Protecting the vulnerable

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) UPDATE NO. 25
8 May 2020

EPI·WiN

World Health Organization

Current global situation

- More than 3.7 million confirmed cases globally
- More than 260 000 deaths

Top ten countries with the highest number of new cases (last 24 hours)

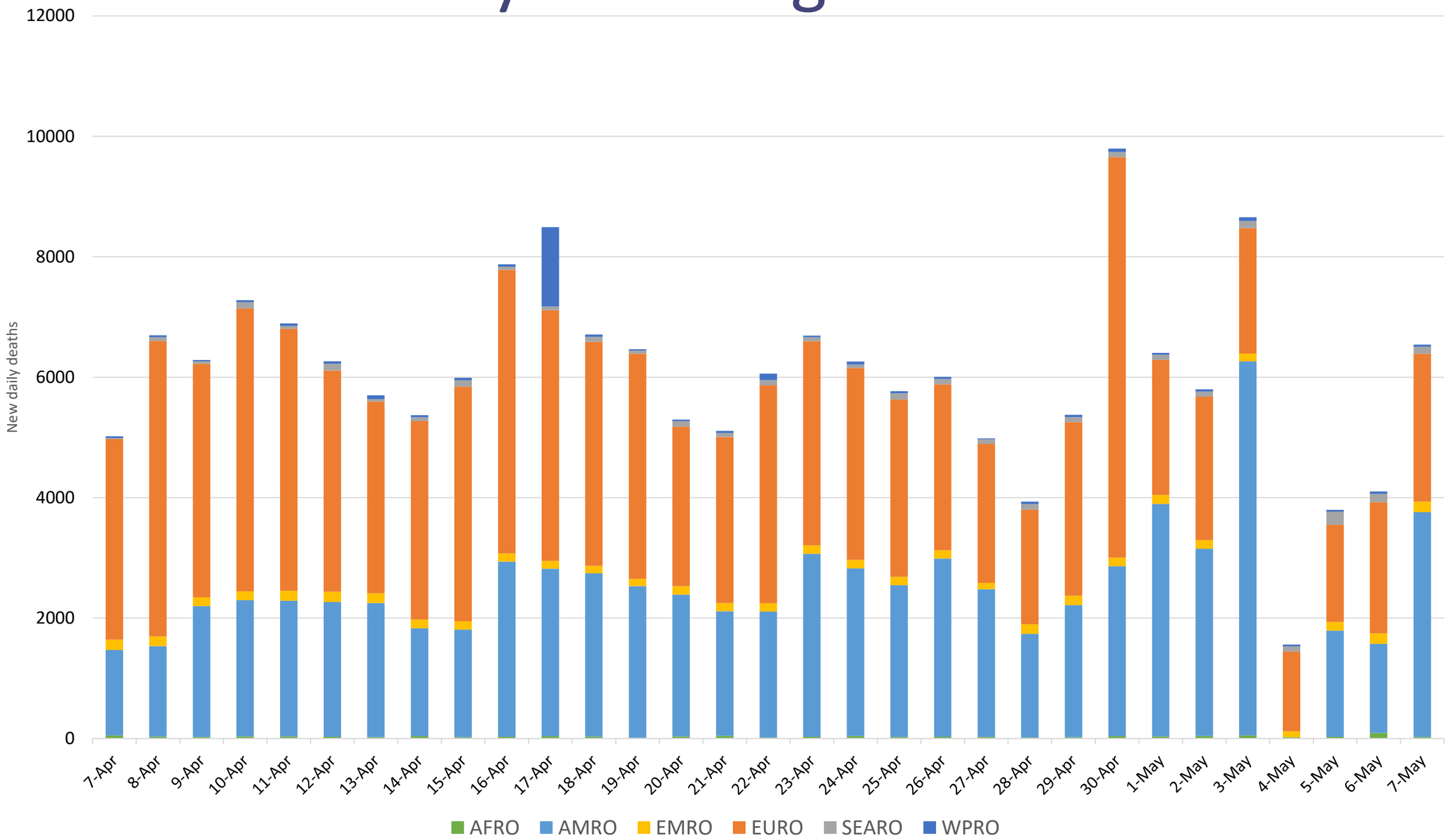
. USA – 22,267
. Russian Federation – 11,231
. Brazil – 6,935
. UK – 6,211
. France – 4,176
. Peru – 3,817
. India – 3,561
. Turkey – 2,253
. Pakistan – 2,094
. Saudi Arabia – 1,793

For the latest data, please access:

WHO situation dashboard
WHO situation reports
UNWFP world travel restrictions

Data as of 07.05.2020

Number of new deaths of COVID-19 per day, by WHO region



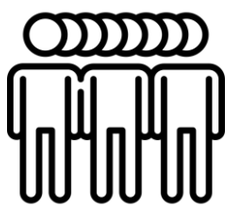
Factors leading to increased vulnerability

LACK OF CLEAN WATER & SANITATION

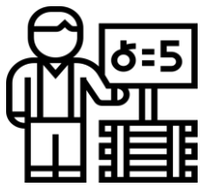
POOR ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE & BASIC SERVICES

FOOD INSECURITY & MALNUTRITION

MARGINALIZED & UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES



OVERCROWDING OR INSUFFICIENT INFRASTRUCTURE



HIGH DEPENDENCE ON INFORMAL ECONOMY & DAILY WAGES

WEAK SYSTEMS (HEALTH, SOCIAL, GOVERNANCE)

ARMED CONFLICT & VIOLENCE

Vulnerable populations

VULNERABILITY LINKED TO COVID-19

Vulnerable to more severe COVID-19 disease:

- ELDERLY
- PEOPLE WITH PREEXISTING MEDICAL CONDITIONS

Vulnerable because of other health conditions:

- PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
- PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV

Strategies to reduce vulnerability:

- ensure and maintain access to healthcare and essential services
- develop shielding strategies to prevent exposure to COVID-19
- develop community plans for psychosocial support and delivery of basic provisions
- make hotlines available

WEForum

https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/2020-03/COVID-19%20-%20How%20to%20include%20marginalized%20and%20vulnerable%20people%20in%20risk%20communication%20and%20community%20engagement.pdf

Vulnerable populations

VULNERABILITY LINKED TO THE SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

- ETHNIC MINORITIES
- WOMEN AND GIRLS
- PREGNANT WOMEN
- GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE SURVIVORS
- PEOPLE WORKING IN THE INFORMAL SECTOR
- CHILDREN

Strategies to reduce vulnerability:

- increase access to healthcare and essential services
- provide socio-economic support
- prevent stigma and discrimination
- provide social support and helplines or sheltered housing

NYTimes

https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/2020-03/COVID-19%20-%20How%20to%20include%20marginalized%20and%20vulnerable%20people%20in%20risk%20communication%20and%20community%20engagement.pdf

Vulnerable populations

VULNERABILITY LINKED TO SPECIFIC SITUATIONS

- REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS
- PEOPLE LIVING IN EXISTING HUMANITARIAN EMERGENCIES
- PEOPLE LIVING IN CLOSED SETTINGS

Strategies to reduce vulnerability:

- ensure access to healthcare and essential services
- ensure access to education and information
- improve water, sanitation and hygiene services
- establish training for surveillance, case management and basic infection, prevention and control

Forbes

https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/2020-03/COVID-19%20-%20How%20to%20include%20marginalized%20and%20vulnerable%20people%20in%20risk%20communication%20and%20community%20engagement.pdf

A closer look: “the shadow pandemic” – violence against women and girls

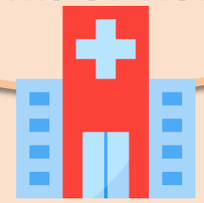
Globally, 243 million women and girls

have been subjected to sexual and/or physical violence perpetuated by an intimate partner in the previous 12 months

Stay-at-home orders further isolate women with violent partners

Data shows violence against women & girls has intensified during the COVID-19 pandemic

Strained health systems responding to COVID-19 patients cannot serve victims of violence



Domestic violence reports in France increase 30% since 17 March lockdown
Domestic violence emergency calls increase 25 % since 20 March lockdown
Helplines in Singapore and Cyprus 33% and 30% increase in calls.

https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2020/issue-brief-covid-19-and-ending-violence-against-women-and-girls-infographic-en.pdf?la=en&vs=5348

A closer look: ethnic minorities

Some countries report a disproportionate burden of illness and death of COVID-19 among ethnic minorities

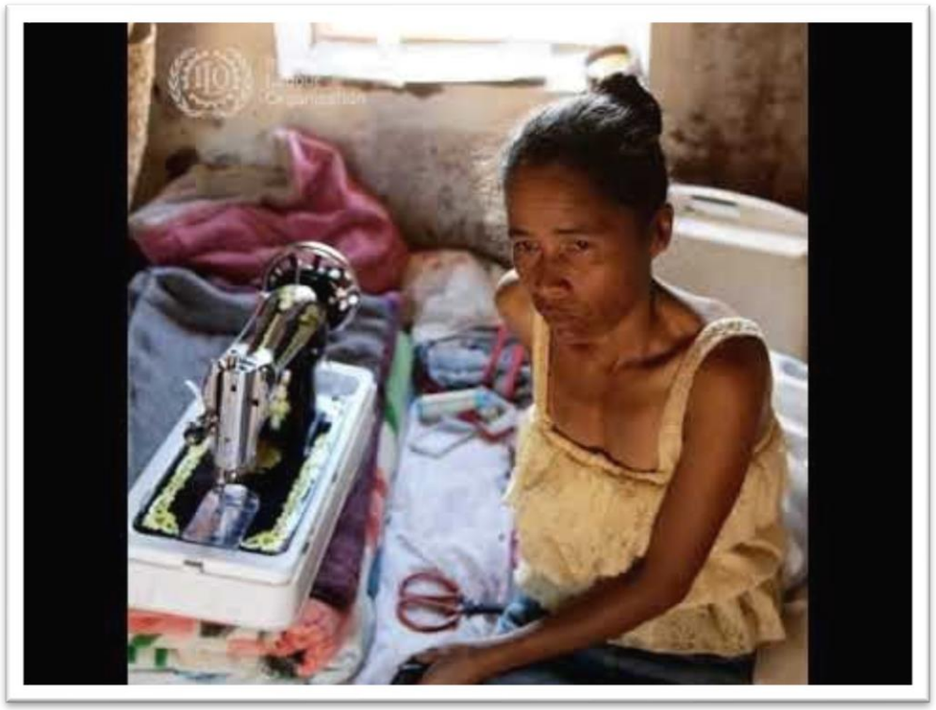
- Ethnic minorities represent 17% of COVID-19 deaths, while constituting 15.4% of the population in the UK[1]

Factors that influence ethnic minority group health

- Living conditions
  - Densely populated areas
  - Overcrowded accommodation
  - Multi-generational households
- Work circumstances
  - Critical workers in the service industry and health care workers
- Underlying health conditions
  - Higher prevalence of chronic conditions (e.g. diabetes, heart disease)

1https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/articles/coronavirusrelateddeathsbyethnicgroupenglandandwales/2march2020to10april2020

A closer look: people working in the informal economy



"Lockdown and containment measures threaten to increase relative poverty levels among the world's informal economy workers by as much as 56% in low-income countries. For these workers, stopping work or working remotely at home is not an option. Staying home means losing their jobs and, for many, it also means losing their livelihoods"

International Labour Organization

ILO Video: The impact of COVID-19 on the informal economy

https://youtu.be/7m_OS-npyXY

A closer look: refugees and migrants

- Across the world, displaced populations in camps or camp-like settings are already highly vulnerable to contracting infectious diseases, and in conditions where a virus can more easily spread.

- In migrant and asylum shelters the usual proposed measures to flatten the curve of transmission of COVID-19 by physical distancing and improving hand hygiene are often very challenging to put in place. Self-isolation is impossible.

- Many refugees live in host countries with some of the weakest health systems in the world. Even for a small number of acute COVID-19 cases, there is limited access to the high level of care needed for the most severe cases.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) works with WHO, governments and partners to ensure that migrants and forcibly displaced persons are included in efforts to mitigate and combat COVID-19's impact.
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLPbTEMLeBi2kkXjBOeiUdEE5F_24ipt1e

Q&A: access to health services is key to halting COVID-19 and saving refugee lives
https://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2020/3/5e7dab2c4/qa-access-health-services-key-halting-covid-19-saving-refugee-lives.html

Guidance

Interim guidance: Public Health and Social Measures for COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Operations in Low Capacity and Humanitarian Settings

COVID-19: How to include marginalized and vulnerable people in risk communication and community engagement

Considerations for people with disability during COVID-19 in WHO's Eastern Mediterranean Region http://www.emro.who.int/violence-injuries-disabilities/violence-infocus/considerations-for-people-with-disability-during-covid-19.html

Information resources

WHO WhatsApp messaging service

Receive the latest news and information on COVID-19. To subscribe:

text 'hi' to +41 79 893 1892

EPI-WIN website

Access to timely, accurate, and easy-to-understand advice and information from trusted sources

www.who.int/epi-win

Previous webinars

COVID-19 and the youth (05.05.20)

Recording:

https://who.zoom.us/rec/share/uO9nIbeo22RLE8_y43jkY4olDI34eaa813Ia-fUFmBpS_liWkDspaaiUEUNVSdd4

40th anniversary of the declaration of smallpox eradication (08.05.20)

Recording:

https://who.zoom.us/rec/share/5NRuNq-r3EdLaaP96lDBfIEuT6nceaa81yIa-vNZyUhlLP1XnqoWCDHhBgGNMymC