

Interruption of vaccination programs, and strategies to close the immunity gap

HPV Prevention and Control Board

Technical Meeting
Impact of Covid-19 on Cervical Cancer Screening,
Treatment and Vaccination

Immunization programmes were widely disrupted due to Covid-19

2nd immunization pulse poll

June 2020

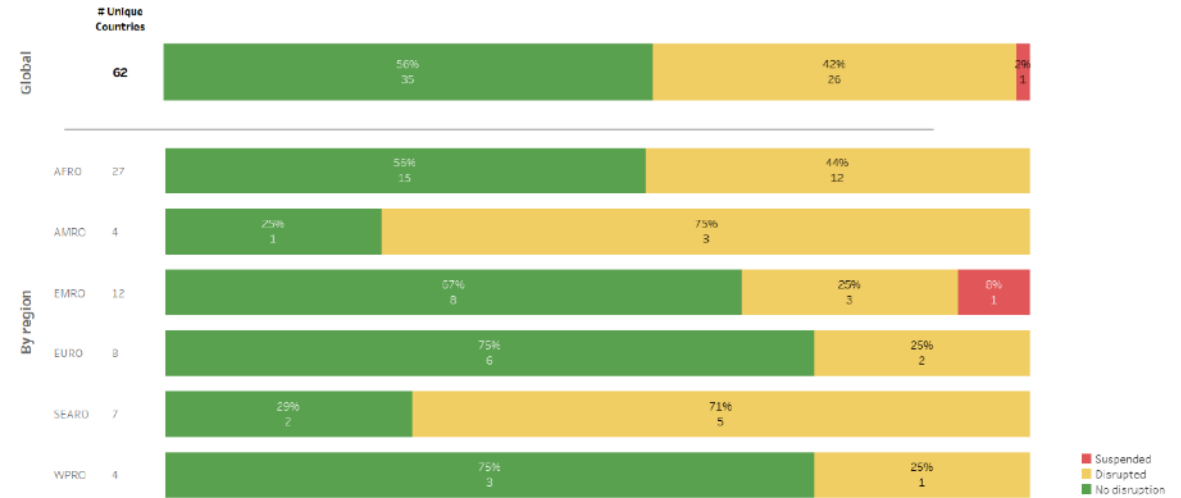
- 82 countries, 260 respondents
- 3 out of 4 countries reported disruptions in fixed post and outreach immunization
- Scheduled campaigns suspended

Fixed Post Disruption: Global

Based on single calculated status per country
National respondents only

Reported level of disruption to fixed post vaccination activities in May 2020 as a result of COVID-19

Percentage of countries reporting a given level of disruption. Includes national level respondents only, once 'Other' and 'Do not know' responses have been excluded.



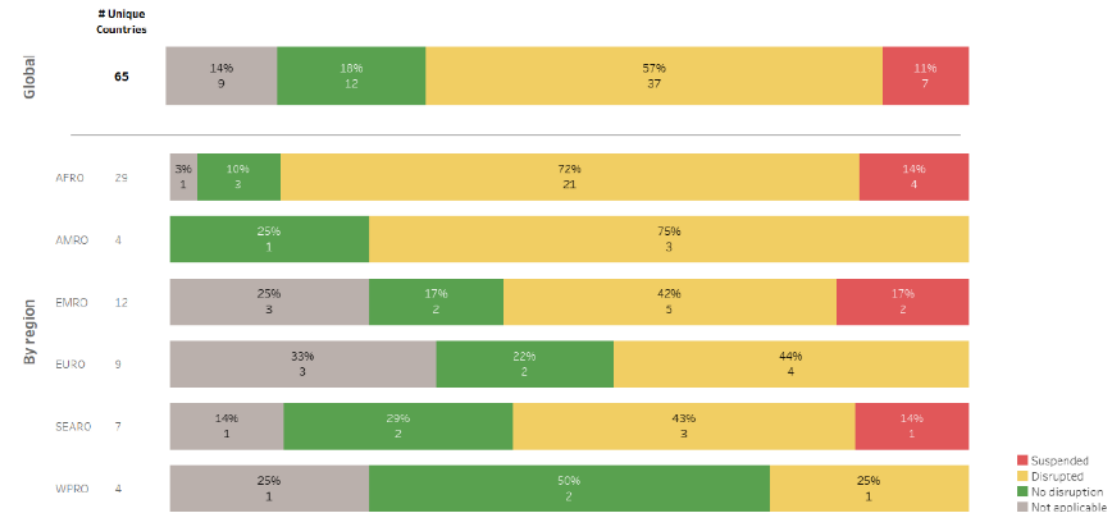
Source: Immunization Pulse Poll 2, Question 7. Displayed percentages are of the calculated single status for disruption level in a country based on the majority response from that country. The data collected are subject to limitations inherent to voluntary self-reporting, self-selection bias, not all countries responded, countries with only one response vis-à-vis countries with many, possibility of fraudulent responses and not having a sampling frame to make inferences. Furthermore, the information about each country does not represent official reporting from Member States to WHO or UNICEF. Thus, the results presented here need to be interpreted with caution and do not represent in any way a WHO or UNICEF position regarding any country or territory for which one or more replies were received.

Outreach Disruption: Global

Based on single calculated status per country
National respondents only

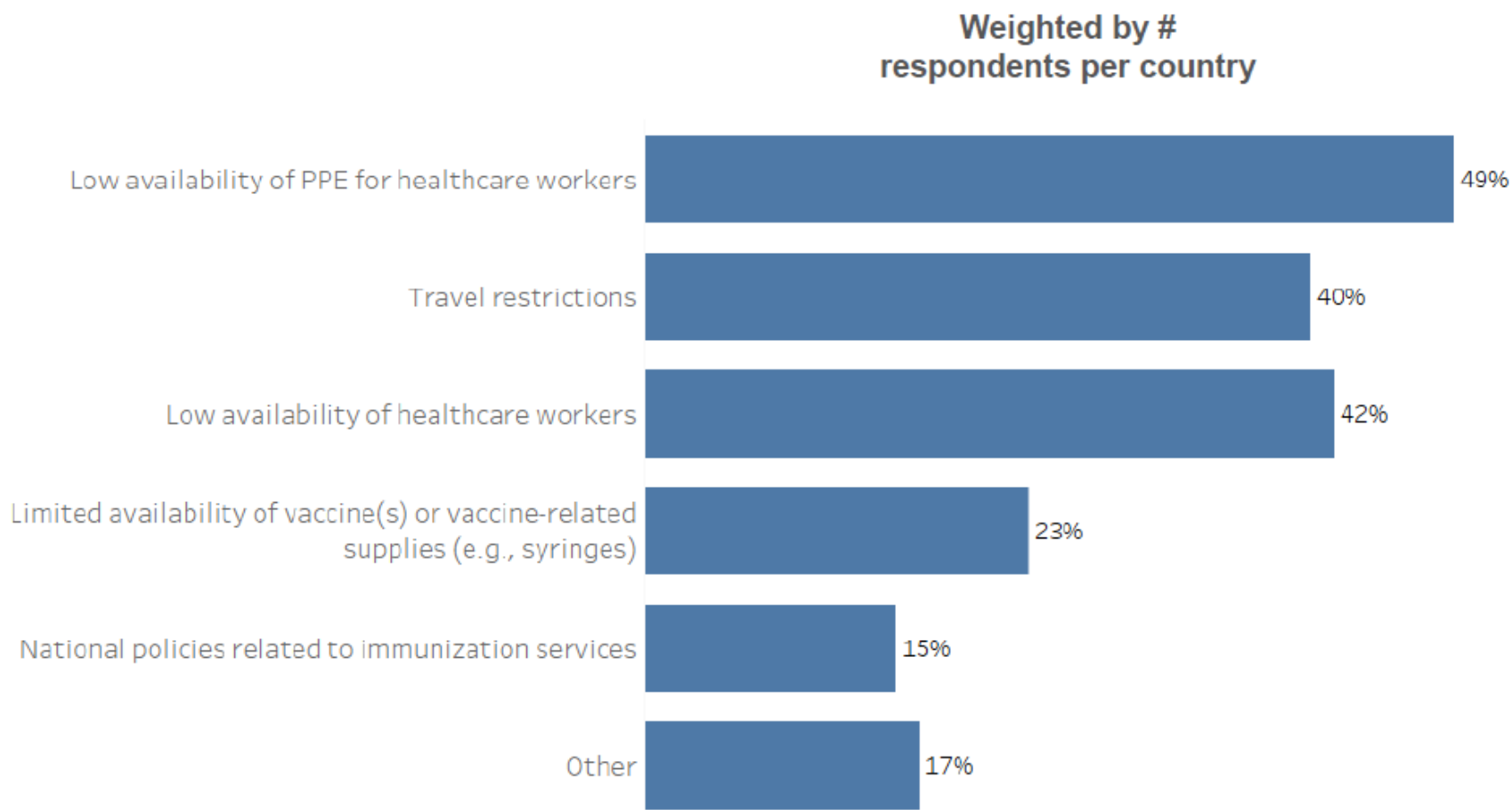
Reported level of disruption to outreach vaccination activities in May 2020 as a result of COVID-19

Percentage of countries reporting a given level of disruption. Includes national level respondents only, once 'Other' and 'Do not know' responses have been excluded.



Source: Immunization Pulse Poll 2, Question 5. Displayed percentages are of the calculated single status for disruption level in a country based on the majority response from that country. The data collected are subject to limitations inherent to voluntary self-reporting, self-selection bias, not all countries responded, countries with only one response vis-à-vis countries with many, possibility of fraudulent responses and not having a sampling frame to make inferences. Furthermore, the information about each country does not represent official reporting from Member States to WHO or UNICEF. Thus, the results presented here need to be interpreted with caution and do not represent in any way a WHO or UNICEF position regarding any country or territory for which one or more replies were received.

There were various reasons for disruption



Service provision

- Lack of PPE
- Travel restrictions
- Redeployment for Covid-19 response
- Disruptions in supply shipments

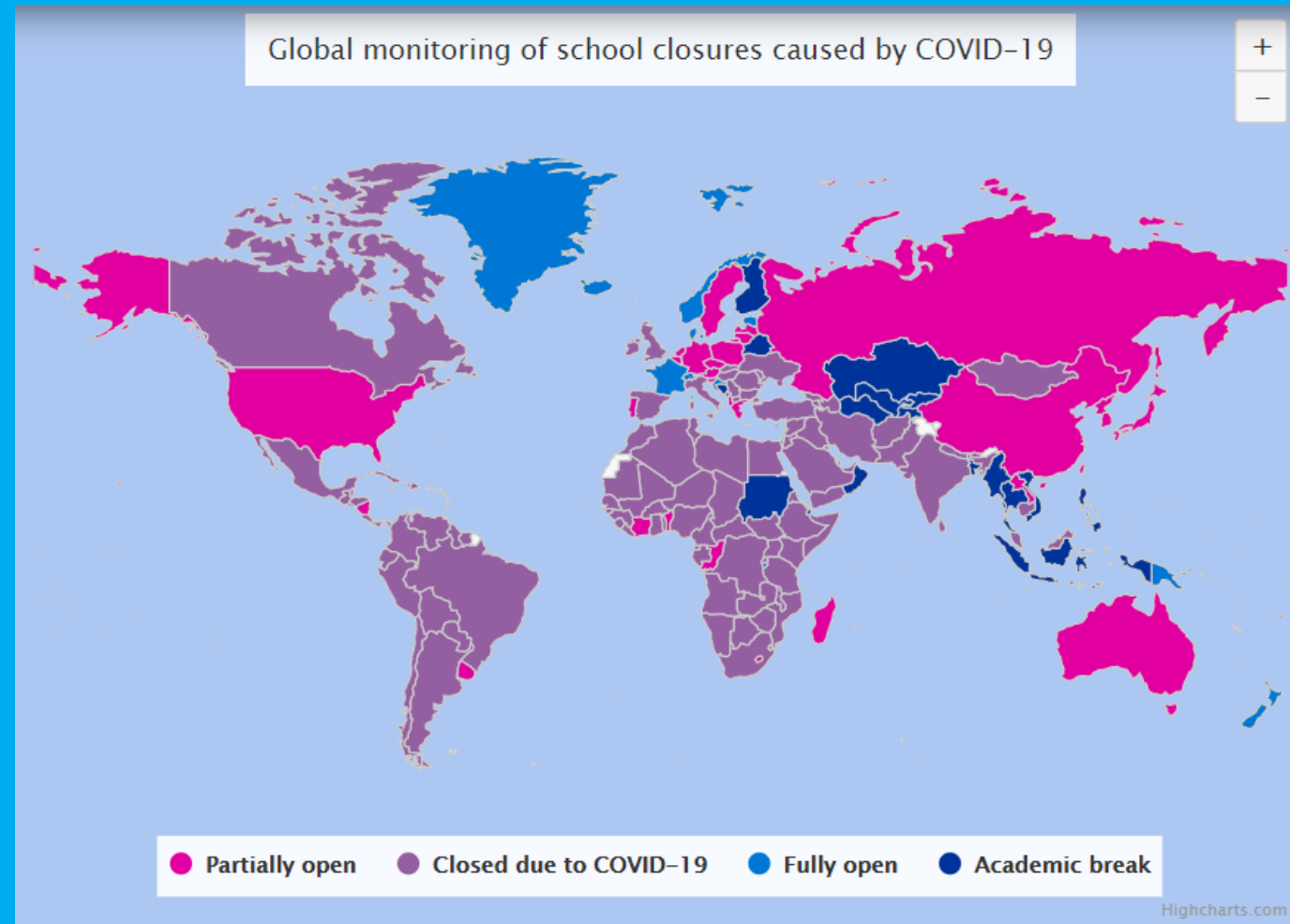
Access

- Lockdowns
- Reluctance, fear
- Transport interruptions
- Economic hardships

Widespread school closures further disrupted HPV vaccine delivery

“At the peak of COVID-19 lockdowns, schools were shuttered for more than 90 per cent of the world’s student population, leaving at least a third of these children cut off from their education completely. Today, 875 million students remain affected.”

UNICEF-EU Press release – 23 September 2020



<https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse>

High level advocacy conducted to resume immunization

“Statement by UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore on the disruption of immunization and basic health services due to the COVID-19 pandemic” 25 March 2020

“At least 80 million children under one at risk of diseases such as diphtheria, measles and polio as COVID-19 disrupts routine vaccination efforts, warn Gavi, WHO and UNICEF” 22 May 2020

- ✓ Resuming essential health services including routine immunization
- ✓ Restarting outreach activities and campaigns
- ✓ Reopening schools

Selected technical guidance on preparedness, continuity and reopening



[click here](#)

Immunization as an essential health service:
guiding principles for immunization activities
during the COVID-19 pandemic and other times
of severe disruption

1 NOVEMBER 2020



[click here](#)

Community-based health care,
including outreach and campaigns,
in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic

Interim guidance
May 2020



[click here](#)



[click here](#)

Myanmar – HPV introduction in the context of Covid-19



Photos: MoH/Myanmar

- Conducted HPV readiness assessment in advance: >90% at all levels
- Launched on 20 Oct 2020
- High level commitment and stakeholder support
- Adapted strategy to community-based for all girls in 2020 (HPV1)
- Phased implementation in line with lockdowns
- Social distancing and infection prevention measures
- Challenges with human resource availability, communication and social mobilization

Uganda – delivering HPV vaccine during Integrated Child Health Days (ICHD)

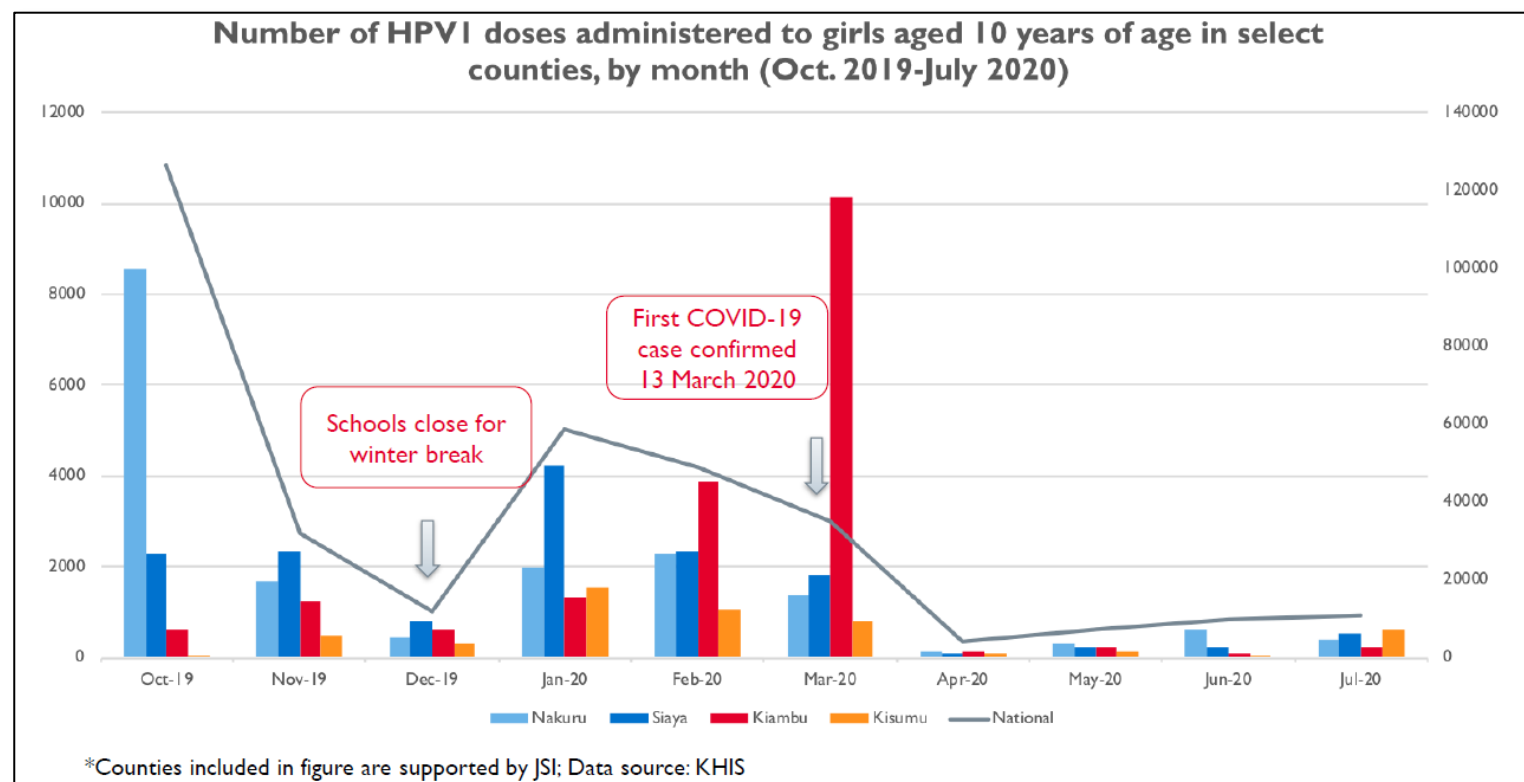


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<https://www.unicef.org/uganda/stories/health-workers-use-special-days-reach-every-child-life-saving-vaccines>

- ICHDs are conducted in April and October, reaching every child and woman with essential health services including immunization
- Includes HPV vaccination for adolescent girls
- Complements routine immunization services, also includes catch-up immunization
- Health Facility-based delivery plus community outreach
- Social distancing, handwashing and PPE

Kenya – HPV vaccination in the context of Covid-19



Data: MoH/Kenya Analysis: JSI

Challenges

- Initial cancellation of outreaches
- Confusion over if HPV vaccination was an 'essential service'
- School closures resulting in reduced vaccination opportunities
- Restricted movement, increased public transport costs
- Redeployment of health staff to Covid-19 response
- Avoidance of health facilities for fear
- Rumors

Good practices

- Tracking girls from health facility registers
- Community Health Workers following up girls
- Sensitization by village elders
- Girls encouraged to bring their friends

Conclusion

- HPV vaccination has been severely disrupted during Covid-19
- Although programmes are being resumed, it will take time for services to reach pre-pandemic levels and close gaps
- National immunization programmes are still under pressure to respond to the pandemic and to prepare for Covid-19 vaccine delivery.
- Biggest challenge is reaching marginalized and vulnerable populations
- There are a number of strategies countries can adopt to improve HPV coverage and close the immunity gap
- Comprehensive technical guidance is available from all partners. Funding, human resources, and conflicting priorities remain as issues.





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Thank you!