

UN warns of pandemic's potentially catastrophic toll on children



United Nations, April 18 (RHC)-- The United Nations warns the coronavirus pandemic could prove catastrophic for children around the world, with 1.5 billion affected by countrywide school closures; millions losing access to school meal programs; and widespread disruptions to maternal and newborn care.

Secretary-General António Guterres said: "Reduced household income will force poor families to cut back on essential health and food expenditures, particularly affecting children, pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers. Polio vaccination campaigns have been suspended. Measles immunization campaigns have stopped in at least 23 countries. And as health services become overwhelmed, sick children are less able to access care. With the global recession gathering pace, there could be hundreds of thousands additional child deaths in 2020."

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