

Civil society and health  
governance in South Africa  
during the COVID-19 pandemic

Sasha Stevenson,  
Head of the Health Rights Programme

## Our civil society context

- + Historically strong and influential civil society
- + Institutionalised participation
  - + AIDS Councils
  - + Meaningful engagement
  - + Public participation processes

# COVID-19

- + Government closed up
- + New structures introduced
- + Different players getting more airtime
- + Communication stopped



**PEOPLE'S  
COALITION**

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# Successes





Search



[+ START A CAMPAIGN](#) [LOG IN](#)

To: President Cyril Ramaphosa

**Tell Government we urgently  
need a Child Support Grant  
increase of R500 for the next 6  
months**



Campaign created by  
Children's Institute, a member of the  
Budget Justice Coalition



**567,742** of 600,000  
signatures

Sign the petition

First Name \*



Last Name \*

# COCT CONFIRMS TEMPORARY HOMELESS SHELTER IN STRANDFONTEIN TO CLOSE

Hundreds of homeless people were moved to the Strandfontein Sports Grounds when the coronavirus lockdown came into effect.







A community health care worker cleans an elderly woman during her visits around the community of Sweet Waters in KwaZulu-Natal. PHOTO: Thom Pierce/Spotlight

## **OP-ED: Underpaid and Unprotected -The case for supporting Community Health Workers**





# LEARNING IN LOCKDOWN RESOURCE MAP



## ONLINE

Here we map what materials are available online.



## BROADCAST

We include TV schedules for broadcast lessons.



## RADIO

Find schedules of lessons transmitted via radio.



## LITERACY

Looking for reading resources? Find some here.

Here, we list the available resources and schedules that we are aware of in one place. We group resources into **online**, **broadcast (TV)**, **radio** and **literacy** subcategories. The purpose of this resource map is to assist continuing learning during the school closure period. We will aim to update this as regularly as possible for the benefit of users. Scroll down for more information.



— Sexual and Gender Based Violence

# South Africa: Providing safe abortion care during a national lockdown

Are **your**  
**rights being**  
**violated** during  
the 21-day  
lockdown?

# ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND SA LOCKDOWN

## ACCESS TO JUSTICE CONTINUES!

**CALL THE LEGAL  
SUPPORT HOTLINE:**

**+27 66 076 8845**

Have you  
**observed a**  
**rights violation**  
during the  
lockdown?

**CALS**  
Centre for Applied  
Legal Studies

 **CENTRE FOR  
CHILD LAW**

 **Centre for  
Environmental Rights**  
Advancing Environmental Rights in South Africa

**corruption  
watch** 

**EELC** **EQUAL  
EDUCATION  
LAW CENTRE**

**LAWYERS FOR  
HUMAN RIGHTS**

**LRC**  
Legal Resources Centre

**NDIFUNA  
UKWAZI**  
DAK TO KNOW

 **ProBono.Org**

**+SECTION27**  
catalysts for social justice

**SERI**  
SOUTH AFRICAN RIGHTS INSTITUTE

  
**WOMEN'S LEGAL CENTRE**

A public interest law organisation may be available  
to assist you, free of charge.



## BEWARE OF FAKE NEWS

In times of a health crisis, FAKE NEWS can put your life at risk. Do not believe everything people send you. Before sharing the information

### CHECK:

Does the person/persons say who they are?

Do they tell you why they are qualified to give an opinion?

Do they refer you to genuine information sources such as Department of Health or the World Health Organisation?

Do they give you a way to get in touch to verify the information?



If the answer to any of these is no... DO NOT SHARE or ACT on this information.

You can check on false information via...

You can report Fake news via...

This message is sent by People's Health Movement of South Africa. We are a progressive health organisation that campaigns for the right to health for all. Our focus during the COVID-19 pandemic is to support the public health messaging of the Dept of Health and to work to ensure equity and justice in access to healthcare at all times.

For more information: C19 PC website [www.c19peoplescoalition.org.za](http://www.c19peoplescoalition.org.za)  
and PHMSA website [www.phm-sa.org](http://www.phm-sa.org)



## Reflection

- + Civil society involvement in the response was significant
- + Outsider role and outside governance
- + Lack of integration of COVID and other programmes
- + Corruption and mismanagement



## What have we learned?

- + Even normative and institutionalised participation and oversight can be undermined
- + Can make impact from the outside but civil society's role within the system is vital
- + Need to redouble efforts to ensure better health governance, civil society participation, transparency and accountability