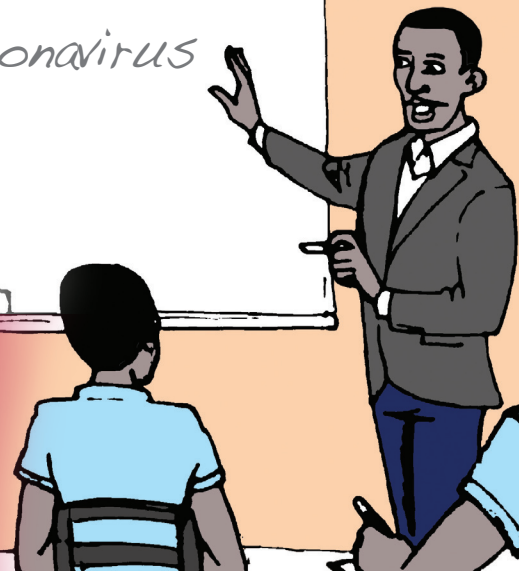*Coronavirus*

KEY MESSAGES FOR TEACHERS ON
CORONAVIRUS
(Covid-19 DISEASE)

What is Coronavirus?

The Coronavirus is a new virus that causes respiratory illnesses in people. It can spread from person-to-person through sneezing and cough droplets. It can cause severe illnesses in humans and if left untreated can lead to death.

What is Covid19?

Covid19 is the name of the disease caused by the Coronavirus – just as HIV causes AIDS. The "co" stands for "corona", "vi" for "virus" and "d" for "disease", while "19" is the year the outbreak was first identified.

Why the name Covid19?

Having a name matters to prevent the use of other names that can be inaccurate or stigmatizing.

Where did the Coronavirus come from?

The current Coronavirus outbreak started in a large animal and sea-food market in China, in a city called Wuhan.

How does the Coronavirus spread?

- It can be spread from person-to-person through the droplets from sneezing or coughing from an infected person,

What are the signs and symptoms of the Coronavirus?

Most patients who have been infected with the Coronavirus have the following signs and symptoms:

- Fever
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Shortness of breath

In more severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia, severe acute respiratory condition, kidney failure and even death.

Who is at risk?

Everyone is at risk. People of all ages can be infected by the Coronavirus, especially:

- People living or travelling in an area where the Coronavirus is circulating may be more at risk of infection.
- Health workers or persons caring for persons who are sick with Coronavirus are at higher risk and must protect themselves with appropriate infection prevention and control procedures.
- Older people and people with pre-existing medical conditions (such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease).

Is there a vaccine or any drug to treat or prevent Coronavirus?

Currently, there is no specific medicine recommended to prevent or treat Covid19 which is caused by the Coronavirus. However, those infected with the virus should receive appropriate care to relieve and treat symptoms, from a health facility or under close supervision of a trained health worker.

- Antibiotics do not treat viruses.
- Currently, there is no vaccine to protect against Covid19. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the Coronavirus.
- Coronavirus is a virus therefore, antibiotics should not be used as a means of prevention or treatment.

How can Coronavirus be prevented?

Standard recommendations to prevent infection spread are as follows:

1. Wash your hands frequently with soap and water even if your hands are not visibly dirty.
   - o *Why?* Washing your hands with soap and water eliminates the virus if it is on your hands.

2. Cover your mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing and immediately wash your hands with soap and water.
   - o *Why?* Covering your mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing prevents the spread of germs and viruses. If you sneeze or cough into your hands, you may contaminate objects or people that you touch. Therefore, washing your hands with soap and water eliminates the virus if it is on your hands.

3. Maintain social distancing
   - o Avoid close contact with anyone showing symptoms of respiratory illness such as coughing and sneezing.
   - o Maintain at least 1 metre (3 feet) distance between yourself and other people, particularly those who are coughing, sneezing and have a fever.
   - o *Why?* When someone who is infected with a respiratory disease, like Covid19, coughs or sneezes they project small droplets containing the virus. If you are too close, you can breathe in the virus.

4. **Avoid** touching eyes, nose and mouth
   - o **Why?** Hands touch many surfaces which can be contaminated with the virus. If you touch your eyes, nose or mouth with your contaminated hands, you can transfer the virus from the surface to yourself.

5. **Avoid** consumption of raw meat or undercooked animal products such as eggs
   - o **Why?** Coronavirus is common in animals especially wild or unvaccinated animals.

6. **Strictly avoid** any contact with other animals (e.g. cats and dogs, rats, birds, bats).
   - o Why? Coronavirus is common in animals especially wild or unvaccinated animals.

7. Seek medical care early. Go to the nearest health facility, if you have fever, cough and difficulty breathing.
   - o **Why?** Flu-like symptoms like fever or high temperature can have a range of causes. Whenever you have fever, cough and difficulty breathing it is important to seek medical attention immediately as this may be due to an infection of/in the lungs or another serious condition. It is also important to tell your health worker about your travel history and living circumstances.

PREVENTION:
Key steps to take to keep your school safe from Coronavirus

1. The head-teacher should inform and update all teachers and support staff about the current information on Coronavirus
   a. Encourage and openly discuss questions, fears, concerns, myths or any misinformation they might have.
   b. Provide support information in a language they can read and understand e.g. posters, fact sheets or common questions and answers on Coronavirus
   c. Create a routine of inspecting the students' cleanliness and health
   d. Identify focal persons/teacher or support staff to be the lead person on Coronavirus, to follow up and regularly report on, all the agreed upon action-points.

2. Inform your students about Coronavirus and regularly update and remind them of the signs and symptoms and the preventive measures.
   a. Provide facts about what has happened, explain what is going on now and give them clear information about how to reduce their risk of being infected in words that they can understand depending on their age and class.
   b. Provide other sources for reliable information.
   c. Provide and agree on how to handle a Coronavirus case – if it ever occurs (what to do, who to call and where to go).

3. Provide hand-washing facilities in the school compound and outside the toilets – always ensure there is water and soap.

4. Reduce and avoid over-crowding in classes or dormitories.

5. Provide a separate facility for the sick to prevent human-to-human infection.

6. Frequently clean and disinfect the school environment, including classes, dormitories, commonly-touched surfaces such as door knobs/handles and walls.

7. Students, teachers and other school staff should avoid close contact with animals.

8. Discourage spitting in public places.

9. Encourage students to ask questions on Coronavirus and other disease outbreaks, especially, in the presence of a well informed and trained health worker or person, who can help to clarify and respond to tough questions or misinformation.

For more information, call the Ministry of Health toll free line on:
0800 100066, 0800 203033 or send a **free SMS** to Ureport on **8500**

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