

FINDING HOPE: Experiences of women, children and adolescents during the COVID-19 pandemic in their own words



Methods

Between April and August 2020, each partner organization was examining how women and adolescents were being affected by COVID-19 as part of their ongoing programme work. Using different methods (e.g. surveys, social media, webinars), partners collected and reported on the lived experiences of over 30,000 people in 43 countries (Annex 1). Each organization applied its own ethics protocols.

Partners came together in April and June 2020 to discuss the issues and challenges facing women and adolescents during the pandemic and their work to document experiences on the ground.^a Despite the difference in country contexts and methods used (e.g. surveys, social media, webinars), these initial discussions revealed many common themes in the challenges faced by women and adolescents as well as the solutions they identified.

a. The team from PAHO/WHO facilitated the inclusion of data from two online regional surveys conducted by UNICEF's Latin America and Caribbean Regional Office.

A simple analytical framework was used by each team to collate its data and programme information and to group emerging themes into three categories. The first category was challenges/ issues facing women and adolescents relating to: livelihoods; food security; mental health; violence, safety and security; autonomy, decision-making and mobility; sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR); and access to social services, including education, health and technology. Additional challenges, both country-specific and common to all the countries, were also identified. The second category focused on what has worked to address each challenge. The final category focused on services and support needed to respond to the identified challenges during the pandemic and beyond.

A series of follow-up calls were held between May and July to discuss the framework and to address any problems or difficulties with the analysis. Each team prepared its own report on the lived experiences of women and adolescents and developed country-specific policy asks for alleviating the short- and long-term negative impacts of COVID-19 on women and adolescents. The reports are available at <https://www.who.int/pmnch/knowledge/publications/lived-experiences-covid19/>.

The findings from the reports were collated, summarized and analysed to inform the development of this advocacy brief.



Photo credit: Amref Health Africa

ANNEX 1.

Overview of the different methods used by partners

Table 1. Quantitative methods used to explore lived experiences

Organization	Method	Sample		Participating countries
		Size	Demographics	
Asociación Profamilia	Online survey April 2020	1,287	Age group: 18-29 Females: 886 Males: 388 Non-binary: 13	Colombia
Centre for Catalyzing Change (C3)	Mobile App survey April 2020	3,329	Age group: 10-20 Females: 2,090 Males: 1,239	India (Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh)
	Telesurvey April 2020	2,282	Government school teachers: 113 Elected Women Representatives / civil society organization representatives: 755 Front-line health workers: 264 Community members: 1150	India (Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh)
International Planned Parenthood Federation, Western Hemisphere Region (IPPFWHR Youth Network)	Online survey May and June 2020	1,088	Age group: 10-29+ Females: 805 Males: 261 Non-binary: 22	Argentina, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Colombia, Dominica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, The Dominican Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, Venezuela
Amref Health Africa	Online survey April-June 2020	2,153	Age group: 18-35 Females: 1,072 Males: 1,061 Non-binary: 20	Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia
UNICEF Latin America and Caribbean Regional Office	Online survey May 2020	7,239	Age group: 13-29 Females: 45.8% Males: 53.7% Non-binary: 0.5%	Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guyana, Grenada, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Lucia, The Dominican Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, Venezuela
	Online survey April 2020	10,796	Age group: 13-29 Females: 5,290 Males: 5,398 Non-binary: 108	

Table 2. Qualitative methods used to explore lived experiences

Organization	Methods		
Asociación Profamilia	Interviews (June 2020)		
	Participants	Demographics	Country
	23	Age group: 15-25 Females: 18 Males: 5	Colombia
	Literature review of national and local data sources by governments, non-governmental organizations, researchers and Profamilia		
C3	Interviews (April to May 2020)		
	Participants	Demographics	Country
	2,342	Female youths and adolescents: 26 Women: 2,316	Nine states in India (Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Maharashtra, New Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Bihar)
IPPFWHR	Documenting stories, sharing live conversations through Instagram (from May, ongoing initiative) Countries in Latin America and the Caribbean		
Graça Machel Trust	Countries: Nigeria, South Africa and Uganda		
	13 webinars (April to June 2020) Total number of participants: 525 Key webinar themes included: sustaining sexual and reproductive health and rights; food systems and food security; the impact of COVID-19 on women and girls; and leading through change focused on women entrepreneurs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 and food systems in the Eastern and Southern African Region, 15 April 2020 • Youth being left behind in accessing sexual and reproductive health and rights, 5 May 2020 • Getting your business online, 12 May 2020 		

Graça Machel Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustaining sexual reproductive health and rights through intersections of social protection policies and programmes during COVID-19, 15 May 2020 • Building resilience: women's leadership in times of COVID-19, 20 May 2020 • Approaches to ensure continuation of sexual and reproductive health and rights during COVID-19 and beyond, 20 May 2020 • The disproportionate burden of COVID-19 on women and girls in the Africa region, and their voices and actions in shaping the discourse, 27 May 2020 • Lead through change: business in the time of COVID-19, 26 May 2020 • Advocating for nutrition during COVID-19, 3 June 2020 • Time to confront the threats of COVID-19 on access to quality primary education in sub-Saharan Africa, 4 June 2020 • Business continuity planning, 9 June 2020 • Fuelling action towards achievement of the sexual and reproductive health agenda, 11 and 25 June 2020
	<p>8 live Instagram conversations Total number of participants: 347</p> <p>Discussions of the role of civil society organizations, gender-based violence, sexual and reproductive health and rights and women's leadership during the crisis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanding equality in times of uncertainty, 14 April 2020 • The rise of consequential leaders, 17 April 2020 • NGO COVID-19 programmatic work, 21 April 2020 • African philanthropy: an imminent response to COVID-19, 28 April 2020 • Media and the mental health narrative during COVID-19, 30 April 2020 • Gender-based violence: the rising pandemic, 8 May 2020 • Coping with COVID-19, 15 May 2020 • Fighting the shadow pandemic that is gender-based violence, 26 May 2020
	<p>5 community field visits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two field visits in South Africa (Alexandra Township), May and June 2020 • Three field visits in Nigeria (Katsina, Kaduna and Kano states, Nigeria), August 2020
	<p>Documentary analysis of human-interest stories and country responses to the pandemic, 12-14 June 2020</p>

Amref Health Africa	<p>Literature review of studies conducted by Amref Health Africa and other partners, media reports and blogs (May to June 2020)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 knowledge, attitudes and practices: responses from 2,010 households in five Nairobi informal settlements (Kibera, Huruma, Kariobangi, Dandora, Mathare). Population Council. • COVID-19 effects on health care-seeking behaviours and other social economic effects in Nairobi. Amref Health Africa. • COVID-19 in Kenya: maternal and newborn health insights from partner counties. Jacaranda Health. • Short-term socioeconomic effects of COVID-19. The Amsterdam Institute for Global Health and Development, the African Population and Health Research Center, Amref Health Africa and PharmAccess Foundation. <p>News and blogs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women living in Kajiado County respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Her Word. White Ribbon Alliance; 2020. • Ajayi A. The potential impacts of COVID-19 on teenage pregnancy in Kenya. APHRC; 17 June 2020. • Maichuhie K. West Pokot records dramatic rise in FGM cases. Daily Nation newspaper; 11 June 2020. • Mwangi MG. Multiple risks faced by adolescent girls in Kenya during the COVID-19 pandemic. LVCT Health Kenya; 7 May 2020. • Ministry of Gender and Social Services. The situation of teenage pregnancies in Kenya. National Council for Population and Development; 2019. • SDG Kenya Forum. Spotlight on the impact of COVID-19 on women and girls. Newsletter Vol XIII: May 2020. <p>Interviews with key informants: Amref Health Africa executive and programme staff, beneficiaries and other partners, including national governments and county and NGO representatives (May to June 2020)</p> <p>Participants: 17 Locations: Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amref Health Africa representatives from Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Senegal, Ethiopia, Malawi and Zambia (10) • NGO representative (1) • County representatives (3) • Women (2) • Adolescents (1)
PAHO/WHO	Consultations with 100 young people from Latin America and the Caribbean, in informal focus groups, May-June 2020

More information available at:

<https://www.who.int/pmnch/knowledge/publications/lived-experiences-covid19/>