Nowhere to Turn: Youth, SRH and GBV during the COVID-19 Pandemic

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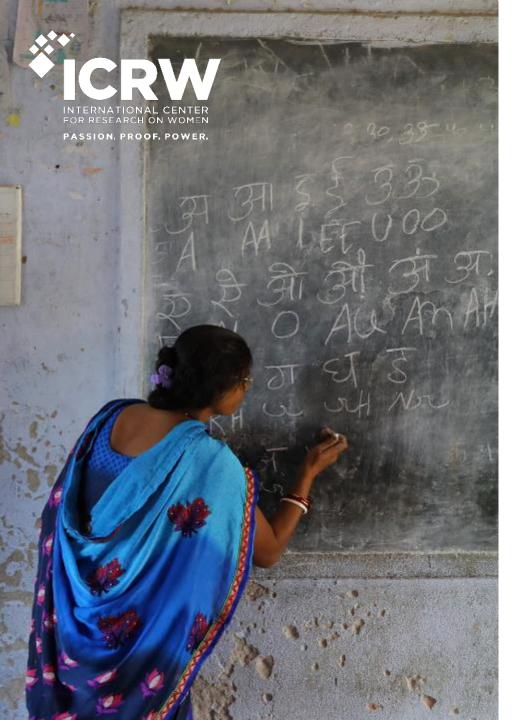
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Adolescents and Young Adults

- 1.2 billion youth aged 15-24 years in 2019 (16% of global population) projected to increase 62% by 2050
- Good health, education, and youth employment are essential for reaping the positive impacts of the demographic dividend on global economic growth
- During adolescence gender norms and stereotypes firmly take hold, with adolescent girls facing intense pressure to conform to gendered expectations
- Gender-based discrimination can be particularly exaggerated, with girls facing a greater likelihood of experiencing a range of challenges.
- Mental well-being is also key for this transition period of life





SRH and Youth

- Access to contraception, abortion, post-abortion care, and wider SRH services is essential for adolescents and young adults (AYA)
- Reduction in fertility among youth (15-24 years) from 244 births per 1000 women (1990-1995) to 178 births per 1000 women (2015-2020) – a decrease of 27%
- Increase in contraceptive use among unmarried (3.8% to 7.4%) and married (15% to 31%) youth (15-19 years) from 1990 to 2019
- Only a modest reduction in the unmet need for family planning (FP)

AYA Vulnerabilities Worsen During Crisis

Crisis exacerbates existing inequalities



Increased vulnerability

- Increased GBV reported
- More likely to fall victim to sexual exploitation
- Social harms and gender inequalities heightened
- Safety and social support challenges
- Loss of voice and agency

Economic shocks

- Loss of livelihoods
- Increased mental strain within households
- Increased care burden by women and girls



SDGs and COVID-19 (1)

SDG Goal	Impact of COVID-19
SDG 1: No Poverty	 Globally 193 Million women and girls aged living on less than \$ 1.90 a day Livelihoods disrupted due to COVID-19 restrictions threaten to trap and push more women and girls into extreme poverty Youth in low-income households forced into income-generating activities to support family survival Increased cases of young women and girls engaging in transactional sex to survive
SDG 3: Good Health and Wellbeing	 Access to SRH services disrupted (810 daily deaths preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth before COVID-19) Supply chain disruptions of essential medicines and services Reported increase in physical and sexual violence, teenage pregnancies, and unsafe abortions. Increased reporting of depression and other mental health issues



SDGs and COVID-19 (2)

SDG Goal	Impact of COVID-19
SDG 4:Quality Education	 Nearly 743 Million girls locked out of school due to restrictions Widened inequality gap for learners from poor, vulnerable, and marginalized households
SDG 5: Gender Equality	 243M reported GBV cases (40% of all cases) in 2019 Data already indicating that reported cases of GBV have doubled in some countries 12M girls marry before age 18 every year and COVID-19 is likely to increase child marriages



What Next?

- Collect, track and use gender disaggregated data to inform response
- Increase and ringfence SRH and GBV funds
- Proper enforcement and adherence to SRHR and GBV laws and policies even during crisis
- Deliberate inclusion of SRHR and GBV policy actions in COVID-19 response plans

Improve
Delivery
of SRH
and other
Services
for Youth

- Adapt to remote approaches
- Digitization of services
 - Tele-medicine
 - Tele-counselling
 - Social media use
 - Digitize sex education

- Expand social support
- Address harmful social norms
- Improve accountability



Thank you

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