



Protecting Women from the Broader Impact of COVID-19

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The Challenges Women and Young People Face during Crisis Situations

- During the pandemic, while it was identified that the most at-risk groups are men and the elderly due to the higher probability of dying due to the COVID-19 - evidence and experience from previous epidemics however shows that women and young girls are often marginalized:
 - Limited mobility and economic factors increase women's and girls' vulnerability to GBV and exploitation
 - Resources for essential SRH and Maternal Health often get redirected to manage epidemics/pandemics.
 - Women disproportionately bear the burden of additional work during quarantines and lockdowns.

**To Respond to
the Needs of
Women and
Young People
during the
COVID-19
Pandemic,
UNFPA
continued to:**

**Collect Information and
Data on the Challenges
that Women and Young
People Face**

**Respond to the Needs
of Health Care Workers
who Served the Needs
of Women and Young
People**

**Look for Novel Ways to
Reach and Respond to
the Needs of Women
and Young People
During the Pandemic**



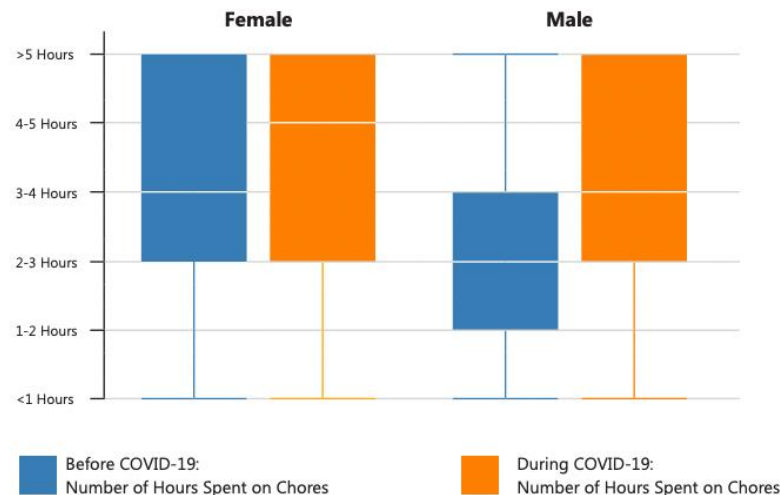
Collecting Information and Data on the Challenges that Women and Young People Face

- Gender & Inclusion Assessment of Covid-19 Pandemic on Vulnerable Women and Girls
- Longitudinal Cohort Study on the Filipino Child Phone Survey
- Big Data Analysis on Family Planning
- Analysis on Excess Births and Deaths

What we learned

- Women disproportionately shouldered more of the burden of care work during the pandemic (*UNFPA RGA Report*)
- During the lockdowns, it is usually the female family members who bears the responsibility of assisting the adolescent child on his/her studies (*Cohort Study*)

Figure 1. Median time spent on Household Chores Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic.



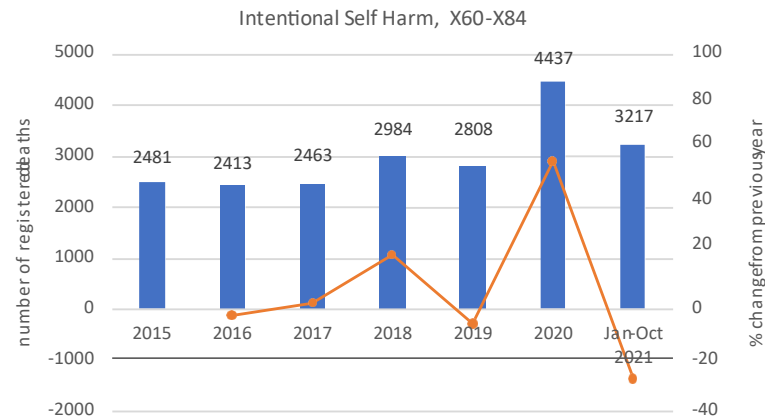
Source: *UNFPA Philippines Gender and Inclusion Assessment During the COVID-19 Pandemic*

What we learned

- While the risk of dying from COVID-19 is low among adolescents, the pandemic has a significant impact on the broader well-being of children.
- Data from the cohort study shows that anxiety levels among children significantly increased during the pandemic.
- At the same time, an analysis of excess deaths in the Philippines during the pandemic showed that there was an increased number of deaths due to intentional self-harm (~50% increase in 2020 compared to 2019)

DSM-Anxiety Levels of ICs who participated in both surveys

	Luzon	Visayas	Mindanao	All
Prepandemic W4				
Normal	95.3	90.4	88.4	92.6
Borderline	3.8	6.8	8.3	5.5
Clinical	0.9	2.8	3.2	1.9
Pandemic				
Normal	83.5	56.9	59.0	71.5
Borderline	9.5	24.6	19.6	15.4
Clinical	7.0	18.6	21.4	13.1



Note: PSA data as of 29 November 2021. (p)=preliminary.

What we learned

- The number of adolescents who live in food insecure households increased from 71% in 2019 to 80% and 77% in 2020 and 2021 respectively. (Cohort Study)
- Most adolescents (almost 90%) had difficulty in distance learning methods and 87% would prefer to go back to face-to-face classes (Cohort Study)

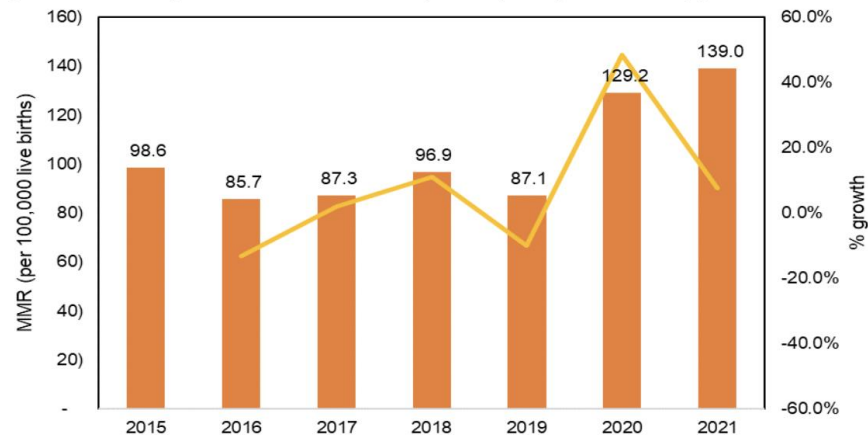
Index children would prefer face-to-face classes

	Luzon	Visayas	Mindanao	ALL
Mode of schooling wanted by IC, %				
Online/internet only - access videos, modules online	1.5	0.8	1.7	1.4
Printed modules picked-up from school/barangay or delivered to home only	8.5	8.0	13.7	9.8
Blended learning - combination of online and delivered modules	4.4	1.0	0.6	2.7
Face-to-face	85.6	90.2	84.0	86.1

What we learned

- Access to essential health services was an issue during the pandemic.
- During the start of the pandemic, UNFPA estimated globally that without any intervention from countries could result in 1.4 million unintended pregnancies.
- Analysis of social media sentiments show that many women online express their issues on the availability of family planning services and commodities, and the access to a health provider for their reproductive health concerns.
- An analysis on excess deaths revealed that during the pandemic, the number of maternal deaths in the country increased by almost 30% during the pandemic compared to the average from previous years.

Figure 3.16. Unadjusted Maternal mortality ratio (MMR) of the Philippines, 2015-2021



Source: Author's calculations using data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).
Note: Preliminary data for 2021 as of January 2022



Responding to the Needs of Health Care Workers who Serve Women

- Provided Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) to healthcare workers in maternity hospitals early in the pandemic
- COVID testing machine for BARMM-CRMC
- Provided HRH support to strengthen data collection and management for DOH COVID19 surveillance

What we provided

- One of the challenges in the pandemic was ensuring the continuity of service provision and the safety of both healthcare workers and their patients
- To ensure that SRH and MH services continue during the pandemic, UNFPA during the start of the pandemic donated PhP 10.7 Million Worth of PPEs to the Department of Health and Health Facilities in the Country.



What we provided

- At the same time, to ensure that mothers deliver safely in health facilities, UNFPA deployed emergency maternity tent facilities in several health facilities.
- These facilities served as triage areas and delivery rooms for pregnant women who tested positive for COVID-19.



OB Triage Tents

<https://rh-care.info/ob-triage-tents/>

3,936 pregnant women and young girls served in 3 OB Triage tents in Iloilo, and 1 city hospital in Bacolod



Kabataan sa Panahon ng COVID-19



Look for Novel Ways to Reach and Respond to the Needs of Women and Young People During the Pandemic

- Taking advantage of online modalities of engagement and service delivery: RH-Care.Info (3.1M in 2020), radio-based infomercials and programs (160,000 reach)
- Bringing the services closer to where women live – RH-Bike Patrol: reached 5,317 of which 4,762 (91%) accepted a FP method

How we reached

- UNFPA in partnership with Y-Peer Philippines rolled out a series of online dialogues between young people and policy makers entitled #KaBayanihan
- The series allowed young people to be able to directly engage with government decision makers, ask about issues relevant to them and express the challenges they face.
- KaBaYaNiHan (1.4M reach)



How we reached

- UNFPA in partnership with PSRP also developed an online platform called RH-INFO.
- The platform provides information on SRHR: Information on FP methods, available health facilities where they can get access, and advice on their reproductive health and rights among others
- To date, the platform has reached almost 13 million people online.

Health Facility Locator
(Where to get Family Planning services near you)

Mandaluyong City
Commission on Population and Development (POPCOM)

Sta. Cruz, Manila
Dr. Jose Fabella Memorial Hospital

Project 8, Quezon City
Likhaan center for women's health
Likhaan Center for Women's Health

More health facilities at rh-care.info/providers

@rhcareinfo

How we reached

- One of the issues during the pandemic was the access to safe transportation for patients and healthcare workers.
- UNFPA therefore provided RH Bikes to healthcare workers, which are electric scooters that can be used by healthcare workers to go to their clients and provide services near their place of residence.





In Summary

- The basic and special needs of women and young girls continue and are often unmet during crisis situations. At the same time, women are also at-risk from the broader socio-economic effects of the pandemic.
- The availability of age and gender disaggregated data is needed to understand the challenges women and young people face not just during the pandemic, but also in the long term.
- The pandemic exposed the vulnerability of the health system to shocks which affected the delivery of essential SRH and MH services further marginalizing women and young girls.

Thank you very much!



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