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**AMREF
GROUNDTRUTH REPORT
SUMMARY
AUGUST 2022
KENYA & TANZANIA**

COVID-19 & YOUNG PEOPLE

IMPACT OF COVID-19

- Covid -19 has influenced young people's lives, this may be directly or indirectly through people they know. What was evident was that there was more harm than good. Many of the youth had to stay out of school hence delaying their dreams of becoming financially independent. Others lost their jobs due to the tough economic times and had to change adapt.
- To some they took the opportunity to find ways of surviving, hence looking for business opportunities online

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The impact of covid-19 has been both negative and positive in the lives of the young people , both in Kenya and Tanzania.



YOUNG PEOPLE CARE

WHAT DO YOUNG PEOPLE CARE ABOUT?

The youth have people and things that they care about. These are people who made them become extra cautious during the peak of the pandemic. Capitalizing on this aspect maybe the key to ensuring that hygiene practices are observed.

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Young people care about:

- Parents and Siblings
- Grandparents and Other extended families for those who live in a communal setting
- Girlfriends and Boyfriends
- Hustles to supplement the family income/provide food for their families
- School

Actions young people took:

At the beginning of the pandemic young people were cautious about the hygiene practices. Many of them talked of the different ways they tried to prevent getting infected. They mentioned wearing of two masks, carrying a sanitizer, washing either hands at any point with soap and running water. All this was in attempt to protect themselves and

'I stay in Mombasa, I did not visit my grandparents in Kisii because I was afraid, I may expose them to Covid-19' Female, 21, Mombasa

Community sensitization: In order to create awareness some of the youths started educating their community on the need of following the government health protocols.

'During Covid-19 the campus was closed, so I went back home. I joined other youths in the village in creating knowledge on covid. I was part of the team that would distribute the handwashing stations issued by the area chief.' Female, 22, Mombasa

PRACTICES IN THE LAST THREE YEARS

YOUNG PEOPLE

Hygiene practices have declined over the last 2 and half years; from Ishaq et al. (2020).

In 2020, young people were following the health guidelines from Ministry of Health—but as the years progressed, they slowly dropped the practices.

Some of the stringent measures which have since been dropped included isolation, taking concoctions and balanced diet, wearing a mask and sanitizing.

Various underlining factors contributed to the initial compliance for example, pressure from government, fear of unknown, search for jobs. Currently, these pressures no longer exist.



When it comes to practicing hygiene, most participants felt that it is either an intrinsic motivation that is among few and that has been developed since upbringing, however most practice hygiene due to a reactive motivation in response to a certain situation.

The former tends to last but the later eventually fades with time.

TRIGGERS

WHAT TRIGGERED COMPLIANCE

Largely, the government, school and media played a key role in influencing compliance

They are also surrounded by things or factors that influence how they behavior. Some of these factors had an impact on them adopting hygiene practices.

"I sell secondhand clothes and interact with so many people, I had to wear a mask all day long. You will feel so uncomfortable, and you can't serve a customer without one"

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- Fear of the unknown
- Desire to protect loved ones
- Government Enforcement
- It was a trending topic in the country/world
- Media Coverage

- Government Enforcement
- Seeking service / looking for employment
- Media Coverage
- School

- Increase in numbers
- Government directive of no compulsory mask wearing
- School



2020



2021



2021
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COMPLIANCE TRIGGERS

CURRENT PERCEPTIONS OF YOUNG PEOPLE

WEARING MASKS

There is a negative attitude when it comes to wearing of masks, due to the last 2.5 years previous experiences they have had. Many of them felt that Covid-19 doesn't exist anymore. There has also been a relaxation on the government-therefore no consequences. Young people felt that the county government officials used this opportunity to extort them by imposing hefty fines on those who flaunted the regulations.

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WASHING HANDS

This is one the practices that has greatly reduced among young people. They no longer see the need to wash their hands because the handwashing stations around them are not as available as before. Washing hands is now restricted to critical events for example after a bathroom visit, before eating, and even this is not a guarantee to many of them. To some of them this is a habit that can be encouraged not only to help prevent Covid-19 but other diseases.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

Young people have not been observing the 1.5-meter rule. Many of them feel that once they have their masks on then it should prevent them from the virus. Another factor that prevents them from observing this is because it's practically hard for them to keep the distance when they share communal spaces or use public transport.

SANITIZING

Most of them no longer find the use of sanitizer necessary. They cannot remember the last time they used one. According to them, sanitizers are expensive to buy and with the little money they have in their pockets they would rather spend it on their basic needs.

CHALLENGES THAT HINDER CONSISTENT HYGIENE PRACTICE

- Scarcity of water
- Economic conditions
- Ignorance
- Lack correct consistent Information
- Impractical
- Some practices are not a norm in the lives of young people.
- Influence from local leaders

COVID VACCINE

MYTHS AND MISCONCEPTIONS STILL PERSIST AMONG THE YOUNG PEOPLE

Affects the young people's fertility

Corona doesn't affect black people

Western world wants to reduce the African population

What have young people heard about COVID-19 and the COVID-19 vaccine

The government is controlling the number of pregnancies

One will become a zombie in a couple of years or one will get paralyzed

After been vaccinated there is another disease that people will get

'I heard that the government is trying to reduce the reproduction rates in the country. So, people give birth to 1 or 2 children. Now that am vaccinated ...I may not give birth.... I will just be helping people with their children.' Female , 19, Nyeri

- Young people wore masks during the pandemic. The main reason for wearing masks was not the fear of being infected but the fear of being apprehended by the law enforcers i.e. the police/ county officers.
- It was noted that getting fully vaccinated, meant that young people could no longer observe any of the hygiene practices. This is because they felt that they are now immune from Covid-19
- Social Media Campaigns alone might not be enough to develop the behavior. A complementary approach, one that takes the audience through a journey of change, and social media to be used as a nudge for adapting the behavior advocated.
- Use of influencers in the campaign might not necessarily mean that it would lead to behaviour change, because there is a perception that the influencers themselves are not really practicing what they advocate (they have a reward to influencing)
- Overall, there was no intrinsic motivation to get the vaccine or follow the recommended public health protocols. They had other pressing needs (in their words, "it's like living with HIV/AIDS amongst us"). What do this mean for us as we seek to create a behavior-change strategy?

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