



For Immediate Release

June 30, 2020

InterAction

Morgan Martinez

Director of Communications

mmartinez@interaction.org

COVID-19 Impacts: Unsafe Living Conditions for Girls in Latin America, Rise in Teen Pregnancies in Kenya, and Malaria on the Rise

[InterAction](#) will be providing weekly tailored Media Alerts highlighting the work our Members are implementing around the world. If you would like to learn more about any of the following information, please feel free to reach out directly to the POC provided.

Gender-Based Impacts

Lockdown Linked to High Numbers of Teen Pregnancies in Kenya

The wellbeing of thousands of girls in Kenya could be at risk with reports of huge numbers of unintended teen pregnancies since the start of COVID-19 lockdown, [warns child rights, and humanitarian organization](#) Plan International. Media reports citing data from a government-managed health information system have stated that up to 4,000 adolescent girls may have visited health facilities for antenatal services in the county of Machakos alone between January and May. The figure for the whole country, it is feared, may run into several thousands.

For information, please contact Bernice Morquette, bernice.morquette@planusa.org, Plan International.

Home Not Safe for Girls in Latin America and the Caribbean

For many girls and women living in Latin America and the Caribbean, mandatory isolation as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic is having [dangerous and violent consequences](#), warns child rights and humanitarian organization Plan International. There has been a significant rise in reports of physical, sexual and psychological abuse directed towards girls and adolescents, with many more cases likely going under the radar. While confinement measures are needed to stop the spread of COVID-19, these same measures have left girls and adolescents much more vulnerable to different types of violence, including sexual violence.

For information, please contact Bernice Morquette, bernice.morquette@planusa.org, Plan International.

Rise of Malaria in Africa

COVID-19 Pandemic Threatens to Reverse Decades of Progress on Malaria

Between 2000 and 2015, every malaria-endemic region in the world succeeded in decreasing malaria-related illnesses and deaths as a result of sustained global public health efforts. [Yet as detailed in a recently published Global Fund Report](#), such progress is being threatened by the rapid spread of COVID-19, which is adding to the burden of already-stressed health systems in malaria-endemic countries.

For example, in Nigeria, which has the highest burden of malaria in the world, lockdowns are stalling malaria-related programming, as well as limiting access to malaria diagnostic testing and treatment services. The [World Health Organization warns](#) that if all bed net campaigns are suspended for 2020, and there is a 75% reduction in access to antimalarial drugs, over 750,000 people in sub-Saharan Africa could die, twice the number of deaths reported in the region in 2018.

What can the global public health community do? [As articulated in a recently published op-ed in Devex](#), fighting these dual health threats will require innovation and dexterity. For example, using technology as a solution, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) supported the Benin government to execute its first mass mosquito net distribution since COVID-19 hit. For information, please contact Nikki Gamer, Nikki.Gamer@crs.org, Catholic Relief Services.

Impacts on Education

Students with Disabilities Face More Exclusion as Schools Close

As 90% of pupils and students in the world have experienced disruption to their education due to the COVID pandemic, the situation of children with disabilities has worsened—distance learning is often inaccessible to them, and they are cut off from other important services they receive at school. The annual UNESCO report, Global Education Monitor, honed in on “inclusive education,” and uncovered various kinds of exclusion.

Inclusive Education Advisor Julia McGeown, is available to discuss how COVID-19 is affecting access to school for children with disabilities, and ways that Humanity & Inclusion’s 52 projects are adjusting amid shutdowns. For more information, contact Mica Bevington, m.bevington@hi.org, Humanity & Inclusion

Alternative Methods to Education for Refugees

With the pandemic’s threat still in full swing, new, innovative, and alternative ways of education must be provided. The brick and mortar school facilities are a luxury in many parts of the world, so other methods are necessary.

Islamic Relief has piloted its new innovative “[magic school bus](#),” which provides refugees access to education. For more information, contact Christina Tobias-Nahi, cnahi@irusa.org, Islamic Relief



###

InterAction is a convener, thought leader, and voice for NGOs working to eliminate extreme poverty, strengthen human rights and citizen participation, safeguard a sustainable planet, promote peace, and ensure dignity for all people. Our Members are premier international global development, humanitarian, and sector-supporting organizations that work in almost every country and manage more than \$15 billion in programs worldwide. [InterAction.org](https://www.interaction.org)