Milken Institute School of Public Health

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY



Intersecting Disadvantages: Impact of COVID-19 on Vulnerable Adolescents Sarah Baird, George Washington University, sbaird@gwu.edu

Outline of presentation



Overview: GAGE research

Please note that the photographs of adolescents DO NOT capture GAGE research participants and consent was gained from their guardians for the photographs to be used for GAGE communications purposes.

Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence (GAGE):

A longitudinal research programme in the Global South (2015-2024)



We are following 18,000 girls and boys - the largest cohort of adolescents in the Global South (https://www.gage.odi.org)



Sample

	Ethiopia	Jordan	Bangladesh-Cox's Bazar	Bangladesh-Dhaka A random sample of adolescents aged 10–12 and 15–17 at baseline from three slums in Dhaka: Duaripara, Mohammadpur and Ershadnagar.	
Description	A random sample of adolescents aged 10–12 and 15–17 at baseline from three urban centres in Ethiopia: Adami Tulu, Debre Tabor, and Dire Dawa.	The sample includes vulnerable Jordanian, Syrian and Palestinian adolescents living in camps (Azraq, Zaatari and Gaza), host communities, or Informal Tented Settlements (ITS) in five governorates of Jordan: Amman, Mafraq, Irbid, Jerash and Zarqa. Adolescents were randomly sampled from databases of vulnerable adolescents maintained by UNHCR and UNICEF.	A random sample of Rohingya and Bangladeshi adolescents aged 10–12 and 15–17 at baseline from random sample of 32 refugee camps and 192 blocks in 6 upazillas in Cox's Bazar.		
Baseline Survey Timing	12/2019- 3/2020	10/2018-03/2019	03/2019 -10/2019	12/2017 -01/2018	
COVID-R1 Survey Timing	06/2020- 07/2020	05/2020 - 07/2020	05/2020 - 07/2020	05/2020 - 07/2020	
COVID-R2 Survey Timing	11/2020-02/2021	11/2020 - 01/2021	2/2021-04/2021	2/2021-04/2021	
Sample Size	2,384	4,101	2,241	780	



Extent of the shock





Food insecurity



'Sometimes we have to eat rice only with salt. We could sell food and buy something for us before. But [now] they give us food like we are beggar.' (17-year-old married Rohingya girl)



Social connectedness

Figure: Percentage of adolescents who interacted with friends or non-household family members in person in the last seven days by setting and gender



COVID-19 and Refugees

Bangladesh - Rohingya women in refugee camps share stories of loss and hopes of recovery © UN Women Gallery, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Education and learning: Jordan

73% of adolescent refuges enrolled in any school prior to COVID-19 (only 54% in ITS)

67% of Primary Female Caregivers of refugee adolescents are concerned the adolescent won't return to school 75% using internet or media to continue learning (Ministry of Education online service (Darsak.jo) and national TV channels 'I used to go to school, now I only study at home. They sent us a message, and told us it is now through the internet... In our tent, only my dad has a phone. We do not know how to study alone, and I do not know if they stopped giving lessons or not' (12-year-old girl living in an informal tented settlement (ITS) near Amman)

'The lessons are very difficult and the teachers don't know how to explain things clearly for us. I can't understand the material and teachers don't provide enough detailed explanations.' (13-year-old Syrian Girl from Irbid)

Education and learning: Bangladesh

47% of refugees enrolled in non-formal school and 73% of Bangladeshis enrolled in formal school prior to COVID-19

27.5% of Rohingya primary female caregivers (PFC) are concerned the adolescent won't return to schooling.
18.5% of Bangladeshi PFCs are concerned the adolescent won't return.

6% of Bangladeshis report using media to continue learning with 1 Rohingya using media 'Now there are many difficulties in education in the camp. While studying in class 1 and class 2, the children's year is over. Previously they were tested at the end of the year. Now [this won't happen] either.' (17 year old boy, Camp)



(quick detour) How do you measure violence on the phone...

- We did not feel comfortable explicitly asking about violence
- Instead took the following approaches:
 - Indirect: Asked about what was happening in terms of violence towards adolescent (girls/boys) as a result of Covid-19 in the community.
 - Proxy: Asked about increased stress in the household and how household members are coping and responding to the situation
 - Vignette: different for ever-married vs. never married

[Read the following filling in the CR's gender]: We now want you to think about [girls/boys] living in your community and the experiences they are currently having. For example, let's think about a [girl/boy] who is your age and is not married. [She/He] lives with [her/his] parents and attends school regularly. This isn't a real person – but for the purposes of these questions let's call [her/him] [Elizabeth/John] [replace with locally appropriate name].

• Gendered Constraints (girls only):

Read: In many households during the COVID lockdown, young women and adolescent girls have had to change the way they live in their own homes, due to increased presence of men in households during the day. Have you had to alter your behavior at home in any way due to the increased presence of men in the household following the COVID-19 pandemic and the social containment efforts to manage the spread of the virus (lockdown, curfew, etc). Please respond yes or no to each of the following statements, as applies to you:



Findings: Violence

53% of adolescent refugees in Jordan and 88% of Rohingya report increased stress in the household as a result of COVID-19

and **47% (15%)** report that household members are getting angry quicker or arguing more often Using vignettes given concerns around privacy, 47% of adolescent refugees in Jordan identified violence as a concern of adolescents like him/her

and **63%** of these said it had increased since onset of COVID-19

'If we hear soldiers are coming, we leave the spot instantly... We don't go out... We don't want to risk the beatings.' (14-year-old Rohingya boy)

> 'People fight a lot in the household... because they spend all the time with each other'.

> (16-year-old Palestinian girl with a visual disability)



Helping Adolescents Cope: Makani (My Space) (Jordan)

About 25% of refugee adolescents were attending Makani when COVID-19 hit. Of these:

- 40% received some support from Makani
- 23% received messaging about MoE online learning
- **33% received message about how to deal** with being stuck at home
- **32% of parents report receiving messaging** on WhatsApp

UNICEF's Makani program provided informal learning support classes combined with psychosocial support and child protection messaging through a network of community-based centers

Centers closed, but facilitators adapted quickly:

- disseminate info on virus;
 - distribute hygiene kits to most vulnerable;
- learning support via WhatsApp and
 - messaging to parents on how to support children

'[The support we are getting from Makani] is very helpful for us now. They tell us that we should eat healthy food ... And we eat everything that includes Vitamin C ... They also explained how to study through TV ... We talk through WhatsApp and Imo, too.' (12-year-old girl living in Zatari Camp)

Makani: Average Treatment Effect (NN Matching)

	Overall	Females	Syrians (Host)	Syrians (Camp)
=1 if Patient Health Questionare-8 (PHQ-8) Score >=10 (suggest symptoms of moderate to severe depression)	-0.010	-0.015	0.012	-0.007
	(0.016)	(0.022)	(0.025)	(0.027)
=1 if adolescent reports he/she has a friend that he/she can	0.038	0.073	0.088	0.023
trust	(0.025)	(0.033)**	(0.035)**	(0.057)
=1 if adolescent had no interaction with friends either in person	-0.044	-0.048	-0.051	-0.036
or online in past 7 days	(0.023)*	(0.035)	(0.032)	(0.054)
=1 if adolescent has complete/moderate increase in technology	0.024	0.020	-0.009	0.128
access	(0.026)	(0.035)	(0.036)	(0.062)**
=1 if adolescent scored within high resilient coping range (13-	0.017	0.004	-0.005	0.076
16), Brief Resilient Coping Scale	(0.019)	(0.024)	(0.028)	(0.045)*
=1 if adolescent wants to return to formal school when schools	0.022	0.019	0.067	0.009
re-open (among those enrolled in formal school at onset of COVID-19.	(0.011)*	(0.014)	(0.017)***	(0.026)

Notes: Parameter estimates statistically different than zero at 99% (***), 95% (**), and 90% (*) confidence. Each cell is th coefficient from a separate regression and provides an estimate of the difference in the outcome between Makani and nc Makani participants. Estimates are derived from matching techniques that utilize the 'teffects' command in Stata to implement nearest Niebuhr matching (using five matches per observation) to match participants to non-participants on a set of baseline variables arguably exogenous to Makani participation. These variables include the following baseline characteristics: asset decile, gender, age cohort, nationality, household size, whether the household is female headed, an if the household receives any aid. which computes robust Abadie-Imbens standard errors. Refer to Table 1 for detailed sample size information.



Married girls

Adolescent mother with her newly born child, Oromia, Ethiopia © Natalie Bertrams / GAGE 2019

Child Marriage

- Our sample includes 1,203 ever married girls (15+), and 2,420 never married girls in the same age-range; allowing us to assess the impact of COVID-19 on married girls.
- While the literature has focused on the potential of COVID-19 to increase rates of child marriage, limited evidence on impact of COVID-19 on already married girls.
 - Prior to COVID-19, married girls were more vulnerable than their non-married peers for some outcomes and in some contexts, but marriage also provided some protective benefits to adolescents.
 - During COVID-19-related lockdowns, married girls' outcomes were consistently **more negative** than those of their unmarried peers, suggesting not only that their wellbeing is more precarious overall but that informal and formal sources of support and safety nets are less responsive to married girls' needs in times of crisis.



Impact of Marital Status on Changes in Health and Economic Empowerment after COVID-19

	Bangladesh-				
	Cox's Bazaar		Ethiopia	Jordan	
	All	Rohingya	Urban	All	Syrian
Outcomes	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
=1 if self-reported health worse	0.074**	0.038	-0.028	-0.026	-0.047
	(0.034)	(0.031)	(0.038)	(0.040)	(0.043)
=1 if completely or moderately	0.062**	0.020	0.067	0.125***	0.094**
worried/anxious	(0.031)	(0.039)	(0.090)	(0.019)	(0.031)
=1 if completely or moderately	0.064**	0.042	0.114	0.097*	0.081
scared/fearful	(0.031)	(0.042)	(0.097)	(0.042)	(0.043)
= 1 if lost employment permanently or	0.111**	0.151**	-0.054	0.182***	0.170**
temporarily	(0.055)	(0.076)	(0.088)	(0.037)	(0.052)
=1 if hungry more often in past 4 weeks	0.049	0.050	0.146*	-0.031	-0.042
	(0.053)	(0.079)	(0.073)	(0.032)	(0.030)
=1 if thinks will be better off in a year	-0.053	-0.012	0.075	-0.037	-0.014
	(0.041)	(0.044)	(0.102)	(0.036)	(0.040)
=1 if increase in technology access	-0.041	-0.012	-0.136*	-0.135***	-0.121***
	(0.042)	(0.054)	(0.074)	(0.028)	(0.021)
Observations	426	169	538	678	538



Qualitative quotes

'Sometimes we have to eat rice only with salt. We could sell food and buy something for us before. But [now] they give us food like we are beggars. The potatoes were 15/16 taka before. Now the price has risen up to 32/30 taka'

- 17-year-old married girl, Rohingya camp, Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh 'I rely on other people for information, even during the pandemic... There are persons who have mobile. But Facebook does not function on their mobiles. We also do not have electric light to charge the mobile and use it.' - 17-year-old married girl, East Hararghe, Ethiopia

'I use Facebook but I use my husband's account. He doesn't allow me to download the application and have my own account. He refused, even now [lockdown] when we are at home all the time '. – 17-year old married Syrian refugee girl, Jordan



Next Steps

Planned longitudinal mixedmethods data through 2024 (1-2 more rounds in each context)

- Continue to improve measurement
- Tell stories of most vulnerable adolescents using mixed methods data.
- Assess post COVID-19 recovery, and factors that promote and hinder that recovery.

Continued engagement with UN agencies, World Bank, NGOs, and relevant government bodies to ensure that research findings inform policy and programming.

Data will all be publicly archived, and we welcome broad collaboration.



Adolescent realities during covid-19

Adolescents' experiences of covid-19 and the public health response in Jordan

Authors: Sarah Baird, Nicola Jones, Agnieszka Małachowska, Majd Masannat, Erin Origley and Mohammed Oarvouti

Introduction

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Covid-ID has rapidly derapted the lives of incluiduals serves the plots. While the direct health effects are largely concentrated among the elderly, the virus off admost certainly have multidimensional effects on young people's velbeing is both the short and long term. This factsheet is part of a prose-country series class great to share ensuring right drigs trans there is a support of all we inder a support of the state of the support of the Garden and Adolescences (Boold Externed (GAGE) programmely original material in East Africa, the Videle Cast and head Asias. This factor is no regard requiring of adolescence for transmission of additional second of the admini-and month is finding an information of a second GASE counsel for Administrative relationship and and regards to a finding and adversed to adverse the adverse of th repriser and securit and reproductive health, procreated all well-being economic empowerment voice and againty and pool y insearby

Sample and context

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Covid-19 phone survey (round 1)



Exploring the impacts of covid-19 on adolescents in Jordan's refugee camps and host communities

Authors: Agniesiska Malachowska, Taatveed Al Abback, Wafa Al Amaireh, Kifah Banioweda, Sarah Al Heiwidi and Nicola Jones?

The government of Jordan after detexting the first covid-fill sames in early March, acted decisively to stop the sprea aduction of Defence Under No. 2 started a nationwide lookdown which confined all residents to their homes. After an supermarkets and charmasies in their neighbourhoods, but most basiveness and gives



'I have nothing to feed my family ...'

COVID-19 SERIES



Sarah Baird¹, Jennifer Seager¹, Shwetlena Sabarwal¹, Silvia Guglieimi⁴, and Maheer Sultan¹

This rate manines the effects of CDND 19 and subsequent economic and educational disruptions on addescent well-being in Europadesh. The analysis is based on data from 2,005 in-actual adolescents aged 10-18 collected per-COVID-15 (February-March 2025) through a field survey for an ongoing impact evaluation, and a follow-up virtual survey ordertaken sarly in the pandemic (May-June 2020). Findings show large household-level economic impacts associated with increased food insecurity, analysis, and mental health bases among adolescents. In addition, school closures have decreased addeccents' access to learning, increased time spent on household chores, and effected Interruption again attains, the regists are particularly large for givs and for adolescents from more valuesable heareholds. We produce sensities consider patients that fails the school return, staget toggists and the more valuesable. They also need country watched based programming to address the likely is group by taking and memory based needs to the school shared programming to address the likely is group by taking and the more valuesable. on young people

BACKGROUND

COVID-10 has rapidly disrupted lives across the globe. Bell resulting in multidimensional effects on young people's well being in the short, and long-run. This is particularly the case for immediate direct effects on learning outcomes; they may also and broader weltare (Rogers and Sabarwal 2003). In Bargladesh where higher secondary achool directed rates for airls are at least partially driven by social and cultural constraints-including early manfane, household responsibilities, lack of access to an even date Information about sexual and reproductive health, mental health issues, and school-based wolence that includes sexual hard somert panelemic threatens to undermine many of the recent pairs in prifs docation and to stant further progress (see Box 1 for more o COMD-19 in Rangladesh) While the government has alred video classes for grades 5 to 20



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on its Shangsad TV channel, uptake has been low (Asadullah 2020; Blowas et al. 2020). Consequently, the education of school-goes







Adolescent experiences following covid-19

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Introduction

Social Isolation and Disrupted Privacy

Impacts of COVID-19 on Adolescent Girls in Humanitarian Contexts

Sarah Baird, Sarah Alheiwidi, Rebecca Dutton, Khadija Mitu, Erin Oakley, Tassew Woldchanna, and Nicola Jones

Abstract: The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown has sharpered the everyday lives of young people, limiting peer interactions and discussing priusy, with preential for long term demonstrat imputs. This study uses upid simul quantitative and qualitative surveys undertaken from April to July 2020 with over 4,800 adolescents affected by displacement in Banglaitch and Jordan to emiors adolescent girl/ experiences of social solution and lack of privace. Our mond-methods findings suggest that the pundersic and policy response has caused sharp metrictions on petvacy and submartially limited interactions with peers, with larger impaces on gelvacy and submartially limited interactions with digital exclusion exacerbates these gender differences. Given that privacy and peer interactions are parameter chaing addences, e.g., gender, and disability responsive processming is extended to resourch and well-being.

Keywoods digital exclusion, gender, pandemie, peen, privacy, refugeer

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Introduction

Bazar: A mixed-methods study

The recovered the CDATE 15 pandwate, including its health effects and the recoverie and social writigation offsets in Taria its parts), are

COVID-19 and government responses to contain it will have multidimensional effects on adolescent girls' wellbeing in the short and long term. One area of concern is the simultaneous increase in lack of privacy and heightened social isolation resulting from the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns, and their likely reinforcement of pervasive inequitable gendered norms. Emerging research suggests that the physical distancing measures implemented to prevent the spread of the virus can lead to chronic loneliness and boredom with both physical and psychosocial health impacts if the isolation continues for an extended period as Debanjan Banerjee and Mayank Rai (2020) note. In the context of the lockdown in Wahan, China, Banerjee and Rai (2020) argue that isolation from the community arising

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Exploring the impacts of COVID-19 on Rohingva adolescents in Cox's

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ABSTRACT.



Covid-19 risk pathways for adolescent girls in low- and middle-income countries

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About GAGE:

- Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence (GAGE) is a nine-year (2015-2024) mixedmethods longitudinal research programme focused on what works to support adolescent girls' and boys' capabilities in the second decade of life and beyond.
- We are following the lives of 20,000 adolescents in six focal countries in Africa, Asia and the Middle East.



