

Protecting Children from Violence Factsheet

Impact of COVID19 on Safety of Women & Children in Somalia

September 2020

BACKGROUND

COVID-19 threatens to **exacerbate the risk of violence against children**, particularly for those who are already at greater risk of violence – including girls, poor children, children with disabilities, and those in fragile contexts. School closures and lockdowns have **interrupted children’s access to protective systems** and at the same time, the consequences of the pandemic have dramatically increased stressors on families. This is resulting in an increase in the risk of violence at home, and also in negative coping strategies such as child labour and child marriage.

Violence against children was already at pandemic proportions before the outbreak of COVID-19; **globally, 1 billion children aged between 2-17 years old** experienced physical, sexual or emotional violence or neglect each year.¹ Child protection, however, is a chronically underfunded sector, despite the well-known economic impacts of violence against children.²

METHODOLOGY



To better understand the impact of COVID19 on child protection, livelihoods, health, nutrition, education, water and sanitation, gender and Gender Based Violence (GBV), Save the Children Somalia conducted a **comprehensive cross-sectional study**.

The general objective of the research is to better understand the impact of COVID19 and quantify the impact of the outbreak on each sector. Globally, Save the Children also identified a need to consult with children and caregivers worldwide, to generate evidence on the impact that COVID-19 has had on children and to **hear children’s messages for leaders** about their response to the pandemic.

Study was conducted using data from

1569 Adults

456 Children

aged 12 to 17 years

235 boys

221 girls

17 Regions in Somalia

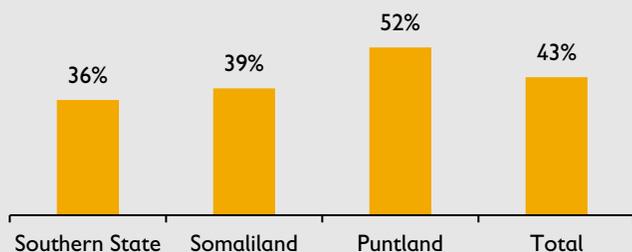
41 Districts

FINDINGS

Increase in Intimate Partner Violence

About **43% of the respondents mentioned they are worried** that COVID19 outbreak may lead to **increased incidence of intimate partner violence**. About half of respondents in IDPs worried about increased IPV incidence, against 44%, and 36%, of Rural and Urban respondents respectively. Seemingly, both male and female respondents equally agreed that COVID19 might increase the incidence of IPV.

Concerns About Increased Intimate Partners Violence During Covid19 By Area



Female Genital Mutilation

17% (18% of females and 15% of male) of the respondents indicated they know a girl circumcised since the beginning of the outbreak of COVID19. It is indicated that on average 2 girls, as many as 15 girls in Puntland were circumcised. Moreover, about one-third (31% females and 29% of males) of the respondents indicated that COVID19 outbreak can limit access to formal justice system, further deteriorating the child rights violation in the community.

Negative Coping Strategies

20% of respondents indicated that families are sending children to work for livelihoods

10% of the respondents send their children to work to reduce the exposure of the adults

70% of respondents mentioned they are sending boys to work

30% of respondents mentioned they are sending girls to work

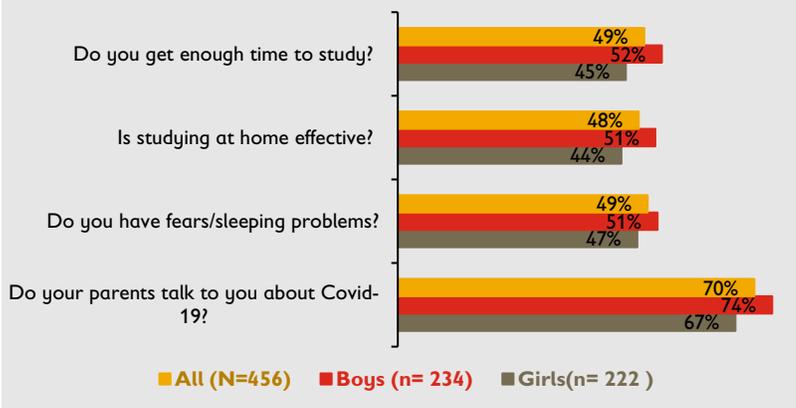
¹ World Health Organization, (2020). Violence Against Children Factsheet <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-children>

² ChildFund Alliance, Save the Children, SOS Children’s Villages International, World Vision International, and Development Initiatives, (2017). Counting Pennies: A review of official development assistance to end violence against children <https://childfundalliance.org/resources-old/publications/counting-pennies>

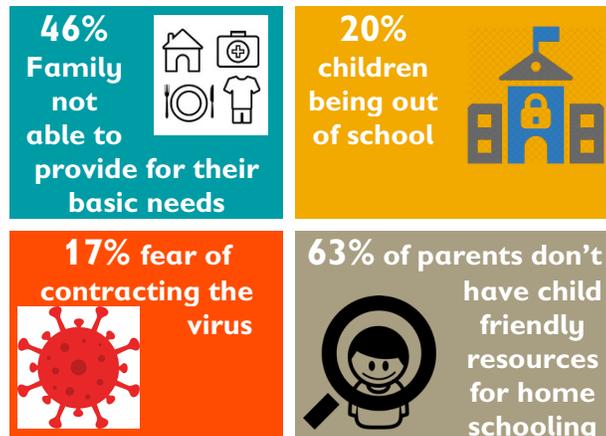
Boys and Girls Experience During COVID19

About half (55% of girls and 48% of boys) responded that they **don't have enough time to study at home** since they are occupied with other activities supporting their parents. **Girls are less likely to have enough time to do their studies** at home. Forty-eight percent of the children believe studying at home is effective, 51% of the boys indicated that home-based school is effective against 44% girls. About half experience fears or are faced with sleeping problems due to COVID19 challenges.

Boys And Girls Experience During COVID19

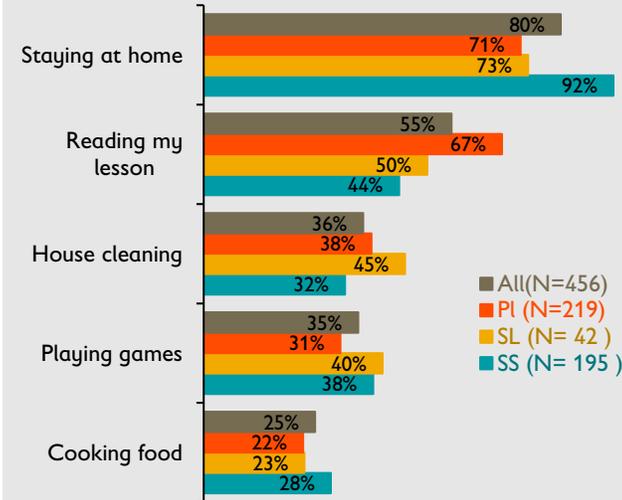


Main Risks Associated with COVID19 on Children



Staying at home during COVID19 is stressful for children, many of children mentioned what they are doing whilst staying at home. The vast majority, **80% are staying idle at home without doing anything**, about half read their lessons, about 35% help their parents in cleaning up the house and doing household chores, only one-third play games with their siblings and one-quarter engaged in cooking food for the family.

To 5-things Children Are Doing During Covid19 Lockdown At Home



GLOBAL FINDINGS ON VIOLENCE

One third (32%) of households had a child, parent or caregiver who said that there had been **physical or emotional violence** in their home since the start of the pandemic.

19% of households in which violence was reported to have taken place by children **had lost all or most of their household income** due to COVID-19 compared to 5% when there had been no loss of income.

Violence in the household reported by children **was double the rate when schools were closed (17%)** compared with when schools were open and the child was attending in person (8%).

Almost **two thirds of girls (63%) reported an increase in household chores** and more than half (52%) reported an increase in time spent caring for siblings and others since the pandemic began. Girls reported that this stopped them from being able to study, at twice the rate of boys.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS



Prioritise and support **well-resourced and inclusive, gender-sensitive child protection** and gender-based violence and mental health services, and designate the social service workforce as essential workers, with humanitarian access to reach girls and boys who need protection support.



Placing **child protection and social welfare provisions as central components** within national and local level infectious disease emergency preparedness plans.



Use data to ensure that COVID-19 **response and recovery efforts are inclusive** and do not exacerbate the particular vulnerability of children during this pandemic and that quality services reach those who are most vulnerable, including people with disabilities.



Scale-up **urgently needed flexible funding for child protection** programming, mental health and psychosocial support and gender-based violence prevention, mitigation and response.