

Youth Can Kick COVID-19
out of East Africa

SURVEY REPORT

East Africa Study on Covid-19
Disruptions to Youth life

May, 2020



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Executive Summary

Coronavirus (Covid-19) global pandemic has affected us all in ways we had never imagined. We now all know the Covid-19 pandemic is not only a health crisis, it is undeniably a “must not ignore” disruption to socio-economic human life – youth haven’t been spared either.

This report represents voices and experiences of East African youth, the disruptions by the Covid-19 pandemic to their life so far, their thoughts on how they could make a contribution toward preparedness and response to Covid-19, and their wish list for support now and after the pandemic.

The study was conducted by means of an electronic survey that ran for a total of 20 days from Sunday 29th March until Tuesday 7th April 2020. The results of the survey will be widely shared with government policymakers and development partners to inform youth engagement approaches in the days to come.

In November 2007, while addressing the Commonwealth Peoples’ Forum, Ugandan president Yoweri Museveni authoritatively asserted “the wealth of nations is in its people, not stones”.

Africa is the world’s youngest continent. The African Union Youth Division estimates that young people below the age of 35 form at least 65% of Africa’s entire population. This trajectory presents both opportunities and challenges as far as the sustainable peace and development agenda are concerned.

The African Union Youth Division estimates that young people below the age of 35 form at least 65% of Africa’s entire population.

Current estimates indicate that half of Africa’s young people are at the risk of not securing decent gainful employment or having access to means of production and the associated economic opportunities. This reality is mirrored in the East African Community (EAC)’s population profile - clearly suggesting that youth form the majority of people affected by the Covid-19 pandemic the region is faced with at present.

A popular adage often attributed to Benjamin Franklin (regarded as the father of time management) goes, "failing to plan is planning to fail". The Covid-19 pandemic has once again presented an opportunity for us all - policy makers, development partners and a range of state and non-state leadership and development stakeholders to reflect on our approaches, plans and investments with one sole purpose - putting youth at the centre.

"Failing to plan is planning to fail"

The one million-dollar questions we are faced with right now are: First, are our current plans and investments adequately youth centred? Second, in the wake of the Covid19 pandemic, what adjustments are required for us to make our work not just youth responsive, but also genuinely ensure youth-inclusive Covid-19 response plans and mechanisms going ahead? Third, what support are we prepared to make available for our already socially and economically disadvantaged youth in order to mitigate the potentially devastating effects of Covid-19 on East Africa's young people?

Finally, this report doesn't claim to offer answers to all the stinger questions above, rather, it makes a modest attempt at a journey toward kick-starting the much needed debate aimed at finding the answers.

One important answer the survey puts clear is: East African youth are ready to dare – they can and want to play an active role in the preparedness and response to Covid-19 in East Africa. Notable too, rather than an academic or logical reasoning outcome, the report offers practical policy oriented solution options for various stakeholders interested in youth centred post Covid-19 interventions.

"The study findings offer both challenges and opportunities and makes a call to action"

The study findings therefore offer both challenges and opportunities and makes a call to action - for us all who seek to advance the cause of youth to make genuine adjustments in our plans and investments with the aim of ensuring East African youth to bounce back even stronger post Covid-19 pandemic.

Acknowledgements

This survey was one in a series of joint initiatives of the YouLead Secretariat and the YouLead Consortium – a collective of State and Non-state youth led and youth serving partner organisations across all the six (6) East African Community (EAC) Member States. The survey has been particularly made possible through a timely partnership between the Training Centre for Development Cooperation (MSTCDC)'s Leadership and Governance Academy (where the YouLead Secretariat is jointly hosted), Restless Development (Uganda), Westminster Foundation for Democracy (Uganda) and Faraja Africa Foundation.

The Restless Development (Uganda) Country Team for unreservedly committing their time and skills all through the process of co-designing, disseminating and analysing the survey responses together with the MSTCDC's Leadership and Governance Academy.

...a regional initiative

Westminster Foundation for Democracy (Uganda) team who dedicated time, expertise, and resources to support the survey process all through and made the collection of videos of young people's experiences of the COVID pandemic possible. The Consortium delegated the role of collecting and editing videos) for the survey to the ACDEG Chapter coordinated by Faraja Africa Foundation. Thanks to the Faraja Africa Foundation team for their dedication and ensuring the video segment of the survey was successfully executed.

A shout out to the dedicated YouLead Secretariat Regional Coordination Team whose commitment and diligence ensured wide dissemination of the survey across East Africa and made the regional experience sharing virtual conversations possible, allowing for collection of country level real time observations and experiences of youth. Under the stewardship of the Head of Leadership and Governance Academy, MSTCDC has offered overall leadership, regional coordination linkages, technical guidance, research design and authorship.

Finally, our deepest gratitude goes to the ever loving and supportive YouLead alumni and friends of YouLead across East Africa and beyond, without whose overwhelming trust exhibited through their willingness to share their experiences, the study would have breathed no life.

Recommendations to Key Stakeholders

Governments | Development Partners | Non-State Actors

1

Governments and development partners should do more to ensure that they are addressing the comprehensive impact of COVID-19 on their young citizen's lives. In particular, they should consider designing policies to address the economic and educational impact of this pandemic.

2

Governments should offer concrete roles for young people in the response effort and create a platform where young people can share the innovative ideas they have on how to prevent the virus's spread and respond to the new challenges it creates.

3

State and non-state actors should meaningfully recognise the role that young people are willing to play in sensitising and supporting their communities. With the appropriate protective equipment and clear safety guidance, young people are - in their own words - ready, willing, and uniquely able to reach communities that organisations would otherwise miss.

4

Additionally, youth-serving non-governmental organisations should work together with young people to hold governments accountable: tracking grassroots delivery and implementation of the commitments - i.e., tax relief, food distribution, etc. - that government leaders have made verbally. How have these measures been implemented? Has the distribution of food and protective equipment reached their communities? Has it reached the right people in their communities?

5

In the absence of specific roles from government and organisations, there is still a lot that young people can do to support their communities, particularly in sensitising them. However, in cases where communities are well connected, young people should instead support their communities - not with more information - but with where they can find the right information.

Key Messages

Coronavirus (Covid-19) global pandemic has affected us all in ways we had never imagined. We now know the Covid-19 pandemic is not only a health crisis, it is undeniably a “must not ignore” disruption to socio-economic human life – youth haven’t been spared either. Several young people reported that their lives have been significantly impacted in several areas.

...Covid-19 is not only a health crisis, it is a socio-economic crisis too.

While only 38.4% mentioned that their access to healthcare has been impacted, majority young people reported higher impacts in their income (59%) and education (57%). Impact was further reported in every other area we asked about.

Given the inevitable aggressive coronavirus containment measures by majority governments in the East African Community region, it is not a surprise that 61% of young people mentioned that their transportation access and mobility had been significantly impacted - resulting in travel cancellations.

...only 7% had tested for COVID-19

Only 51.7% of young people were able to mention a measure that the government had put in place to manage the economic repercussions of the aggressive measures in containing the virus. Of those who mentioned a measure they had heard their governments take, tax/loan forgiveness or payment rescheduling (29.4%) and the distribution of food and basic necessities (27.7%) were the most known.

At the time of the survey, majority young (94%) had heard a “great deal” or “a fair amount” about COVID-19. However, few (7%) had tested themselves for COVID-19 - whether this has changed is an additional research question.

While there were several reasons for this, information was the most common barrier they mentioned - with 49% stating that they did not know where to access testing services from (regardless of whether they suspect they might have COVID-19 or not).

59%

impact on youth income

Instead of giving more information to young people, we could instead support them to determine which information is the right information - what’s credible and accurate.

When asked what they were doing to protect themselves, a slight majority (51%) reported that staying at home was the most important measure that they were taking to avoid getting the virus. However, 34% of our respondents were not working from home at the time of the survey.

It would be interesting to further investigate those not working from home, to establish whether it is because they are essential workers or because they anyway do not have work to do (unemployed, in school, etc).

In addition, several East African government measures mandate avoidance of non-essential movements. However, beyond staying home, more could be done to let young people know about and encourage use of the other ways and personal protection measures by which they can protect themselves if they are unable to stay home, even if ongoing government measures do not require them.

Current debate among policy makers, development partners and a multiplicity of actors concerning the pandemic and its impact on young people has so far raised more questions than answers. Although this report doesn't offer the thought after answers, it challenges us to make modest steps into a genuine attempt at a journey toward kick-starting the much needed journey of collectively finding the answers.

...Current debate... concerning the pandemic and its impact on young people has so far raised more questions than answers.

East African youth are ready to dare – they are aware of their position and responsibility in society, can and want to play an active role in the preparedness and response to Covid-19 in East Africa - a huge human resource potential capable of kicking Covid-19 out of East Africa and driving East Africa's post-Covid-19 transformation agenda if adequately skilled, mobilised and capacitated

**...youth are ready to dare.
...kicking Covid-19 out of
East Africa.**

Notably, when asked what roles their respective governments have offered young people to participate in responding to COVID-19, only a few were able to point to a role they have been offered - apart from complying with government measures. Some mentioned that their government had called on them to take up volunteer opportunities - but these were not clear; and to come up with innovations - but without knowing where and how to start and where to share such innovation ideas or initiatives.

The study findings offer both challenges and opportunities and makes a call to action - for us all who seek to advance the cause of youth to make genuine adjustments in our plans and investments with the aim of supporting and ensuring that East African youth bounce back even stronger post Covid-19 pandemic.

With current population estimates suggesting that young people below the age of 35 form at least 65% of Africa's entire population, Africa is the world's youngest continent. This reality is mirrored in East African Community (EAC)'s population profile. Therefore, the survey results clearly suggest that youth form East Africa's majority of people affected by the Covid-19 pandemic the region is faced with at present.

This trajectory presents both opportunities and challenges as far as East Africa's sustainable peace and development agenda are concerned. Before and at the time of the pandemic, existing estimates indicated that half of Africa's young people were already at the risk of not securing decent gainful employment or having access to means of production and the associated economic opportunities. The indications from the study suggest that the Covid-19 pandemic has potentially worsened the pre-existing situation for youth.

However, the Covid-19 pandemic presents an opportunity for us all - policy makers, development partners and a range of state and non-state governance, leadership and development stakeholders to reflect on our approaches, plans and investments with one sole purpose - putting youth at the centre. East Africa's rich, diverse and increasingly highly sophisticated youth population present potential for a major resource pool capacity.

...the COVID-19 pandemic presents an opportunity for us all to reflect on our work with a purpose of putting youth at the centre

In the days ahead, beyond initiatives for protection of youth against Covid-19 infections related risks, how States, development partners and Non-state actors respond to the youth bulge and their steps taken toward investing in youth entrepreneurship innovation should be observed as an indicator for success on the human development index.

1 Background

At the time of the study, in the hit of the Covid-19 pandemic, the World Health Organisation (WHO) had repeatedly called on Africa's leaders to prepare for the worst while hoping for the best. The WHO strongly advised that Covid-19 could potentially burst into a full humanitarian crisis on the African continent. Contrary to the previously predominant perception that Covid-19 was going to affect older people, especially those with pre-existing conditions, and that people of young age might be immune to it, mid-time emerging infection and death trends for example in USA, Italy and elsewhere suggested a different picture.

Two first recovery cases in Kenya were a female and male youth.

By the time of the study, reports already indicated for example that in New York City alone up to 50% of those hospitalised, were young people between the ages 18-44. In East Africa, Kenya and Uganda had just registered cases among youth and children. Two first recovery cases in Kenya were a female and male youth, the youngest case in Uganda was an 8 months baby.

Worrying still, in Uganda, health workers were dealing with probably the world's most mysterious case - a child diagnosed had tested positive for Covid-19 at birth, while the mother and father tested negative for the virus.

Apart from skyrocketing infection and death rates, and amidst declaration of tight lockdown rules in Rwanda, Uganda and Kenya, aware that young people form East Africa's population majority,

we believed were several ways in which the Covid-19 is and would continue to disrupt young peoples' lives, and possibly on a large scale. This in our view would most likely include, but not be limited to access to jobs, livelihoods and other economic opportunities, transport in and around cities, disruptions to the right to assemble, organise and effectively participate in social, economic and regular life.

We were also interested in finding out if, how and whether young people felt sufficiently protected against coronavirus, and if they feel they could play a role in preventing and responding to the pandemic, and in their view, what role they saw themselves play given need or if called upon to play a role.

The Survey sought to gather views on how youth across East Africa are coping with dynamics associated to Covid-19 and how they saw themselves playing a role in preventing and responding to the crisis. The study was conducted by means of an electronic survey over 20 days - 29th March until 7th April 2020.

The study report offers insights into these and more factors from an East African youth perspective. The report is to be widely shared with national and regional government policymakers and development partners to inform their youth engagement approaches in the days to come.

2 Study Design

The study was designed to take the shape of and allow both qualitative and quantitative inquiry and analysis. The main means and tools of execution were an electronic empirical survey administered in three ways: 1) an electronic survey 2) A series of regional virtual conversations with youth leaders, and 3) experience based videos self-recorded videos by youth on a voluntary basis.

The planned final dissemination and validation webinar with policy makers and youth, and follow up campaign, dissemination and sharing of the report and videos with policy makers and other first responders are an integral part of the purposefully planned journey from start.

An Electronic Empirical Survey

First, a reasonably detailed but precise and internet friendly empirical questionnaire was designed. Questions were selected on basis of relevance to the salient factors assumed to most likely form inevitable ways in which youth might get vital disruptions by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The survey was then widely circulated through the social media platforms, general mailing lists and individually targeted respondents among the constituencies of YouLead and those of the study partners.

The electronic distribution was done through the YouLead mailing lists to at least 2000 contacts of young people already existing in our network of youth leaders across the 6 EAC countries. The survey was allowed to run for at least 20 working days before responses were retrieved and analysed.

National and Regional level virtual conversations

A series of country level (country by country) conversations were held with YouLead alumni and selected contact persons in each country. The main medium of exchange was pre-existing closed WhatsApp. These WhatsApp groups are voluntarily formed and moderated by YouLead alumni, members are exclusively YouLead alumni - the YouLead Action Network and they exist in each of the six (6) EAC Partner States.

These conversations were in each case prompted by YouLead Regional Coordination team, who by choice stayed away from any form of control, allowing the conversations to be led by members themselves.

In each country level conversation, guiding questions were offered for purposes of providing a relevant frame for the conversation that eventually leads to each group highlighting key challenges faced by youth in the country, and providing recommendations for consideration. These conversations were conducted throughout the months of March and April 2020.

An Electronic Empirical Survey

National and Regional level virtual conversations

Regional webinar with youth leaders and young practitioners

Dubbed “Digital Regional Conversation on Youth Best Practices on Covid-19”, this regional webinar marked the climax of the series of consultations and conversations in the bid to learn insights on how Covid-19 is impacting youth lives and how they are coping, and the support required.

The East African Community wide conversation took place on Wednesday 15th April 2020 at 11 am EAT and was hosted virtually on zoom, with more than 60 young leaders from all across the East African Community. This zoom mediated conversation sought to gather more views on how youth across the East Africa n region are coping with the impacts of Covid-19 and the lockdown period. The conversation was moderated by the YouLead Secretariat team and involved a panel of invited young professionals from across the region.

Random, experience based voluntary video recording

These were solicited from willing young people, especially YouLead alumni, Restless Development Young Researchers Network, and other youth within our network of partners who voluntarily recorded 30 second to 1 minute videos using their mobile devices and directly shared them with us.

Youth sending in videos were offered an opportunity to agree with consent declaration that their shared videos could be used for purposes of the survey and can be widely disseminated to a wider audience. The collected videos were then subjected to required modifications and conversions to compatible formats and edited only for purposes of branding.

The modified videos were uploaded to a central online source, from where they are being disseminated through our various social media and other electronic platforms.

The videos were to the largest extent collected during the same period as the electronic survey was running, and for the same time length – with some collected past survey deadlines. Prior to launching of the video collection exercise, general guidelines were issued to the respective respondents.

A guidance session was held over zoom with all video volunteers prior to video recording. Our media and communication team offered support all through the exercise to assist youth who wanted to share a video but were not fully familiar with use of digital tools, also to ensure some degree of uniformity in collected videos.

Note on intention of videos

The video exercise is not meant to collect intellectual argument or share knowledge on Covid19, it is specifically for willing respondents to share their own personal experiences with Covid19 - how they are practically affected and how they are coping up or dealing with/adjusting their lifestyles.

Video collection design was tailored to answer one precise open ended question: "What's keeping you up at night?/What's been the biggest impact on your life because of COVID?".

Regional webinar with youth leaders and young practitioners

Random, experience based voluntary video recording

Final validation and dissemination webinar

A final webinar was pre-planned to take place at the end of the survey. The webinar is to be organised and hosted on Zoom, aimed to disseminate and validate the survey results and solicit any further views and inputs from the youth and other relevant stakeholders all around East Africa.

The webinar is to bring together national and regional government policy makers, development partners and other youth led and youth serving actors and mobilisation for the webinar will give priority to youth who offered responses to the survey and those who shared videos. A sample of the collected videos will be widely disseminated and played prior to and during the webinar.

Dissemination and follow up campaign, sharing with policy makers and other first responders

This phase will be based on or informed by the outcomes of the survey. We shall aim at widely sharing the report with a range of stakeholders through bilateral and collective follow up arrangements aimed at exploring partnership opportunities.

This phase is meant for Individuals and organisations who express interest or are perceived to be relevant for taking forward the results and recommendations of this report and work together to find and take forward innovative interventions aimed at supporting East African young people to bounce back stronger after the Covid-19 pandemic.

This phase hence opens for partnerships and is therefore an open call for partners among government, development partners and civil society who seek ways of engaging with youth and are currently seeking insights into investment priorities related to youth work.

Study Limitations

Some of the key data limitations to this approach were but are not limited to the fact that the average respondent is a Ugandan male below 25 in formal employment or with his own business on lockdown in his home country. We did not hear enough from unemployed or informal sector employed youth.

The response data is fairly balanced for gender, but might need to be more mindful of means and ways to obtain increased gender balance in follow-ups/future data collection, potentially with a focus or interest in how the Covid-19 pandemic is impacting young women specifically? Response data is not well-balanced nationally - findings are likely to be more representative of Uganda's experience than other countries in East Africa.

Predominantly from young people 25 or below - less representative of older young people. While from a range of living backgrounds, there are voices that are underrepresented/missing: we do not see clear segregated response voices of those not in education or not in employment, those in informal employment, refugees/migrants, and those in education (including skill-building). Unfortunately, these are the voices that are most often missing from the conversation. Rural youth with little or no access to internet might have been left out, since the survey was electronically distributed.

Final validation and dissemination webinar

Dissemination and follow up campaign

Study Limitations

Ethical considerations

In the error of rising sensitivity surrounding personal data privacy concerns, electronic surveys require assurances of maximum possible anonymity.

Given that the survey was administered with intention of possible follow up with some of the issues respondents would raise, it was necessary for us to collect contact information of respondents where desirable.

This ethical concern was managed by offering optional sharing of personal contacts for only participants who wished to stay engaged with us after the survey.

For self recorded videos collected, the call for videos included an open consent statement each participant was required to read and agree to prior to sending us a video.

The consent statement made it clear that it was purely voluntary to record and share a video, and that participants who submit videos are consenting and acknowledging that we and our partners may use their pictures, videos and other content produced during this campaign for purposes of any part or whole work related to this survey.

THE RESULTS

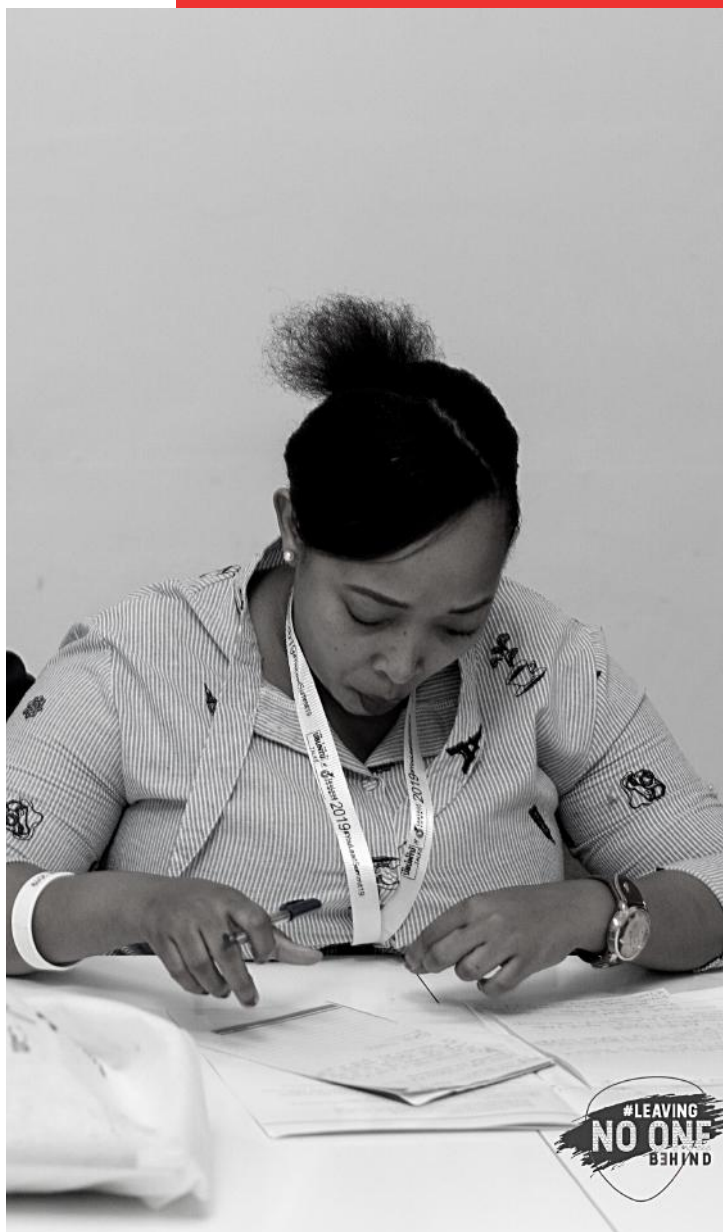
WHAT WE LEARN FROM THE STUDY

3.1. Introduction

This section presents a modest picture of what we have learned from the study. It comprises a full detail of the voices, experiences, observations, recommendations and calls to action by youth - what youth have had to say on the basis of the questions put forward to them through the study. The results are presented in subsections built around the three levels of survey methodologies deployed: 1) results from the electronic survey (presented in both qualitative and quantitative forms to the extent possible).

The original questionnaire and questions has been attached as an appendix at the end of the report. 2) results from the national and regional conversations, 3) results from the experience based self recorded videos. In an attempt to remain as simple, precise and practical as possible, results in each subsection (from each submethod) are presented in the form of who we talked to, what we asked them, and what they said.

The obtained answers are complimented with researcher observatory notes aimed at interpreting and explaining the results as and when possible.



The results section is then followed by a brief discussion on the results, which ends with putting forward some useful conclusions, recommendations to national and regional government policy makers, development partners and a myriad of non-state actors.

It then highlights the potential way forward focused on how partners could make use of the report to either initiate new interventions or reconsider adjustments to existing youth focused plans, investments and interventions in order to be and remain relevant to the current reality and support youth causes.

3.2. Results from the electronic empirical survey

A reasonably detailed but precise and internet friendly empirical questionnaire was designed. Questions were selected on basis of relevance to the salient factors assumed to most likely form inevitable ways in which youth might get vital disruptions by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The survey was then widely circulated through the social media platforms, general mailing lists and individually targeted respondents among the constituencies of YouLead and those of the study partners.

The electronic distribution was done through the YouLead mailing lists to at least 2000 contacts of young people already existing in our network of youth leaders across the 6 EAC countries. The survey was allowed to run for at least 20 working days before responses were retrieved and analysed. The questionnaire with original questions is attached at the end of the report as an appendix.

What were our data collection methods?



Online Google Forms **survey**, shared through social networks - of partners and young researchers



Self-filmed **videos** from young people, responding to: "How has COVID-19 impacted you, and how are you coping?"

What were our data collection methods?



Regional webinar with youth leaders and young practitioners



National and Regional level virtual conversations across the East African Community

Responding to the question

What does the current situation in your country mean to you as a young person and to the economy at large?

Who did we hear from?

We heard from **447** young people across East Africa

Uganda (64.2%), Burundi (1.3%), Kenya (18.3%), Rwanda (6.0%), South Sudan (1.6%), Tanzania (7.8%), Others (0.8%)

We heard from slightly more men - 57%.

2/3 were from the youngest age group (18-25).

While they came from a range of livelihood backgrounds, many had a specific source of income. (54% either had a business or were formally employed.)

What did we learn?

We looked at 5 areas of young people's experience with COVID-19



Information

What do they know about COVID-19?



Protection

How are they keeping themselves safe?



Disruption

How have containment measures impacted young people's lives?



Response

What have they seen their government and their peers do to respond?



Involvement

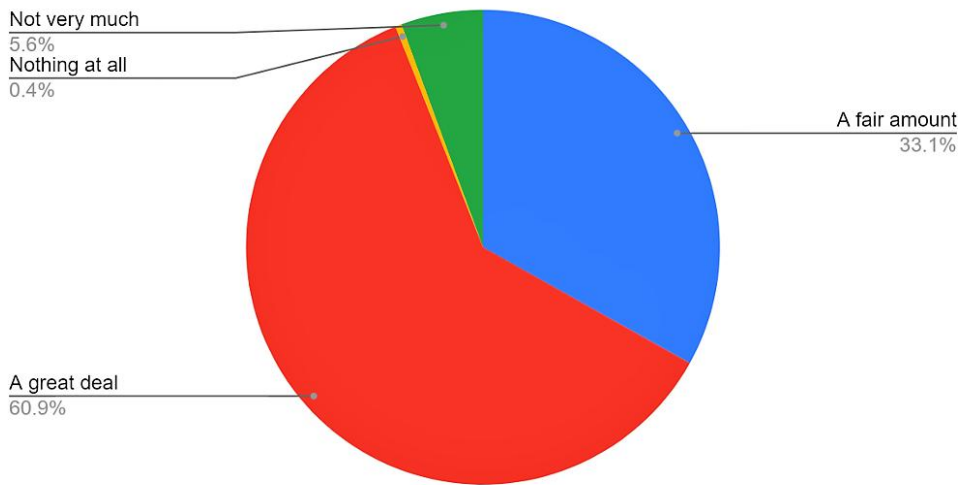
How involved would they like to be in any response efforts?



Information

94% reported that they have heard a "great deal" or "a fair amount" about COVID-19.

However, few (**7%**) have tested themselves for COVID-19. While there were several reasons for this, information was the most common barrier they mentioned - with **49%** stating that they did not know where to go for testing services.



What have young people heard?

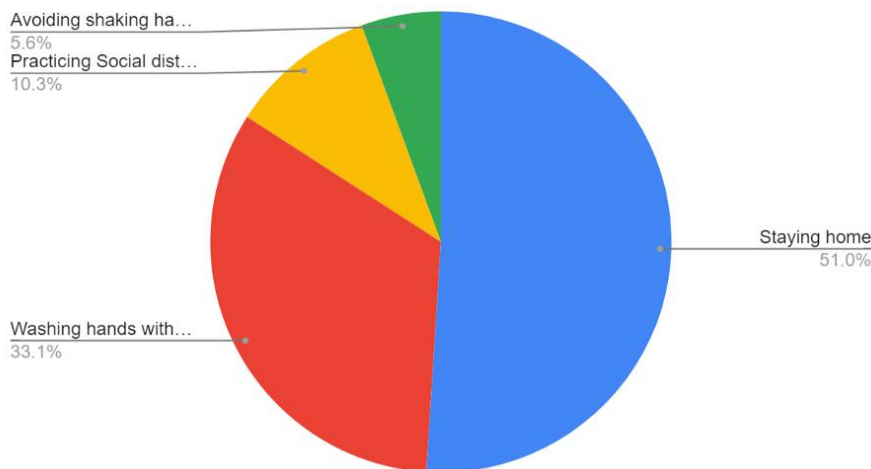
Not surprisingly, almost all (94%) have heard 'a great deal' or a fair amount' about COVID



Protection

When asked what they are doing to protect themselves, a slight majority (51%) reported that staying at home was the **most important** measure that they were taking to avoid getting the virus.

However, 34% of our respondents were not working from home at the time of the survey.



Youth protection against Covid-19

A slight majority (51%) reported that staying home was the most important measure they were taking to avoid getting the virus



Protection

Several government measures mandate that their populations should avoid all non-essential movements. However, perhaps more could be done to encourage young people to stay home, even if government measures do not mandate it - and to let young people know about the other ways they can protect themselves if they are unable to.



Protection

When asked what they are doing to protect themselves, a slight majority (**51%**) reported that staying at home was the **most important** measure that they were taking to avoid getting the virus.

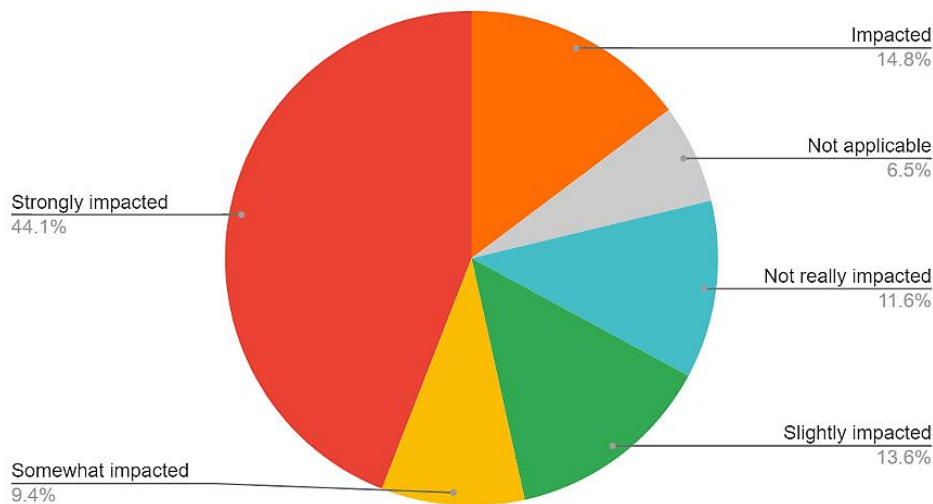
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However, **34%** of our respondents were not working from home at the time of the survey.



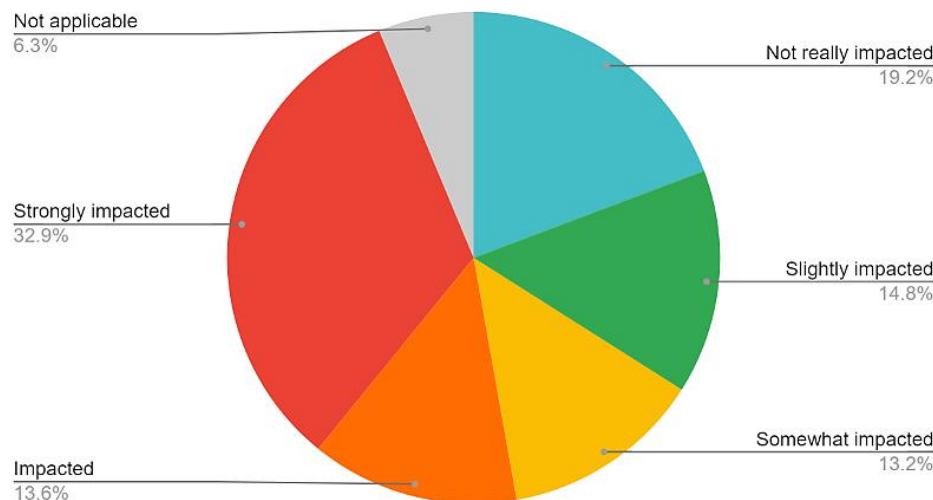
Disruption

Several young people reported that their lives have been significantly impacted or impacted in several areas of their lives. However, while only **38.4%** mentioned that their access to healthcare has been impacted, young people reported higher impacts in every other area we asked about, especially income (**59%**) and education (**57%**).



Impact of COVID-19 on income of youth

Over half (59%) of young people reported that their incomes have been "strongly impacted" or "impacted"



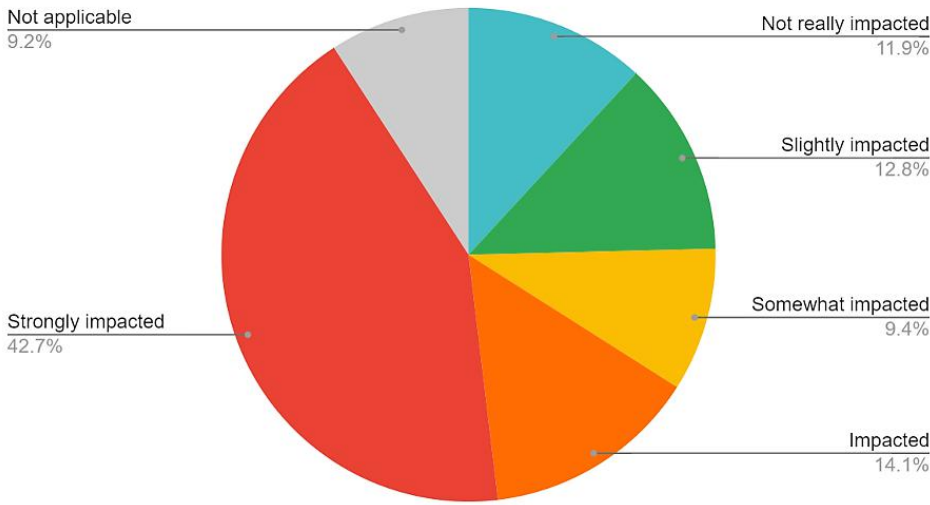
Impact of COVID-19 on family & social life

Just under half (47%) of young people reported that their family and social life had been "strongly impacted" or "impacted"

OBSERVATORY NOTE

Follow up research is required for establishing exactly where the Covid-19 pandemic has most impacted young people. This follow up research will adequately inform appropriate areas and means of support to youth.

The reported high impact of Covid-19 on family and social life of youth is a clear indicator of what can be expected to come in form of mental health related challenges. Support may be required along these lines in the days ahead.



Impact of COVID-19 on youth education

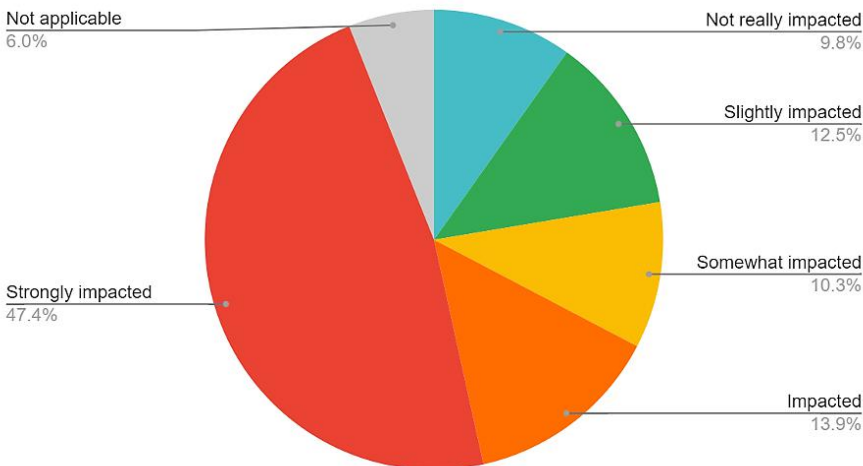
Over half (57%) of young people reported that their education has been "strongly impacted" or "impacted"



Disruption

Given virus containment measures enforced, it is not a surprise that **61%** of young people mentioned that their transportation access and mobility had been impacted or significantly impacted.

252 of them had plans to travel in the month of April, and at the time of taking the survey, only **8%** still intended to. They pointed to this as a very concrete indicator of just how disrupted their lives have become - that they are stuck in a place that they did not intend to be.



Impact of COVID-19 on youth travels

61% of young people reported that their transportation and mobility have been "strongly impacted" or "impacted", with some canceling pre-arranged travel plans



Response

When asked about the official measures taken by the government to halt the spread of COVID-19, only a handful of young people had nothing to say. Instead, **most had a lot to say** - *reciting* the multiple official containment measures that their governments have put in place.



Response

Only **51.7%** of young people were able to mention a measure that the government had put in place to manage the economic repercussions of containing the virus.

Of those who mentioned a measure they had heard their governments take, the following were the most common measures they had seen: tax/loan forgiveness or payment rescheduling (**29.4%**) and the distribution of food and basic necessities (**27.7%**).



Youth involvement in COVID-19 response

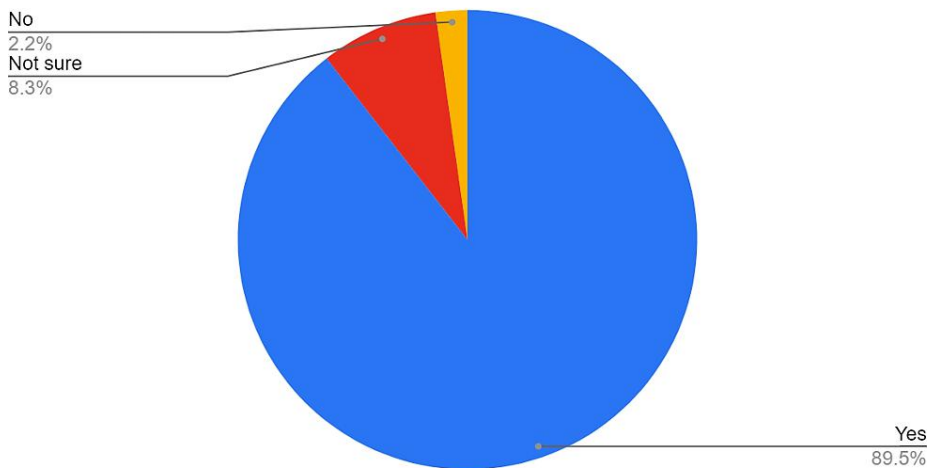
When asked what roles their respective governments have offered young people to participate in responding to COVID-19, only **a few** were able to point to a role they have been offered - apart from complying with government measures.

Some mentioned that their governments had called on young people to: share accurate information with their communities - but informally; that there could be volunteer opportunities - but these were not clear; and to come up with innovations - but without knowing where and how to share them.



Youth involvement in COVID-19 response

Some youth mentioned the initiatives that they had taken independent of a formal role in response efforts. Some also stressed that they have not been given a role - but that they have a lot of value to add.



Youth interest to participate in COVID-19 response

90% would want to play a role (formal or informal) in response to COVID-19 if there was one offered



In Uganda, young people are not given a chance to fully participate in this and their voice is not heard yet they could play a very big role in fighting this invisible enemy



No known mechanism has been put in place for young people to participate in COVID-19 response!!



Youth involvement in COVID-19 response

The most commonly mentioned way youth wanted to get involved was through sensitizing others on how to protect themselves (**45.9%**) - only about a quarter of those interested in this role (**22.9%**) mentioned that this engagement would have to be online.

A further **10.7%** specifically mentioned that they would be willing to volunteer - either in hospitals or in distributing food and protective equipment.



Youth involvement in COVID-19 response

Several referenced the government in particular, saying that they would like the government to engage them or get in conversation with them. Below are some selected quotations



Since [I] am a health activist and a social media Influencer, I would be grateful if the government involved people like me who have skills and expertise in this area of communication and community mobilization and engagement.

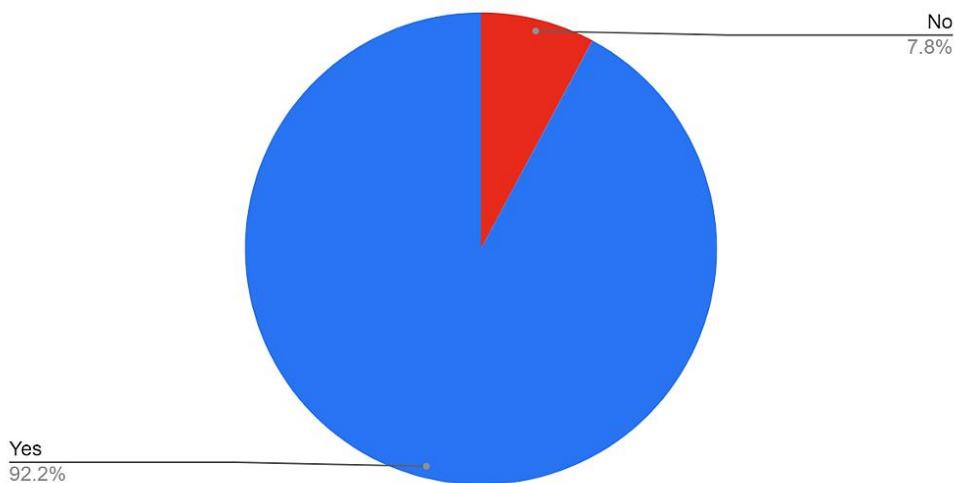


Engage through online dialogue with duty bearers on...how to address the short, mid-term and long-term socio-economic impact of the pandemic



Youth interest and involvement in work related to the results of this survey

92% would like to be involved in follow-up discussions about these results and sharing other research findings.



Youth appetite to engage in post-survey conversations and work

92% would be interested in participating in virtual discussions of these findings.

OBSERVATORY NOTE

Young people have a high appetite to get involved in work related to this survey and its findings. It's possible that this enthusiasm could be even higher, if they were clear on what their role was in COVID-19 response, since even the 8.3% did not simply say "no" but rather that they weren't sure.

Of the almost 450 young people who responded to this survey, over 400 said they were ready to be involved in COVID-19 response - even without knowing what their role would be. If we do not think about how to harness their support - and that of those like them - we are missing out on a massive opportunity.

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS

From survey results

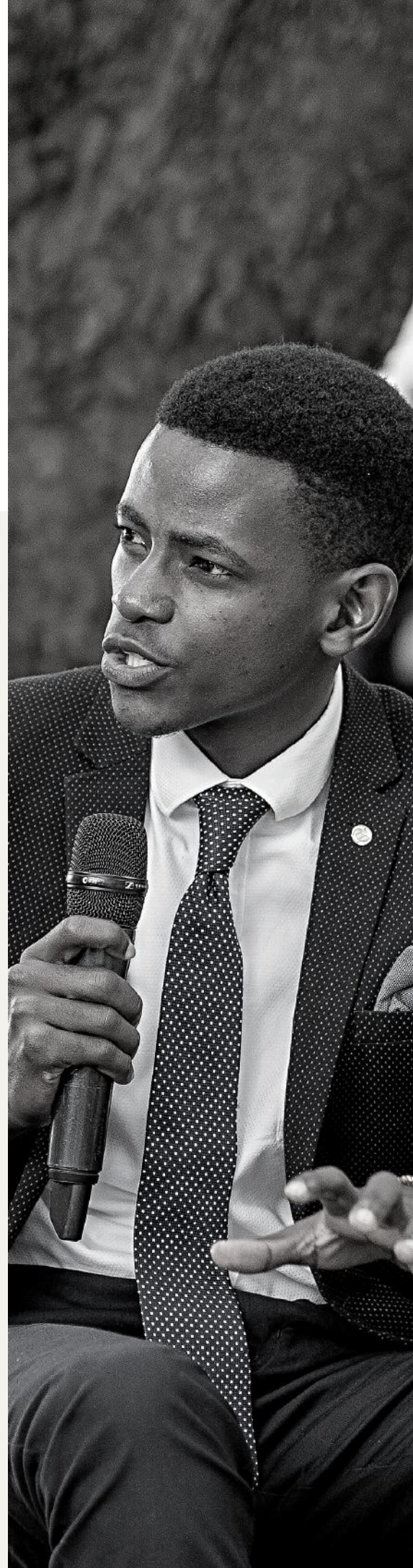
On Measures against health impact of Covid-19

When reciting which measures their governments have taken against Covid-19, young people mentioned many of the 'usual suspects': lockdowns, curfews, restrictions on movements, the closure of schools/markets/workplaces, social distancing, working from home, etc.

In addition to these physical containment measures, quite a number of the respondents (though still less than 10%) mentioned the ways that the government and government ministries have been raising public awareness about the virus and how to prevent contracting it.

...while sensitisation is being done, it is not being done 'fully at the grassroots'

They mentioned numerous channels where these messages have been shared: through radio, through TV, via SMS, and through presidential addresses. Based on what they have shared, it does not seem that young people are struggling for information. One even referenced the daily COVID-19 case updates. However, another flagged that while sensitisation is being done, it is not being done 'fully at the grassroots'.



On Measures against health impact of Covid-19

The word 'reciting' above is important. Based on the answers received, it seems that these young people have just been repeating verbatim the information that they have received. However, this does not show how much they have internalized it - and it is not clear whether or not they agree with it.

Only one respondent challenged the curfews by stating, 'Kenya has discovered COVID-19 is spread at night', followed by sarcastic emojis. That they are merely reciting and not internalizing is also reflected in the fact that many conflated government measures with what they personally can do to prevent contracting the virus.

...'Kenya has discovered COVID-19 is spread at night', followed by sarcastic emojis.

As important as it is to see the 'usual suspects' emerging - showcasing that young people have heard the government directives in their respective countries, it is also interesting what did not come up as frequently in the data that we would have expected to see - and what we did not expect to see but did.

Very few young people (less than 20) referenced the hotlines/SMS/USSD code services available for those who suspect they have contracted the virus - and most of those were in Rwanda.

...'What we did not expect to see was the force that has been used to enforce the above measures" a few young people decried, referring, while directly to the 'brutality' of security personnel.

Only 5 mentioned the provision of food to those who are struggling because they cannot access income - and one of them mentioned that these provisions were 'meager'. Only 2 mentioned the training and protection equipment that health professionals have received - perhaps only because they are likely to be affected by these particular needs or things.

On Measures against economic impact of Covid-19

Only a slight majority of young people surveyed were able to point to specific economic measures that they had heard of their governments taking. It is important to note that these are just the measures that they have heard of at the time of the survey - that they might not have actually seen whether these measures have been implemented or followed through.

Within those who did not point to a measure known to them, only just less than half said outright that they hadn't seen any effort; the rest (114) only mentioned measures that have affected the economy - not those that have been put in place to support it.

'Let's save lives first'.

For those who outright mentioned that they have not seen any measures taken, only one agreed with the said policies, saying 'Let's save lives first'. Instead, several others mentioned how the government should be doing more to address the economic impact of the virus.

On Measures against economic impact of Covid-19

Quite a few mentioned tax or loan forgiveness or rescheduling. However, most of these were in Kenya, where perhaps this policy has been more clear. Even then, though, young people highlighted that this does not help young people at either end of the spectrum: the unemployed or those who earn more than \$240/month.

Additionally, many of those who mentioned social protection measures in the form of food distribution only mentioned that they had heard about it - not that they had received it or seen it. Considering these measures have been publicised to a fair amount, this is not surprising - but it might be more interesting to follow up on some of these government commitments.

Among Ugandan respondents, several (18) mentioned the need for measures to be put in place to ensure that prices do not hike. And in Kenya, there was some mention about reallocating budgets to support prevention and reducing government salaries to free up budget, making more resources available for Covid-19 response.

...several (18) mentioned the need for measures to be put in place to ensure that prices do not hike.

Apart from these more proactive measures, most of the other measures mentioned by young people have less to do with what the government will do and more about what it is still allowing: for food stores and markets to remain open (with some guidelines to minimise spread), for cargo trucks to still be allowed to as usual.

transport cargo, and for essential sectors - like agriculture and manufacturing - to remain open. This is particularly true for Tanzania, where quite a few mentioned that it's business.

This is particularly true for Tanzania, where quite a few mentioned that it's business as usual.

Overall, with only 51.7% mentioning an economic measure - and with many of those unclear about whether they have been implemented and highlighting access issues, this suggests that more can be done by governments to respond economically - which will become crucial in the post Covid-19 recovery period.

On Roles offered young people to participate in COVID-19 response efforts

Interestingly, it appeared that many young people conflated complying with the government prevention measures with having a role to play in responding to COVID-19. However, it is our persuasion that complying with guidelines is not necessarily a meaningful role. It is a personal responsibility to stay safe, and protect others from contracting the virus in case one is infected.

For those who were able to mention roles that the government offered them, most of these roles were said to be vague - perhaps too vague to deliver impactfully.

On Measures against economic impact of Covid-19

Several mentioned that the government had called on them to share information - accurate information - and sensitize and protect their communities from the virus, particularly their elders. However, they didn't mention anything more specific than these. Same with volunteering and innovation: A few mentioned their potential in volunteering but without mentioning and specific volunteer roles.

A few others mentioned that their governments were encouraging young people to use their creativity to innovate solutions to curb the pandemic - but they did not seem to have much clarity on what to do with innovations they would come up with: Who would they share them with? How?

...it seems that most East African young people remain unclear on what role they could play

Given the answers received on this and related questions, it seems that most of the East African young people remain unclear on what role they could play - particularly in government-organised responses.

Taken together, responses on this question suggest that government initiatives to respond to COVID-19 are missing out on the potential that young people represent. More must be done to harness this potential in response efforts.

On Ways young people see themselves playing a role

A large proportion of those who answered the question focused on what would make them feel safe - being provided with Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) - and not on which role they would want to play. So, there are a lot of young people whom we didn't hear from, in terms of how they are willing to help.

While some young people stressed that any engagement around sensitisation would have to be online, most didn't express this as a key means by which they would want to play a role. Instead, they highlighted other ways by which they could spread the word: through radio, through megaphone (biking through the community), by door-to-door outreach. Several even stressed how important it would be to get information out to those who are not connected online.

Over half of the sample clearly specified how they are ready and willing to help - with more probably willing but not answering that way. Many of these young people are likely already taking initiative to play the role they want to play. So, how do we organise them to be a bit more methodical and strategic?



REGIONAL VIRTUAL CONVERSATIONS

Introduction

In addition to the electronic survey, in order to increase the human interaction element of the study, the YouLead Secretariat took the initiative to conduct further investigation by means of moderated virtual conversations with youth focused on the disruptions of Covid-19 within the YouLead alumni network.

The conversations were aimed at determining the extent to which Covid-19 disruptions have in practice affected youth in their respective work fields and daily livelihoods. These series of conversations took place over a period of three weeks during some parts of March and April 2020. The in-country conversations were conducted and moderated through YouLead Alumni WhatsApp groups in all EAC Partner States - Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda - no country left behind.

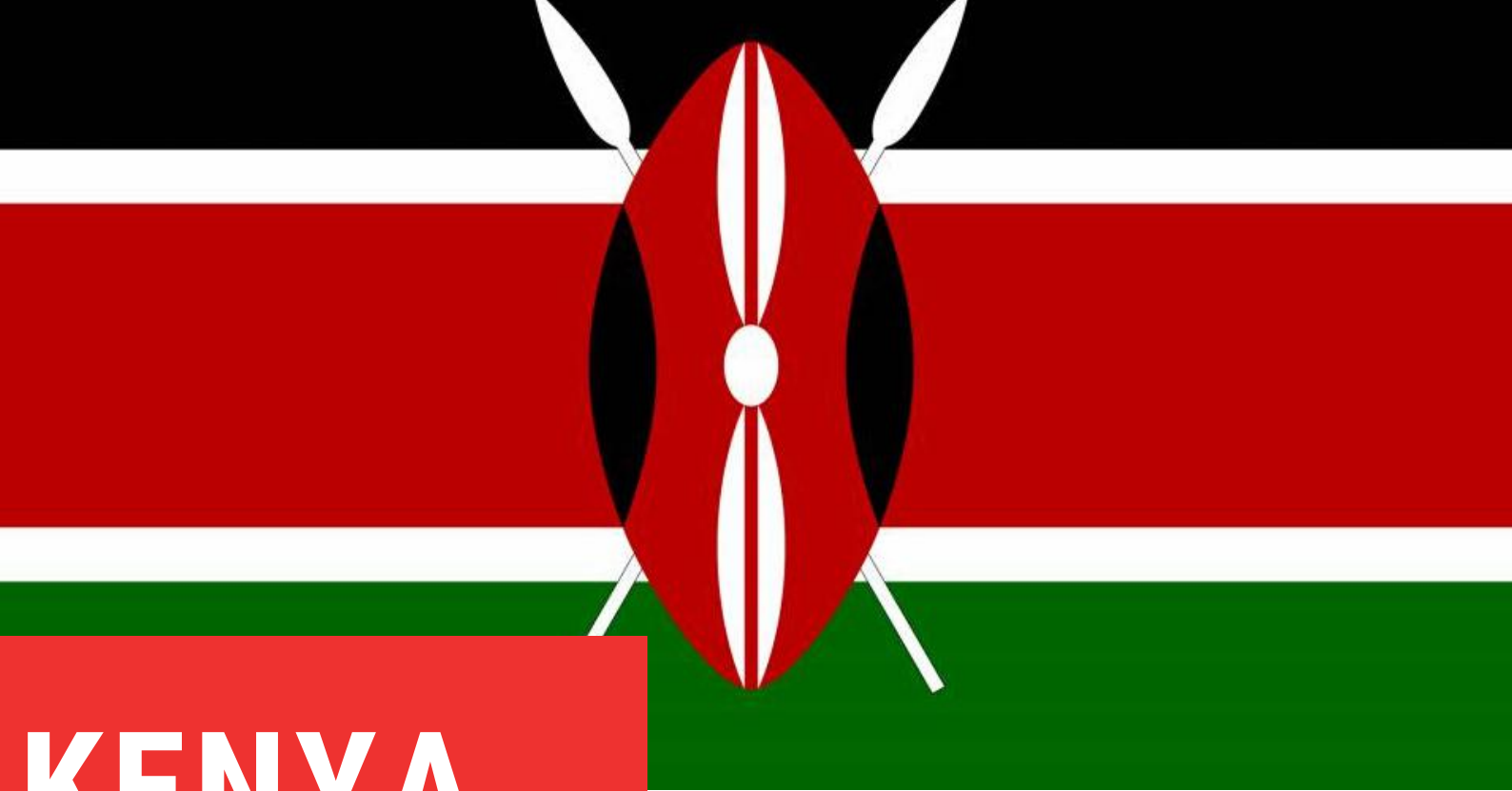
The conversations were guided by, but not limited to a set of pre-set questions. Rather than entertain intellectual debate or exhibition of Covid-19 related health knowledge,

the conversations were tailored to facilitate experience and observations based, encouraging sharing of practical experiences.

...Rather than entertain intellectual debate or exhibition of knowledge on Covid-19, the conversations facilitated sharing of practical experiences.

What was asked and discussed

1. What does the current situation in your country mean to you as a young person and to the economy at large?
2. What is the government doing to combat the situation at hand; do you think the government is doing enough?
3. If you had an opportunity to share your thoughts, what would be your priority recommendations (i) To young people and (ii) To the government?



KENYA

Challenges

Suspension of businesses means loss of jobs and income for a sizable number of youth.

Transport fares are high due to the reduced number of people who can be in a matatu.

Young people are being affected by Mental health illnesses.

Recommendations

Encourage young Kenyan people to use www.ajiradigital.go.ke which is a website that connects people to online jobs and online training.

Support in food collections and donations such as the initiative #BeNiceKE started by YouLead alumni Francis Amonde to purchase supplies for Boda Boda families that can at least last them for some time.

Inform the masses about handwashing and also involving the masses in popularising more cost-effective ways to stay safe.

Develop campaigns to encourage companies to hire back employees.

Develop campaigns to raise the consciousness of companies on how to best survive and bounce back stronger after such a pandemic e.g. cost-effective ways to keep young people in employment.

...youth were able to highlight key country specific and general challenges faced in each country and put forward a set of recommendations for consideration

Advocate for the government to lower or waive off some services for youths e.g. fees free company registration for youth owned enterprises and startups.

For mental health, to develop a USSD free shortcode where someone can send the message: HELP or SAIDIA and we get a team of professional counselors to call back the person and just engage them on positive thoughts because the daily news, forwards and messages, can cause one, mental torture and emotional break breakdown.

TANZANIA

Challenges

Most of the businesses are not running which is a big problem since most Tanzanians are middle income daily earners expecting to feed their families on a daily income basis.

Donors have retreated their commitment of funds and are hesitant to support organization activities, understandably, implementation has slowed down and some organisations have been forced to stop projects that are beneficial in terms of provision of education and entrepreneurship growth.

A series of questions were pre-set and communicated to participants ahead of the conversation sessions to allow for well guided conversations

The government rules of no gatherings has stopped some of the youth restaurants from operating hence cutting off the daily income of youth who own such businesses. Some hotels have also been closed with no compensation to workers.

Recommendations

A compensation plan for those that have suspended working or have lost their jobs.

Use of recorded videos, drawings and flyers to reach out to more people about the virus.

Each leader in the village should be equipped with the right information on how to prevent infections and provide the information to their citizens through public address systems.

To lower the government bills to help employers to keep paying their employees e.g. Lowering taxes, or eliminating water bills and electricity bills for a certain period of time.

Ahead of the 2020 general elections, the government should exercise its duty of care to the citizens and ensure effective precautionary and personal protection measures to minimise potential infections due to possible gatherings.



UGANDA

Challenges

Many young people earn their livelihood from daily business hustles, surviving from hand to mouth thus their income is incapacitated at the moment since the lockdown.

The situation is likely to result in increased crime rates especially petty and violent thefts since people are not working and earning.

Women being breadwinners in most families, given current limitations on travel, they cannot access food and other essentials in life such as sanitary pads.

There has been an increase in the number of gender based violence in homes.

Owing to the mysterious nature of the pandemic, young people are living in fear of risk of the unknown.

COVID-19 has changed the face of education with many institutions switching to online learning, which they weren't ready for. There might be quality related challenges if not well monitored and regulated. Majority of young people, especially those upcountry, may also not afford internet prices.

Recommendations

Government should double the budget for essential services, so that for the next 8 months Ugandans have no bills to pay such as electricity, water etc. Young people need to be very keen and vigilant because unpatriotic people may use this opportunity to embezzle funds now and during the post COVID-19, we shall have to demand a utilization status of the money

Young people need to develop a culture of voluntarism, engage in community service in this kind of situation

Young people must join hands and build strong social economic pillars that will support and resolve to be more sustainable

Mobilize and support a pool of volunteers, rally young people to do online campaigns, disseminate guidelines from WHO and MoH

We can create an online platform and have alumni professional counsellors to offer counselling online sessions. This will help with mental health issue that is on the raise



SOUTH SUDAN

Challenges

Lots of personal plans cancelled

Loss of some businesses as contracts have been terminated.

Employees have been affected as in one of the companies, there was downsizing of employees from 46 to 30 and most are youth.

After investing all my money to start a business, I had to buy goods from Uganda and Kenya and immediately, the borders were shut down and my goods were blocked in Kampala and Nairobi.

Most youth activities, especially by entrepreneurs have been affected/shutdown.

Preventive measures put by the government excludes people with disability, like the deaf.

Recommendations

Government should put strict measures regarding prevention of the disease before it gets rampant in the country.

- Youth entrepreneurs in the food sector should start to do online orders and delivery.

Government has placed several regulations, unfortunately, they're not implemented seriously as even government high officials still break the social distance rule set by them. Borders have been closed but control measures are still weak.

COVID-19 has drained my emotional wellbeing. I'm constantly checking on my family and friends in Uganda and Kenya

Much as awareness is going on, not all or most languages are covered, and this calls for translation of messages to local languages.



RWANDA

Challenges

Unemployment: some youth might have already become jobless due to current situation, and more will possibly become jobless given the fact that some companies will cut employees after this situation due to the predictions in economic downfall.

Youths Startups have been affected by the situation and they will struggle to rise them up after Covid-19

...Youths Startups will struggle to rise up after Covid-19

Economists are predicting increase in prices due to increase in demand and low supply post Covid-19. This is because some factories are no longer producing...the youths will be affected by this given their high population and less purchasing power.

Mental health issues for young people who live alone is another area of real concern.

Recommendations

Government to invest not only in curbing the virus but also in medical research aimed at finding the cure.

Increase in use of digital technologies and digital currency will favor the youth.

Youths can use this time to work on improving themselves and their projects.



BURUNDI

Challenges

To young people, the situation is very uncertain as we don't see clearly the damages at large, but the atmosphere reveals that more damages will be reported as far as very tough measures are not put in place.

It may result in an explosion with tremendous damages. So far gatherings are still allowed, churches, schools, buses are still operating as usual even if we know the virus is found of fast spreading in crowded areas.

So far gatherings are still allowed, churches, schools, buses are still operating as usual even if we know the virus is found of fast spreading in crowded areas.

The economy might be affected, many jobs might be lost for example the Airport is closed and people are not moving for businesses. All travel agencies are already closed and their employees lost their jobs.

Recommendations

Masks should be recommended by the government as a means of protection Young people have to strictly observe the measures taken by the government and try to take the message as far as possible to the population whether using online or offline means.

They must be responsible for this lead in mitigating the spread of the virus in the spirit of solidarity within the rural communities. They have to contribute through innovative ideas.

The government should mobilize more funds to tackle the outbreak and lead the capacity building of the health personnel and strengthen all the health care systems through partnerships within the region, acting in solidarity to contain the virus.



REGIONAL WEBINAR

With youth leaders and young practitioners

Following country level contextualized virtual conversations, a regional zoom based webinar dubbed “Digital Regional Conversation on Youth Best Practices on Covid-19” was organized to further enhance the discussions, share experiences of best practices that are being carried out by youth across the region.

The webinar further gave a window of opportunity for youth to have a discussion on the impending situation with young professionals working in various fields as guest panelists. The East African Community wide conversation took place on Wednesday 15th April 2020 at 11 am EAT and was hosted virtually on zoom, with more than 60 young leaders from all across the East African Community.

The regional webinar marked the climax of the series of consultations and conversations in the bid to learn insights on how Covid-19 is impacting youth lives and how they are coping, and the support required. This zoom mediated conversation sought to gather more views on how youth across the East African region are coping with the impacts of Covid-19 and the lockdown period.

The conversation was moderated by the YouLead Secretariat team and involved a panel of invited young professionals from across the region.

The purposely selected bench of young panelists included a lawyer and legal practitioner, an economist and policy analyst, a youth social worker, and finally a medical practitioner – the latter couldn’t make it to the panel due to a last minute medical emergency that required his inevitable attention at the time of the virtual conversation.

These facilitated a conversation on the current situation, the perceived impact at the time and the likely immediate future for youth and the recommendations on the post Covid-19 action plans.

Key questions that guided the conversation included

What is the state of women in our communities impacted by Covid-19 disease and its effects?

From the economic perspective, what have governments been doing to minimize the impact?



REGIONAL WEBINAR

Matters arising - What we learned from the Regional webinar

Uganda

Uganda was perceived as being at its worst stages compared to many other East African countries. Uganda was already on total lockdown, schools, companies and other shops were closed. The problem of unemployment was feared to have escalated since many youths had no jobs nor work for wages.

The women in Uganda are greatly impacted

The women in Uganda are greatly impacted, women do most of the casual work and are the daily bread winners for their families in these days of lockdown, they are finding it hard to earn and fend for their families.

The cases of Gender Based Violence were reported to be more rampant, suspected to be due to the stay home situation.

Tanzania

Tanzania had not yet set any tight rules as other East African nations. The government had made different rules for different areas such as in Dar es Salaam region people are not allowed to be walking in the street if they are not necessarily up for urgent business.

Initiatives had been made by the government to create awareness amongst people about COVID-19. The office of the Health Minister and the Prime Minister had closed down the schools, and shops.

The Prime Minister had called off major national gatherings such as Union Day celebrations supposed to take place on 26th April as well as the May 1, Workers' day was not celebrated. Low or weak measures awareness raising efforts were reported amongst youths with special interests such as the deaf and the dumb and there that there was need for the countries in the East African region to do something about it.



REGIONAL WEBINAR

Matters arising - What we learned from the Regional webinar

Burundi

Burundi is one of the countries in the region that had few cases of covid-19, however, youth asserted that this did not do away with the fact that the country is suffering gross economic impact.

As an immediate action point, the government had decided to close its airport, resulting in a significant loss of jobs. To the youth, the situation was reported to be very uncertain and many were taking the covid-19 seriously, as there's no clear indication of what is currently on ground.

However the atmosphere in the region had highlighted to them that if they are not well prepared and if the appropriate measures are not put in place, the magnitude of damage to the country healthwise and economically will be gross.

Kenya

The measures taken by the Kenyan government were said not to be enough and perceived as not sustainable over the long term. The government was reported to have centralized every response and not sufficiently involved other sectors such as the private sectors, religious leaders and CSOs in the response to covid-19. This situation was observed as common in almost all the EAC Member States.

It was further suggested that response to Covid-19 should be approached as a fight which should be fought by everyone, governments were encouraged to be open to work with other sectors.

The approaches by the Kenyan government were said to not be sufficiently inclusive - that the youth may carry out awareness but did not show how this awareness should be done.

It was feared that the pandemic would lead to a huge rate of job loss predicted especially amongst the young people due to the fact many companies that have been affected by this lockdown.



REGIONAL WEBINAR

**Matters arising - What
we learned from the
Regional webinar**

South Sudan

Most of the policies passed by the government were said to not be so friendly to young people's participation. It was observed that it is the role of young people to call upon the governments to be inclusive and involve youths more effectively in the fight against Covid-19.

Rwanda

Youth in Rwanda were said to be highly involved in the country's Covid-19 response especially employees who are youths and have a medical, health and community working background.

In addition, the government was said to have trained more young people to volunteer during the period of the pandemic. These youths were said to be carrying and distributing brochures with the information about Covid-19 to create awareness.



REGIONAL WEBINAR

Matters arising - What we learned from the Regional webinar

Regional level perspectives

Kenya's economy was perceived as most affected and it would be so after the pandemic. However, youth asserted that the East Africa Community had a chance to intervene and work in harmony to fight COVID-19.

It was suggested that we should have a plan for the over 70% of the youths in East Africa who were, and might remain redundant over some time, and jobless due to the COVID-19 pandemic in East Africa. Engaging them in the life saving initiatives during and post Covid-19 was suggested.

It was suggested that every country should have a focus on involving the young people in saving the lives of people through engaging them in community sensitization processes, adding that If the youths were not engaged, social crimes such as theft and drug abuse might increase in the period of the pandemic.

It was observed that not only women were affected by the pandemic, but men as well. Generally, it is time for people to seek and spread correct information about the virus. In addition, since people cannot access workplaces, it is time for them to start to do online businesses because the former jobs, from which they have taken a break, may not be there in a time sooner than they think.

It was observed that countries in the East African Community region should harmonize their efforts in curbing the Covid-19 situation. Almost all East African countries were seen as working in isolation which may even weaken border controls. Harmonization of efforts were encouraged as necessary for ending the pandemic in the region more quickly. Governments were further advised that they need to design temporary taxation policies during this pandemic due to variation in the waves of the economy and increased government spending.



REGIONAL WEBINAR

Matters arising - What we learned from the Regional webinar

Some observations and recommendations

Youth noted that it will be hard to return to normalcy as early as possible. The East African nations are already in deficit. Some companies will lay down their workers during and after the crisis. There is a predicted high unemployment rate after the crisis.

However, the youth should look at opportunities in the emerging companies in the IT industry and blend with the digital economy. The need for youth to have and maintain a positive mindset was seen as important going forward.

In response to the gender based violence rising during this period, it was recommended that the formation of 'desks' to respond to cases of gender based violence as is being done in Rwanda be replicated in other East African countries.

In response to what NGOs not in the health sector can do, it was recommended that such organisations can start to plan projects that will address the economic and social crisis that will rise after the crisis and encouraged that organisations such as research institutions should research and provide knowledge on how governments may go about the post Covid-19 time.

...plan projects that will address the economic and social crisis that will rise after the crisis

The governments in East Africa should jointly come up with solutions related and unique to the East African Situation. Furthermore, there is a need for governments to intervene and address the lives of people in refugee camps through enhanced creation of awareness and developing solutions to problems that are refugee specific.

1:00

MINUTE VIDEO

IMPACT OF COVID19



**RESTLESS
DEVELOPMENT**



WESTMINSTER
FOUNDATION FOR
DEMOCRACY



VIDEOS FROM YOUTH

Youth voices from across East Africa

These were solicited from willing young people, especially YouLead alumni, Restless Development Young Researchers Network, and other youth within our network of partners who voluntarily recorded 30 second to 1 minute videos using their mobile devices and directly shared them with us.

Youth sending in videos were offered an opportunity to agree with consent declaration that their shared videos could be used for purposes of the survey and can be widely disseminated to a wider audience.

The collected videos were then subjected to required modifications and conversions to compatible formats and edited only for purposes of branding. The modified videos were uploaded to a central online source, from where they are being disseminated through our various social media and other electronic platforms.

The videos were to the largest extent collected during the same period as the electronic survey was running, and for the same time length – with some collected past survey deadlines. Prior to launching of the video collection exercise, general guidelines were issued to the respective respondents. A guidance session was held over zoom with all video volunteers prior to video recording. Our media and communication team offered support all through the exercise to assist youth who wanted to share a video but were not fully familiar with use of digital tools, also to ensure some degree of uniformity in collected videos. A total of 40 videos have been collected from the young people all over East Africa. Most of these young people had negative comments about the pandemic and lockdown.

Some observations and recommendations

The video exercise is not meant to collect intellectual argument or share knowledge on Covid19, it is specifically for willing respondents to share their own personal experiences with Covid19 - how they are practically affected and how they are coping up or dealing with/adjusting their lifestyles.

Video collection design was tailored to answer one precise open ended question: "What's keeping you up at night? What's been the biggest impact on your life because of COVID-19?"

Video responders answered the question - What's been the biggest impact on your life because of COVID-19?

Keeping it open-ended ensured that we heard what the respondent's experience was, in their own context, without biasing them to what we think is important. Then, we could probe on additional key areas if we did not hear them coming up.

VIDEOS FROM YOUTH

Youth voices from across East Africa

What we learn from the videos

On financial impact

"We are spending without earning" - young people from in Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and south Sudan.

In Tanzania the young people are afraid of change to the new normal.

In Kenya "I got kicked out of my house because I hadn't paid my rent" a young person from Kenya. Some have lost their jobs.

On mental health impact

High risk of depression for young people living alone.

State of giving up on the hope of lockdown ending.

In Tanzania the young people are worried they might spread the virus to their loved ones.

In Burundi the young people are living in a state of uncertainty.

Most of the young people said they are using this time to work on their relationship with family and God.

Some of the young people are using this time to read self-improvement literature.

They are also using this time to exercise their bodies to keep fit and healthy.

Impact on education and academics

Some youth have resorted to taking online cases.

Most schools and institutions have resorted to online teaching.

Assignments from universities have been issued where possible.

Impact on Innovation

More young people are resorting to online ways of making business.

Many more are adapting to use of online payment systems.

Use of online platforms to advertise businesses.

We are using this time to learn new skills in cooking.

Impact on health

Social distancing rules proving difficult to sustainably comply with.

General sanitation and personal hygiene has improved during the pandemic

Impact on entrepreneurship

Business activity has been low.

Use of innovative ways to keep the businesses alive and working.

Contacts and correspondence

If you wish to receive a copy of the report or want to be part of our work, we kindly ask that you indicate your contact address by filling in and returning this form.

Name in full	
Country	
Organisation	
Responsibility in organisation	
Your inquiry/message	

You may also reach us directly by email

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For technical inquiries, comments or feedback
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Appendix 1: Study questionnaire and questions

Survey questions

1. Kindly provide the following details:

1. Your country

2. Gender

Male

Female

3. At the time of the current covid-19 lockdown, are you locked up in your home country?

Yes

No

4. Which category best describes your work affiliations

Politics

Business

Formal employment

Innovation & entrepreneurship

Migrant

Refugee

East Africa Study on Covid-19 disruptions to youth life

Other: specify

5. How much have you seen, read or heard about coronavirus

A great deal

A fair amount

Not very much

Nothing at all

6. Have you tested yet to know your status?

Yes

No

7. If you wanted to test for covid-19, how easy is it for you to access a testing centre?

There is no testing centre I can go to

Testing centre exists but I don't know where it is

Testing centre exists but is too far away

Testing centre exists but ques are too long

8. Share your own view about the control of Covid-19 spread? Tick all that apply to you.

It is a disease of the old people especially with pre-existing conditions

I am aware that I can contract it or get infected too, even though I am young

I am concerned that Covid-19 might grow into a humanitarian crisis

I am optimistic that Covid-19 is under control and it will be over soon

9. What are you doing to avoid contracting the virus?

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Staying home

Washing hands with soap and water more often

Avoiding shaking hands with others

Practicing Social distancing

10. **Covid-19 spread control measures by government:** Outline any official ways and measures you are aware of in which your government has responded to Covid-19 to prevent its spread
11. **Covid-19 economic impact control response measures by government:** Outline any official measures you are aware of in which your government has responded to Covid-19 to aimed to minimise its economic impact on life
12. **Government-led Youth participation mechanism:** Outline, any official government call, arrangement and mechanism you are aware of that exist for you as a young person to play a role in responding to Covid 19 crisis?
13. **Government-led Youth participation mechanism:** Outline, any unofficial or community led call, arrangement and mechanism you are aware of that exist for you as a young person to play a role in responding to Covid 19 crisis?
14. If there was a call, arrangement or mechanism for you as a young person to play a role in responding to Covid 19 crisis, would you be willing to actively participate, would you get involved in voluntary work?
Yes
No
Not sure
15. In what ways would you feel safe offering your support or participation to help in preparedness and response to the Covid-19 crisis emergency?

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16. Did you intend to have any travels within the region in the coming month of April?

Yes

No

17. If yes, what is the purpose of travel?

Work/business

School

Visit family and friends

Personal leisure travel

18. If yes, what is your travel plan now?

Cancelled the travel plan completely because it is not safe to travel

Cancelled the travel plan completely because it is not feasible or possible anymore

Postponed travel till ban is lifted

Still looking for a feasible option

Other:.....

19. Based on the new government regulations across the region, are you presently working from home?

Yes

No

20. With the new regulations in place across the region, on a scale of 1-5, how have these negatively impacted on various areas of your life? (1 being lowest negative impact - 5 highest negative impact)

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On access to jobs, employment, work or business					
On transport and mobility in your city, country or region					
On access to health care services					
On access to livelihoods and economic opportunities					
On access to education services					
On family & social engagements					
On refugee support/protection services (if you are a refugee)					

21. Please add any other comments about disruptions, challenges, or changes in your daily lives due to the COVID-19? (indicate maximum characters)

22. YouLead secretariat would like to engage you on a virtual discussion on the impact of the COVID-19 on EAC member states youth and the region, would you be interested in participating?

Yes

No

23. Please write below resources/action you would like to see YouLead Take on in effort to assist youth in the region during the COVID-19? (indicate maximum Characters)

Ends