

Reducing Adolescent Pregnancy (RAP) in the Era of COVID-19

Kenya Pilot Program Evaluation, October 2020



**Women's Campaign
International**



Investing in Girls Through Education and Resource Mobilization

Summary

The Reducing Adolescent Pregnancy (RAP) in the Era of COVID-19 pilot program was implemented in August-September 2020 in Kisumu, Kenya. Women's Campaign International (WCI) and Winam Green Ventures (WGV) implemented a four-week pilot program, engaging 15 adolescent girls per week in socially-distant gatherings. These workshops provided participants with critical resources, support, and information to prevent them from becoming pregnant, acquiring HIV, and acquiring and spreading COVID-19 in order to ensure that more girls return to school after this pandemic. The RAP initiative is directly tied to the model and goals of WCI, building off of past work focused on health messaging and youth development.

This evaluation found that the RAP pilot program was successful in achieving its measurable objectives. The pilot program was successful in implementing and promoting an inclusive learning environment through a trauma-informed facilitator and a culturally-relevant curriculum that met the needs of RAP participants. The outcomes of the RAP pilot program demonstrate that participants gained knowledge on how to practice healthy habits in their relationships and personal lives and became part of a supportive, women-led community.



Organizational Backgrounds



Women's Campaign International



Women's Campaign International (WCI) is a non-profit organization based in Philadelphia, PA that works to equip women to actively participate in leadership roles in political processes, economic development, conflict transformation, and civil society. In providing requisite skills, knowledge, and culturally relevant support, WCI develops the leadership skills of women who have the power to transform their communities. WCI envisions a world where women have equal “seats at the table” in leadership around the world. WCI worked with women in Liberia during the Ebola pandemic to get the word out on how to protect the community, and has taught hundreds of girls about sexual health through our GALS program in Kenya and Philadelphia. WCI has been working in Kenya since 2018.



WCI's Director of Programs and Operations, Brynn MacDougall, and WGV's Founder, Prescilla Awino, in Kisumu in 2019.

Winam Green Ventures (WGV) is a non-profit organization based in Kisumu, Kenya that empowers women to implement environmentally-friendly socio-economic initiatives. The Founder of WGV, Prescilla Awino, served as the Program Manager for WCI's Girls Advocacy and Leadership Series (GALS) in Kisumu in 2019. Prescilla has experience leading workshops and initiatives focused on agribusiness, sexual health, leadership, advocacy, and entrepreneurship. Some of her existing initiatives include creating an organic, sustainable community garden for local women to maintain and sell produce to procure safe income, and training women to sell solar cook stoves to reduce carbon-related health and environmental issues.

Context Setting

COVID-19 is a global health emergency that has disproportionately affected women and girls, as is typical in times of crisis. COVID-19 has ended this year's access to school for thousands of adolescents around the world, and many parents have lost their incomes. Without school, adolescents now have free time to fill, and many are without adult supervision throughout the day. Despite critical social distancing measures, many teens are using their free time to socialize with their peers and engage in sexual activities.

An increase in teen pregnancy will be—and already is—a significant outcome of this pandemic.

We know this is the case in Kenya, where our partner WGV is based. The potential effects that an increase in unprotected sex will have on girls' futures will be devastating:

- **Teen pregnancy rates are increasing**, and will continue to increase, putting girls' physical and mental health at risk.
- **Pregnancy is a main reason that teen girls drop out of school**. An increase in teen pregnancies means there will likely be a decrease in the number of girls enrolled in school post-pandemic.
- HIV prevalence in Kisumu is 3.4 times higher than the national prevalence at 19.9%. **An increase in unprotected sex will lead to an increase in HIV transmission.**
- **COVID-19 will continue to spread**, not only to adolescents engaging in close activity, but also to their families upon returning home.

The "RAP" Initiative

WCI and WGV implemented a four-week pilot program, "Reducing Adolescent Pregnancy (RAP) in the Era of COVID-19," in August-September 2020. Engaging 15 adolescent girls per week in socially-distant gatherings, WCI and WGV provided participants with critical resources, support, and information on COVID-19, the female reproductive system, menstruation, safe sex, and healthy relationships, equipping girls with the knowledge and resources they need to prevent pregnancy, HIV, and COVID-19. The RAP pilot program had a strong focus on building understanding around personal health and ensuring that participants feel confident in their ability to make healthy decisions moving forward.

We also know that when girls are menstruating without proper products, or are hungry, they are less likely to attend gatherings and be active participants. To address these needs, each participant was provided with a resource package including PPE, underwear, toilet paper, pads, condoms, lotion, and food.

Through these efforts, WCI and WGV are working to ensure that more girls will return to school after the COVID-19 pandemic.



Prescilla Awino facilitates a RAP workshop.

Through a Training-of-Trainers (ToT) model, WCI ensures that every program is culturally relevant and builds local leadership capacity. Our trainers not only gain the skills to conduct workshops, but are also able to integrate lessons with a refined local knowledge of the needs and resources in their communities. Prescilla Awino, Founder of WGV, was trained as the RAP Program Facilitator for our Kenya pilot program.

Evaluation of the Pilot Program

The evaluation process used a primary and secondary evidence-based evaluation effort, using a participatory and mixed methods approach to assess the effectiveness of the RAP pilot program. In the process of evaluating the RAP pilot program, a participant interview method in combination with quantitative survey questionnaires was used to collect information. The data collection process was implemented throughout each week of the pilot program and led by the Program Facilitator. A total of 60 participants (out of 60) consented to participate in interviews and survey taking.

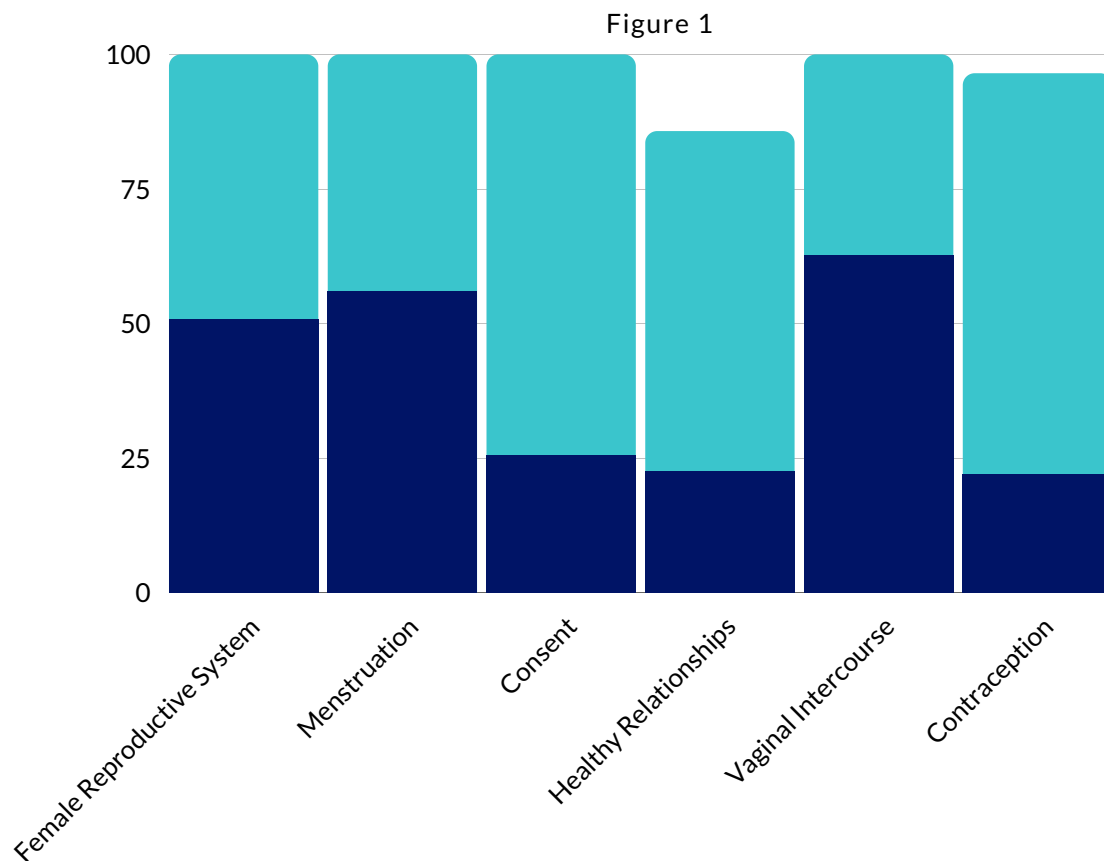


Findings

Goal 1: Preventing teenage girls from becoming pregnant.

The participants gained an understanding of menstruation, healthy relationships, and sexual relationships. Involvement in RAP has improved girls' abilities to create personal boundaries and understand the importance of consent. All participants were given condoms, which will further reduce their risk of engaging in unprotected sex resulting in pregnancy.

Figure 1 indicates the percentage of participants who understood the following concepts before (dark purple) and after (teal) the RAP program.



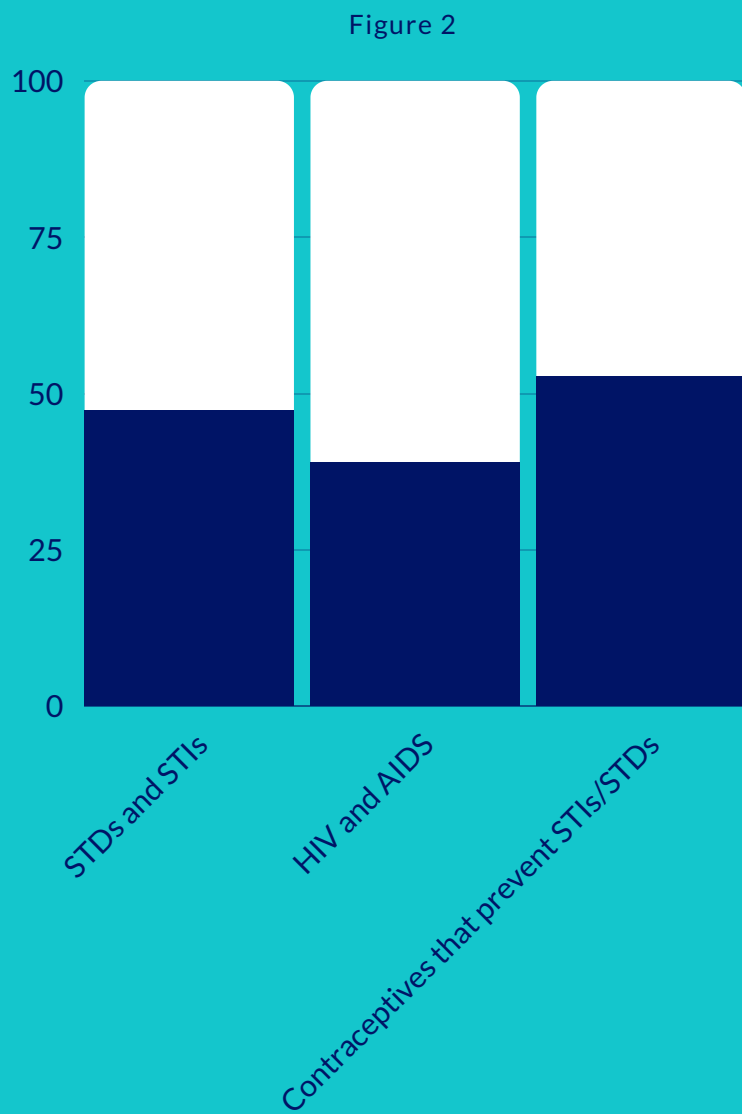
“I learned that I have the right to create limits for myself, in all my relationships.”

Findings

Goal 2: Preventing teenage girls from acquiring HIV.

As a result of the RAP pilot program, participants gained an understanding of pregnancy and STD prevention, and where to go to acquire contraceptives and STD testing. All participants were given condoms, which will further reduce their risk of having unprotected sex and acquiring HIV.

Figure 2 indicates the percentage of participants who understood the following concepts before (dark purple) and after (white) the RAP program.



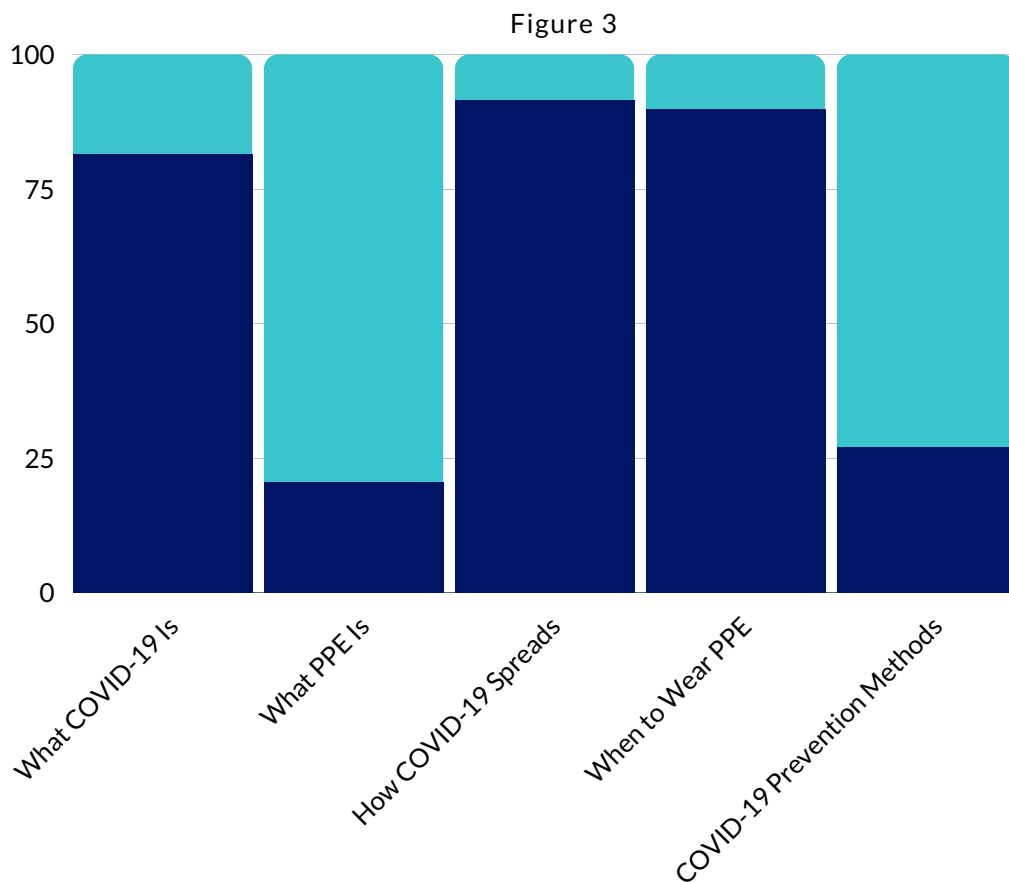
“I learned how to keep myself safe. I learned how STDs and STIs are spread, that all can be prevented and treated, and that most can be cured.”

Findings

Goal 3: Preventing teenage girls from acquiring and spreading COVID-19.

The participants gained knowledge and awareness about COVID-19 and the importance of PPE. Girls' involvement in the RAP initiative has also been successful in dispelling myths about COVID-19. All participants were given reusable masks, hand sanitizer, and soap, which will further reduce their risk of acquiring and spreading COVID-19.

Figure 3 indicates the percentage of participants who understood the following concepts before (dark purple) and after (teal) the RAP program.



“I learned that we should not stigmatize people with COVID-19 but instead show them love and do what I can to protect myself.”

Findings

Significant findings in relation to the additional RAP objectives were also discovered:

As a result of the RAP initiative, 100% of participants are now aware of organizations in their community where they can find support (compared with 15.75% pre-RAP).

The RAP initiative succeeded in creating a supportive and engaging environment where participants felt comfortable asking questions and trusted the Program Facilitator's responses. "I came to RAP because of Precilla [the Program Facilitator] and I have learned so much from her." The program also introduced participants to a local women's health representative, who discussed where they can go for future health questions.

Before RAP, zero participants had enough menstrual hygiene products to last through their next menstrual cycle. By the end of RAP, 100% of participants had enough menstrual hygiene products to last through their next cycle.

Participants feel determined to return to school after the pandemic: "I now know that I have my own personal boundaries, and that they apply to any boy or any man, I will also go back to school and share what I know about consent."

Each girl indicated that she would be an advocate in her community moving forward: "I'm going to share with my friends the good lessons we have been taught so that come 2021 we all go back to school together."

Conclusion

The Reducing Adolescent Pregnancy (RAP) in the Era of COVID-19 pilot program in Kisumu, Kenya has successfully equipped participants with the knowledge and tools to prevent pregnancy, HIV, and acquiring and spreading COVID-19. The RAP Kenya pilot program empowered girls to protect themselves and their communities through information and access to resources, making a significant impact on the 60 participants. Moreover, RAP helped participants connect with resources in their community and fostered a space to share ideas to transform knowledge, skills, and thoughts into action.

The RAP program is an information-oriented, trauma-informed, and girl-centric initiative with proven results that can be replicated and scaled to empower more girls with the information they need to take charge of their health and protect their futures.



"You have supported me on how to take care of myself. Thank you."

Scaling the Solution

WCI plans to expand RAP programming to six weeks, with two cohorts per week, throughout four countries—Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, and Nigeria—to engage more than 1,000 girls. This expansion would not only reach more girls, but would also create job opportunities for local women to serve as facilitators and trainers.

WCI needs your support to be able to grow our RAP initiative and ensure that more girls return to school after this pandemic.

Get Involved

Donate

WCI needs your support to be able to grow the RAP program and ensure that more girls return to school after this pandemic. To invest in the futures of these girls, **make your donation [here](#)**. As we fundraise to continue our initiative in Kenya and launch additional RAP programs, every investment makes a difference.

Partner

WCI looks to create mutually-beneficial partnerships with companies committed to supporting women and girls around the world. For our partners, this means the chance to make meaningful social impact, build relationships with local grassroots organizations, and develop and deploy ethical and sustainable business strategies. **WCI is seeking partners to donate care package products and invest in our RAP program expansion.** To explore partnership opportunities, please email Brynn MacDougall at brynn@womenscampaigninternational.org.

Contact Us

For general inquiries, donations, and partnerships, please contact Brynn MacDougall, WCI Director of Programs and Operations, at brynn@womenscampaigninternational.org

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