

# MOZAMBIQUE: THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON CHILDREN & THEIR FAMILIES

## Context

In Mozambique, the government declared a level-3 State of Emergency after the first COVID-19 case was identified in country on 22 March, 2020. All educational institutions were closed from 23 March; the reopening of pre-primary, primary and secondary schools will be dependent on their capacity to adapt their facilities to ensure that they can comply with the government's COVID-19 prevention regulations.

COVID-19 has caused major disruptions globally, including in Mozambique where poverty rates are high and thousands were still struggling to recover from 2 devastating cyclones in 2019. Additionally, the violent insurgency in the north has displaced hundreds of thousands, and there are numerous on-going health concerns, including cholera, malaria, and HIV. The aim of the study was to understand how children and their families have been impacted by the additional stress of COVID-19.

## ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Save the Children conducted surveys around the world on how COVID-19 was impacting children and their families. In Mozambique, the survey was implemented in 8 provinces (Maputo, Gaza, Manica, Sofala, Tete, Zambezia, Nampula and Cabo Delgado) from 16th June to 9th July, 2020; 97% of families resided in rural areas. A total of 364 caregivers (42% female; 58% male), and 203 children (53% aged 11-14; 47% aged 15-17; 51% female; 49% male) were interviewed and asked a series of questions regarding how COVID-19 has impacted their lives to date, and how they think it will continue to impact their lives in the foreseeable future.

## ECONOMIC IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON FAMILIES

The economic impact of COVID-19 has had a dramatic effect on households in Mozambique: 42% of caregivers stated that their households had lost an income due to COVID-19; 76% stated that they had lost at least half of their income and 43% said they lost 75% or more of their income. 66% stated that they had trouble paying for food.

## Caregiver's reported changes in feelings and concerns in comparison to before COVID'19

COVID-19 is having a psychological impact on caregivers, with them reporting having decreased happiness and feeling that they can cope, and an increase in loneliness, worry and hopelessness.

**Table 1. Caregiver's reported changes in psychological health**

Feelings	more than before	about the same	less than before
Change in feeling Happy	13.7%	19.8%	66.6%
Change in feeling Able to cope	23.3%	33.5%	43.3%
Change in feeling Lonely	46.5%	25.9%	27.6%
Change in feeling Worried	77.8%	9.5%	12.7%
Change in feeling Hopeless	37.7%	26.7%	35.5%

**Caregivers listed a number of concerns about COVID-19, including access to basic prevention materials such as face masks and hand sanitizer or soap. 74% stated that they were worried about COVID-19 infection.**

**Figure 1: Caregiver's concerns about COVID-19**



## Children's reported changes in feelings and behaviors in comparison to before COVID-19

Children reported that COVID-19 has impacted their wellbeing in many negative ways, including a decrease in feeling happy, hopeful, relaxed, safe, and less time playing, and an increase in worry, sadness, boredom, sleep and time caring for siblings and others. 93% of caregivers stated that they had noticed that the children showed increased negativity, although 54% said that their relationship with their children has improved.

**Table 2: Children's reported changes in feelings/ behaviors**

Feelings / behaviors	more than before	about the same	less than before
Change in feeling Happy	27.6%	19.9%	52.5%
Change in feeling hopeful	26.7%	25.6%	47.8%
Change in feeling safe	21.8%	23.6%	54.6%
Change in relaxing	26.6%	36.4%	37.0%
Change in play	37.0%	15.1%	47.9%
Change in feeling worried	72.7%	12.8%	14.4%
Change in feeling sad	64.9%	17.8%	17.3%
Change in feeling bored	40.2%	31.8%	27.9%
Change in sleep	41.5%	33.0%	25.5%
Change in care for siblings/ others	63.9%	27.3%	8.7%

### Children and school

96% of the children surveyed said that they believe they will be returning to school, although 65% said that they need school materials.

51% of caregivers stated that they need home schooling / learning materials; 71% reported that their children's teachers have not been in touch at all since schools closed.

## CHILDREN HAVE THEIR SAY!



"The adults should teach us how to be careful of COVID-19"

"I am afraid we will miss the school year due to COVID-19"

"I want the government to provide more support to vulnerable families with food, hygiene products and masks to fight COVID-19"

"My parents should make efforts to have more food at home"

"Our parents should help us to do the school exercises at home"

"We don't want to go to school with COVID-19"

"I am afraid of not having a home or food. My father lost his job and only my mother is employed"