

Slum dwellers are at increased risk of intimate partner violence and HIV as they cope with the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects.

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Background

- People in informal settlements face disproportionately high risk of ill-health, including HIV & intimate partner violence (IPV).*
- Shocks, like the COVID-19 pandemic and the resultant economic and social lockdowns, interrupt existing services and worsen health status of vulnerable populations.

Aim

To assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on IPV & HIV risk among women and men in a Nairobi informal settlement.

Methods



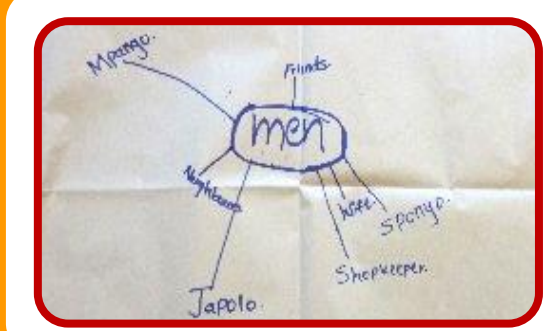
FOCUS & DESIGN

- Intersection of IPV & HIV
- Community-based participatory study



PARTICIPANTS

- 56 women & 32 men from marginalised groups
- 4 female & 6 male key informants



DATA COLLECTION

- 11 focus group discussions, 8 interviews
- Adapted ALIV[H]E guiding questions



DATA ANALYSIS

- DEPICT model for participatory data analysis

Results

- Slum dwellers face high risk of IPV – with men experiencing emotional and physical IPV and women experiencing physical and sexual IPV.
- IPV and HIV intersection occurs as a result of power differences and the use of ‘power over’ by those advantaged by gender, age, income, status, education, ability etc.
- As summarised in Figure 1, the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects amplified risk of IPV and HIV among female and male slum dwellers.
- Infection control measures triggered a cascade of reinforcing issues in informal settlements: limited access to income and services, aggravated hardship, and common – but high-risk – coping practices.

Conclusions

- Through marginalisation and hardship, female and male slum dwellers were at increased risk of IPV and HIV during COVID-19.
- Intersecting inequalities, including female gender, young age, disability, sex work, unemployment, amplified IPV and HIV risk.
- As a result, long-term impact on physical and mental health, economic and social well-being of slum dwellers is expected.

Recommendations

- Adapt services safely to ensure continuous access to services and information during shocks, like the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Provide equitable social protection mechanisms.
- Strengthen social accountability mechanisms for aid delivery, including the involvement of representatives of beneficiary groups in selection procedures and provision of services.

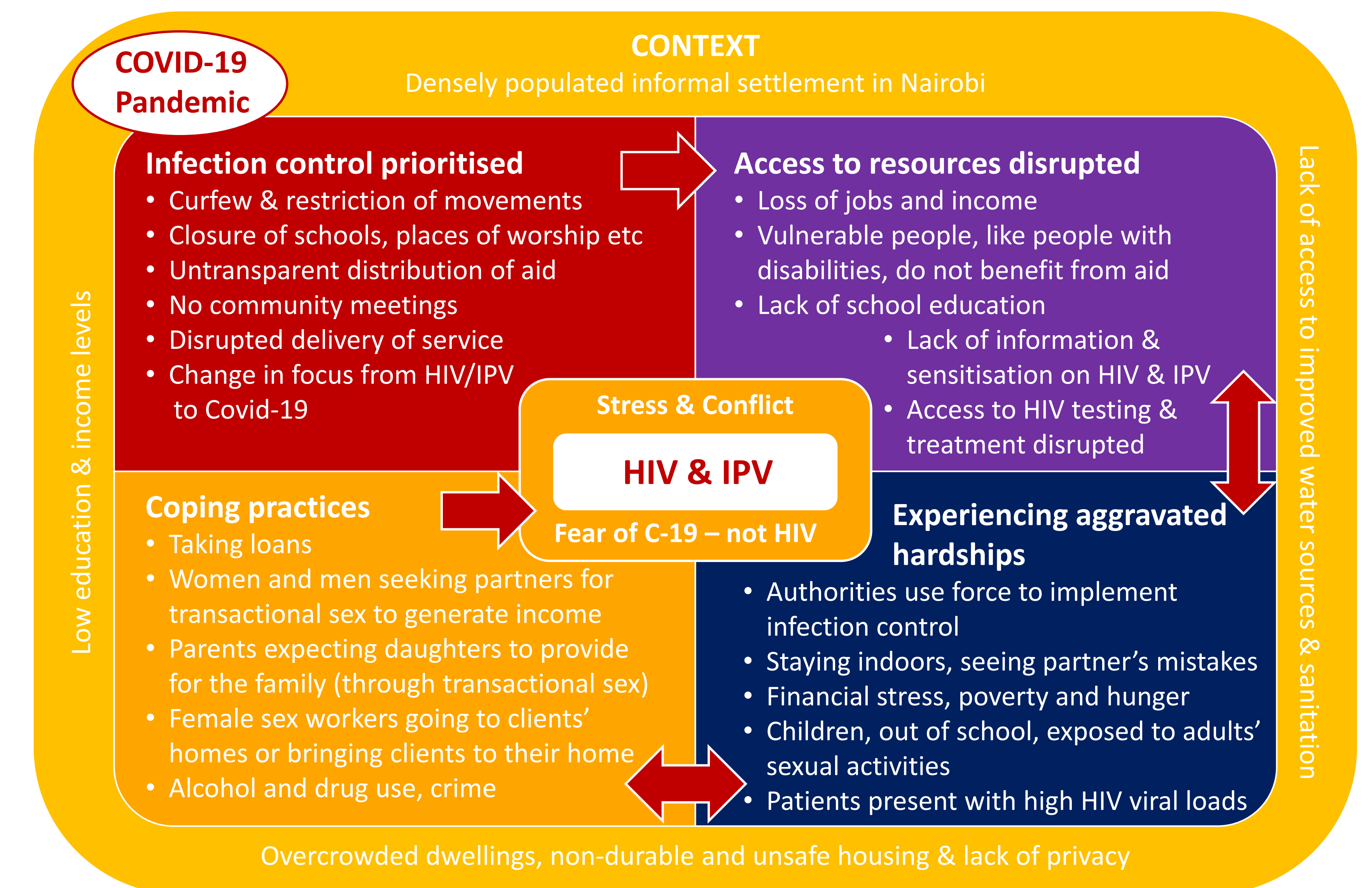


Figure 1. Summary of findings on the impact of COVID-19 pandemic HIV and IPV among women and men in an informal settlement in Nairobi..

*IPV Definition

We define intimate partner violence (IPV) as any behaviour within an intimate relationship that causes emotional, physical, sexual, or economic harm. The intimate relationships include heterosexual and same-sex relationships that are marital, dating, extra-marital, or transactional.

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More about the study

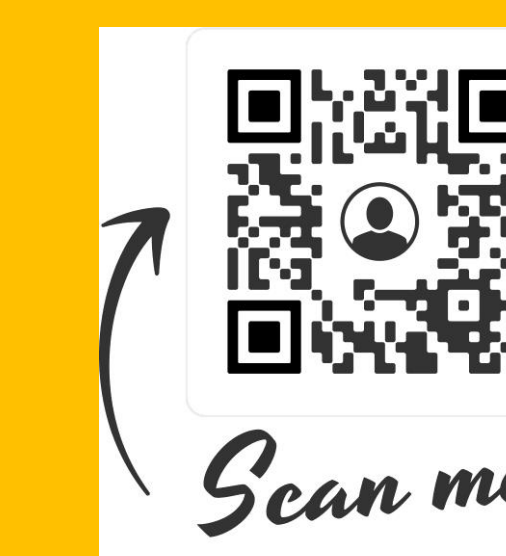


For additional information about the methods of and lessons from the study, scan the QR code and watch our presentation online.

Links:

ARISE Hub: <https://www.ariseconsortium.org/>
 Community Health: <https://www.lstmed.ac.uk/community-health-systems-group>
 LSTM: <https://www.lstmed.ac.uk/>
 LVCT Health: <https://lvcthealth.org/>
 ALIV[H]E: <https://salamandertrust.net/resources/alivhe-framework/>
 DEPICT: <https://doi.org/10.1093/heapro/dat093>

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