

# Support still needed: the failure of Kenya's pandemic economic relief system and impact on the country's women



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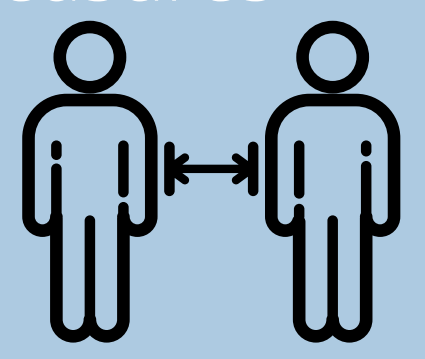
## COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND GOVERNMENT RESPONSE IN KENYA

Economic measures



- Tax reductions
- Suspension of loan defaulting reports for those indebted by April 2020
- Pay cuts for some Members of Parliament.

Social measures



- Strict curfews
- No inter-city travel
- Closure of schools

## INTERNATIONAL INFLUENCES



- US Global Gag Rule (GGR)
- UK reduction of foreign aid
- Hospitality, tourism, flower industries suffered with less consumers

- Women in Kenya are less likely to operate a business.
- 1% own property, therefore have less loan collateral.
- Struggles with entrepreneurship:
  - Discrimination in business spaces, lack of education, and family pressures.
- More likely to adopt work as roadside vendors or domestic helpers.
- 30.2% of female headed households lived below the poverty line compared to a 26% male counterpart.

**"HE USED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE DURING LOCKDOWN BECAUSE HE KNEW I COULD NOT GO ANYWHERE"**

**Devastating** consequences of government neglect: from July 2021, Human Rights Watch have published a series of reports signalling government failures on women in Kenya during isolation, particularly in urban spaces.

- Female genital mutilation from purists.
- Dramatic increases in gender based violence.
- Women deserted by male heads of households who return to rural homelands.
- 40% rise in teenage pregnancies as girls forced into prostitution for sanitary pads.

## DIGITAL FINANCIAL TECHNOLOGY AND ASSUMED BENEFITS

M-Pesa mobile money success, ban on cash.  
Rescue packages kazi mtaani inua jamii



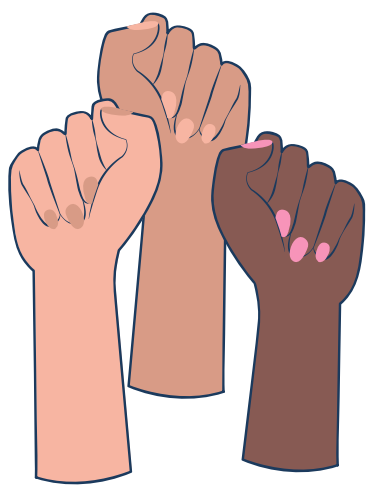
Systems failed, did not reach many who needed assistance.  
Predatory loan systems used by many in lieu of social support, indebtedness led to additional problems with credit scores.

## Platformization

- Shift gig work onto virtual platforms
- Gender bias in roles
- Barriers to entry
- Employers more power
- Hours problematic

## RESILIENCE

- Resourcefulness and innovation
- Pressure on government from groups like HRW



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