

The Consequences of the COVID-19 Pandemic for Children in Kenya

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Based on new survey data for more than 5,000 Kenyan households, this study shows that, despite government efforts to introduce remote learning options, access to education declined markedly during a nine-month-long period of school closures. Remote learning was adopted by only a small minority of students, and disadvantaged children fell further behind. During the first semester of 2021, reports of alterations in children's externalizing and internalizing behavior more than tripled, with one in five children being affected by June 2021. After schools reopened, children learning remotely or through alternative means were more likely to suffer from these disruptions in emotional well-being than those who returned to school. While the medium and long-term effects on learning outcomes and human capital remain unknown, our findings suggest that girls, and children from poorer and less educated households have been disproportionately affected.