Canada's Evidence-Driven Pandemic Response

BEFORE COVID-19

Prior to the onset of the pandemic, Canadian organizations and their global partners routinely navigated complex data-related challenges and so have drawn on past experiences with global health crises in responding to COVID-19.

Data related challenges pre-COVID:

Limited quality health information systems at all levels (country, region, local)

Persistent gender data gaps concerning vulnerable groups

Government resistance to publishing data.

RESPONDING TO COVID-19

Throughout the pandemic, Canadian organizations' response to COVID-19 has been influenced by factors such as changes in available funding, shifting priorities, size of organization and human resources, and individual country contexts

Many of the data challenges faced pre-COVID-19 have been either exacerbated or have remained consistent, while others have changed radically.

COVID-19 has required organizations to adapt remote strategies to account for pandemic-related challenges, and/or adopt new or unfamiliar remote practices

New Context

- Donor orientation towards COVID-19, and in some cases, away from other critical issues, including poverty, sexual and gender-based violence, food insecurity, infectious diseases, and sexual and reproductive health and rights
- Weak data infrastructure resulting in unreliable information on need and gaps at the country level
- Increased need for flexible, virtual evaluation approaches as travel remains restricted

Data Strategies Adapted - Plan B

- Limit primary data collection to essential information
- Upskilling and redistribution of data collection tasks to local staff
- Adjusting Protocols to align with safety standards
- Resourcing virtual data collection & remote visualization

LOOKING FORWARD

Despite many uncertainties about the future and impact of COVID-19, Canadian organizations are certain that our sector must think creatively, and take concrete actions, to prevent losses and protect hard fought gains.

Focus should be to:

Strengthen:
Virtual monitoring practices

Respond:
Ethically "Do No Harm"

Share:
Purposeful Stories

Tracking Canadian Impact:

Data on how Canadian organizations are responding to <u>COVID-19 around the world</u> is captured in the <u>Project Explorer</u>...

...an open access tool with detailed project level data that captures the full spectrum of development activities in global health and gender equality, with a <u>link to Canada</u>

COVID-19 Response to date:

79
Projects

46
Organizations

50⁺
Countries

✱ In 2020, the Project Explorer was recognized as one of Canada's Top 100 Recovery Projects helping to build back better in the COVID-19 era.

Visit the <u>Project Explorer</u> to learn more!

CanWaCH
Canadian Partnership for
Women and Children's Health

CanSFE
Partenariat canadien pour la
santé des femmes et des enfants