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Data Brief—Adolescent Mothers: From Cautionary Tales to Partners

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Girls Deliver

PRE-CONFERENCE ON ADOLESCENT GIRLS
KIGALI, RWANDA • 16 JULY 2023

ROUNDTABLE SESSION DATA BRIEF

ADOLESCENT MOTHERS: FROM CAUTIONARY TALES TO PARTNERS

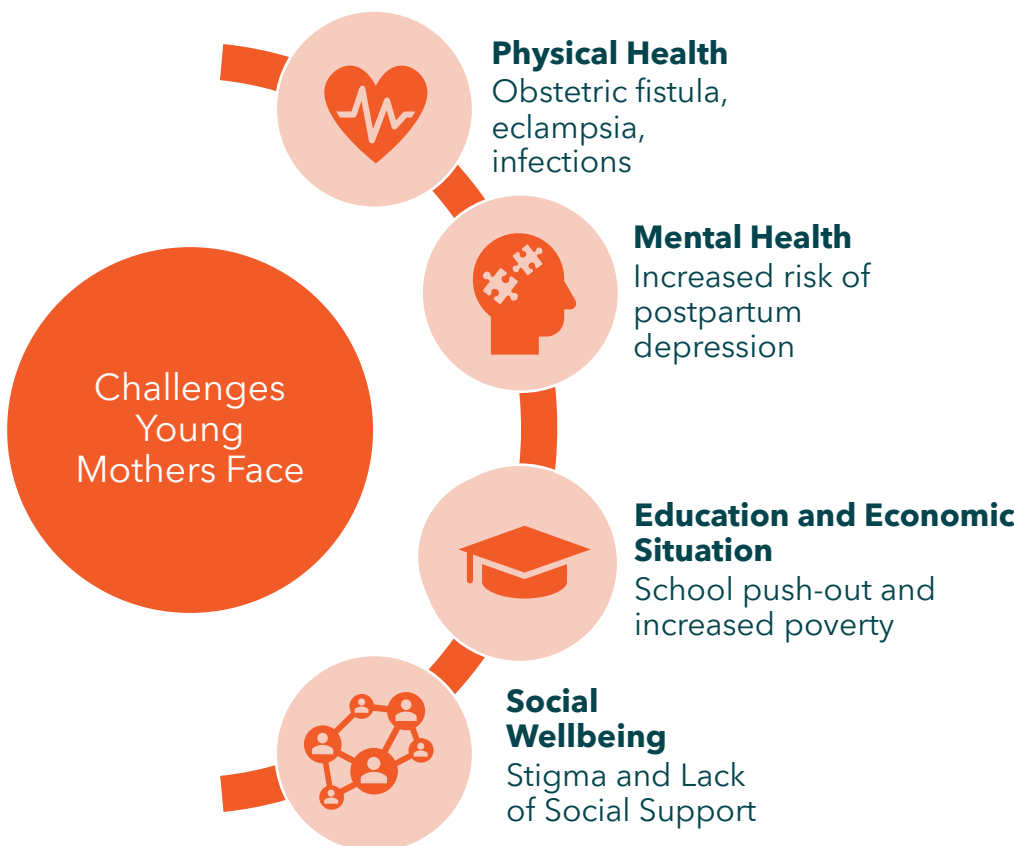
Every year, approximately **21 million** girls aged 15-19 become pregnant and **12 million** of them give birth in low- and middle-income countries.

Despite the rate of adolescent childbearing decreasing over time, the highest rates continue to be in sub-Saharan Africa with a rate of 101 per 1000 women.



Globally, approximately **1 in 6** young women give birth before their 18th birthday.

Adolescent mothers face discrimination and violence - from communities, service providers and families - causing unique challenges and higher risks than their older counterparts.



The children of teenage mothers are more likely to face several challenges:

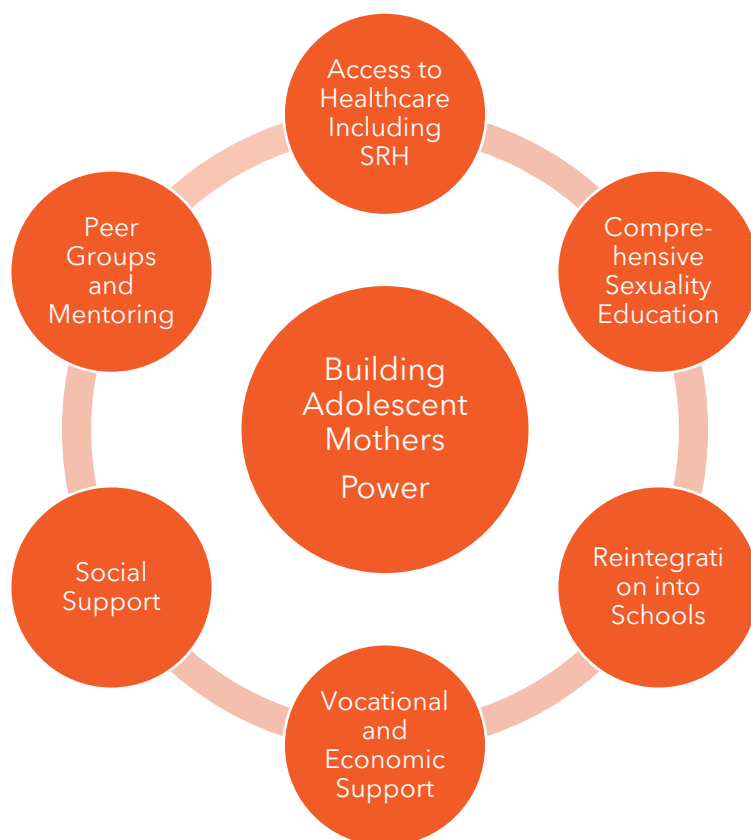
- Higher preterm birth and mortality rates
- Stunted growth
- Potential developmental delays
- Slower language development
- Lower school enrollment

Despite the challenges they face, the futures of adolescent mothers and their children are **not set in stone**.

When provided with opportunities, education, services and support, adolescent mothers can overcome the obstacles they face and improve their own and their children's outcomes.

Adolescent mothers are agents in their personal lives, societies, and the world.

As the people closest to the problems they face and those with a deep commitment to their children, **young mothers are best positioned** to understand what solutions will work to address these challenges.



In 2022, dialogues were held with nearly 200 young mothers across Kenya, Mozambique, and Tanzania to better understand these challenges and the solutions that young mothers propose.

Learn more by scanning the QR code!

Listen to their words and **invest in their solutions!**

- ✓ Invest in building young mothers' **power and social capital**, including work led by young mothers that provides opportunities to challenge the systemic harms they face, build their social networks of support and work collectively to meet their needs.
- ✓ Invest in **systems change** to ensure young mothers have **access to critical services** such as health care, education, childcare and services for their children.
- ✓ Invest to **shift norms** that challenge shame and stigma around early pregnancy and parenting.
- ✓ Invest in **SRHR programming & youth friendly health spaces**, both prevention and safe & supportive pre- and postnatal care.
- ✓ Invest in younger mothers **who face the most discrimination and violence**.

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