

**Timeline**

April-December 2020

**Study Type**

Descriptive / Surveillance

**Article Link**

<https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataverse/Covid19researchandevaluation>

**Research Implemented by IPA**

No

# COVID-19-Related Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices Among Decision-makers in Indigenous Municipalities of Guatemala

## Researchers

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## Abstract

Indigenous communities are often socially and economically marginalized which makes them particularly vulnerable to the impact of COVID-19. The Population Council has a longstanding partnership with indigenous communities in Guatemala through the Abriendo Oportunidades (AO) program. To understand the knowledge, perspectives, and needs related to the COVID-19 pandemic, we will conduct key informant interviews with indigenous community leaders and frontline workers. Phone-based surveys will be carried out with 144 key informants in the municipalities of Chisec, Patzún, San Andrés Semetabaj, San Juan Ostuncalco, San Juan Sacatepéquez, San Pedro Carchá, Santa María Chiquimula, Totonicapán, Uspantán and Sololá in April 2020. These individual profiles will include heads of household, former girl-program mentors, community health workers and providers, education officers, traditional birth attendants, and municipal officers. Results from this study will help inform national and municipal prevention and mitigation strategies for indigenous communities and identify government resources that may be prioritized to meet the needs of these communities.

## Project Outcomes of Interest

knowledge, perspectives, and needs related to the COVID-19 pandemic

## Key Findings

### *Key Findings from Round 1:*

- 100 percent of respondents are aware of COVID-19, and 74 percent know that anyone can get infected.
- Knowledge of at-risk groups and major symptoms are high. However, more than half incorrectly identified children as particularly at risk and there was lower awareness of difficulty breathing and fatigue as symptoms.
- Frontline health workers and municipal officers had the highest perceived risk of being infected with COVID-19, while community leaders, heads of household, and young indigenous women who are former adolescent girl group mentors had the lowest perceived risk. Teachers fell in the middle.
- Respondents stated that TV programs, followed by the President's announcements and TV advertisements were the most trusted sources of COVID-19 information—a majority get information from TV and radio shows.
- There is mixed knowledge on measures to prevent infection—more awareness on handwashing and masks, compared to social distancing. Indigenous community members may face challenges in adhering to promoted sanitation and hygiene and social distancing guidelines due to a lack of personal water sources, the expense of hand sanitizer, and single-room households.
- Key informants are most worried about infecting other people, followed by COVID-19's potential deadly impact and its impact on livelihoods.

## Link to Results

Results brief is [available here](#).

## Impact Goals

- Build resilience and protect the financial health of families and individuals
- Improve social-safety net responses
- Improve women's health, safety, and economic empowerment
- Reduce COVID-19 transmission rates

## Project Data Collection Mode

- CATI (Computer-assisted telephone interviewing)

## **Link to Data Collection Instruments**

<https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataverse/Covid19researchandevaluation>

## **Implementing Organization**

Population Council

## **Results Status**

Results