

Pandemic blocked access to family planning for millions: UN

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The COVID-19 pandemic prevented some 12 million women around the world from accessing birth control last year and led to 1.4 million unwanted pregnancies, a UN agency said Thursday.

The [women](#) were spread among 115 countries, according to a new report by the United Nations Population Fund, which deals with sexual and reproductive health issues.

"Pregnancies don't stop for pandemics, or any crisis," said the agency's executive director, Natalia Kanem.

"We must ensure that women and girls have uninterrupted access to life-saving contraceptives and maternal health medicines," she added.

The report said women could not access [birth control](#) in 2020 because restrictions on movement due to the pandemic caused them to use their resources in other ways.

Data collected by the agency showed women accessed family planning services in particular in April and May of last year, relatively early in the pandemic.

"The devastating impact that COVID-19 has had on the lives of millions of women and girls in the past year underscores just how vital it is to ensure the continuity of reproductive health services," Kanem said.

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