



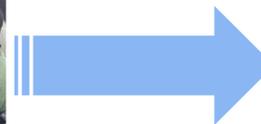
# **Pilot Study III:** **Remote Qualitative Research** *Impact of COVID-19 on Women-Owned Businesses*

## Overview

In the past, **Infinite Insight** has conducted qualitative research using platforms such as Skype, for In-depth (IDIs) and Key Informant interviews (KIIs).

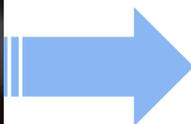
And in West Africa, **Consumer Ideas** has also conducted Online Bulletin Boards

- **However, in the main**, qualitative research has been conducted Face-to-Face (F2F), using our experienced moderators around the Continent.
- This has provided deep and rich insights (social & marketing) for our clients covering a variety of subject matters, from health; agricultural; food security; media; social media to name a few.
- **The COVID-19 pandemic** however, has temporarily halted F2F fieldwork, and in light of this, Infinite Insight has embarked on exploring alternative research methods.



- This report details the outcome of a self funded qualitative research project on ***How Female Business Owners are Dealing with the Lockdown***. The project tests three online methods of collecting qualitative research data, and shares both the research findings and the suitability of popular platforms (Zoom, WhatsApp) for **Focus Group Discussions, Paired Interviews** and **Ethnography**.

The main objective was to establish suitable alternative methods and to continue our production of quality research insights.



Also See our [Video Summary](#) of this Report on YouTube

- Respondents were sent Zoom calendar invitations 3-4 days prior to the appointment. Zoom provides a precise link to the session, that when clicked on allows one to be admitted into the session.
- The WhatsApp app was used to form a group comprising the 6 respondents. They were sent an invitation message through the app a day before the sessions commenced.
- Communication through emails and telecommunication was also used for confirmations and forum guidance.
- The screening process via Zoom is facilitated by the fact that one has to admit respondents individually, thus enabling a basic re-screening prior to joining the session

**Zoom Video Call FGD**

	AGE	EDUCATION	BUSINESS	AGE OF BUSINESS	HOUSEHOLD SIZE
R1	59	Graduate	Tourism	17	2
R2	60	Graduate	Tourism	17	3
R3	38	Graduate	E-Commerce	5	4
R4	43	Graduate	Event Planning	5	5
R5	44	Post Graduate	IT Software	11	2

**Paired WhatsApp Video Call FGD**

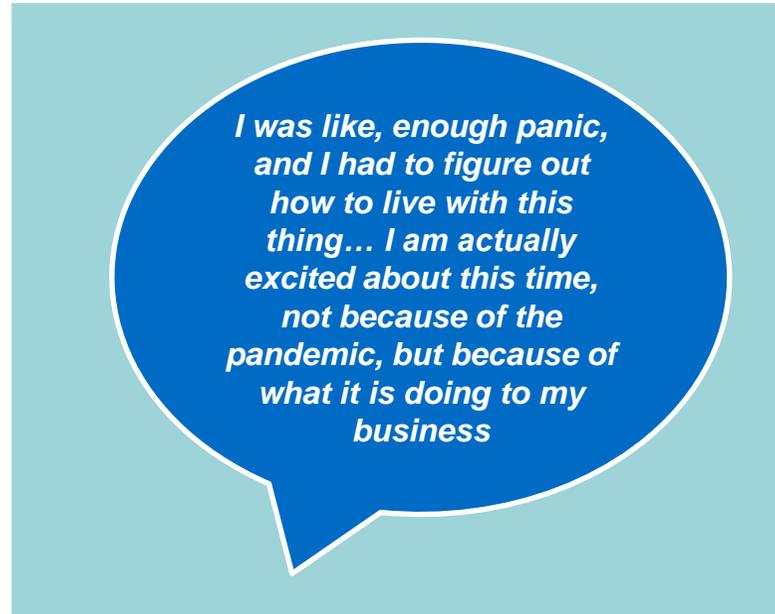
	AGE	EDUCATION	BUSINESS	AGE OF BUSINESS	HOUSEHOLD SIZE
R1	38	College	Wedding Planner	10	4
R2	36	Graduate	Tourism	8	3

**WhatsApp Bulletin Board FGD**

	AGE	EDUCATION	BUSINESS	AGE OF BUSINESS	HOUSEHOLD SIZE
R1	39	Ongoing University	Car Sales	4	4
R2	30	Diploma	Own a Gym	7	5
R3	37	Post Graduate	Hospitality	16	5
R4	56	Graduate	Business Consultancy	6	4
R5	36	Graduate	Outside Catering	6	5
R6	37	Secondary	Stationery	10	7

# Study Findings

- From the initial constant following of **news on COVID-19**, most respondents are **viewing news significantly less**.
- Knowing what's happening particularly in countries where friends & family are, remains important, but news updates are now largely seen as fuelling too much **anxiety, fear, sadness & insecurity**.
- But most still believe, having an **understanding of the disease**, its stages **helps to reduce stress**. They view information from recognised sources as '**powerful**' in maintaining a level of calm reality.



- There is a '**buckling up**' and '**bracing**' approach together with engaging in positive and innovative thinking by most.
- And, there is a **spiritual outlook** when thinking about Kenya having comparatively low death rates.
- Though, **government's measures & actions** are also viewed positively and seen as a **contributory factor to the low casualty rates**.



*To be honest I religiously followed the numbers at the beginning then after like recently the numbers keep going up so I don't follow that much... it is literally becoming the new normal*

*the numbers cause a lot of sadness and panic so I decided to be my keeper and my neighbors keeper and.... not focus on the numbers too much*

- All believe that **it will take time** for the global and indeed Kenyan economy to recover and there will be **'traumas'** along the way.
- There is a clear **awareness** of the highly negative impact on Kenya's economy, and foresee recovery to be slow.
- Nevertheless, the pandemic is seen to **provide Africa** with an opportunity to re-strategise for the future. In particular Kenyans are viewed as **'enterprising'** and **'resilient'** people who will find ways to adapt and survive.



## ZOOM FGDs

*We've had quite a fragile economy. We have so many people who have been living below the poverty line.../ There will be many people especially the small business owners who probably will not ever recover, and I am truly shocked of how I can survive on little money*

## WHATSAPP BULLETIN BOARD

*I try and understand what other economies are doing in order to be able to plan for the business and potential clients but my main focus is on Kenyan trends .../ we will have to become creative in trying to achieve budgets which were always based on numbers and add more value added services to the portfolio .../Winners will be those who adapt to more digital involving businesses as well as agriculture as food must still be eaten...*

## WHATSAPP DYAD

*I believe we will be affected quite heavily especially because we have ties with the world and specifically Kenya, so definitely we are going to be impacted.../I thought the health and medical industry would make a killing .... But there are fewer diseases, like I was thinking the other day I have not given my child medicine in months*



- **Winners** are seen as businesses already in the **digital age** such as the **'technical online events space'**, agriculture, PPE distributors and pharmaceutical companies.
- Whilst **Losers**, particularly in Africa, are those heavily engaged in export trade with Europe, US and other economies, and globally; tourism & the hospitality sector.
- The **poor & lower middle class** also stand to lose with many only previously surviving on having constant incomes.

# The Impact on Business Activities

- With strong representation of the **hospitality & tourism sectors** stark realities & fears are often expressed. Yet there is also a clear level of optimism driven by the need to remain positive for those depending on you and for self perseverance.
- The **desire to share** strategies on solutions is evident. Focusing on the local & regional markets; continuing to work and encourage booking postponements rather than cancellations; observing and focusing on the more optimistic clients, in this case described as younger in age, are thoughts expressed.



## ZOOM FGDS

*I have heard stories of how it's been really hard and tough. As much as we are coping, we are hoping for the best .. and just do what we can do to survive and just like put food on the table, ensure our children are getting some kind of schooling*

## WHATSAPP DYAD

*I believe we have people who are looking forward to travelling again, because literally every single person I talk to in Nairobi they are looking forward to come down to the coast.../ I think I am one of the few lucky ones because for weddings we have not really been impacted*

## WHATSAPP BULLETIN BOARD

*I have bought some new equipment and sensitize the membership through our social media accounts on the importance of boosting their immunity through physical activity and healthy diets.../ The business has become more personalized ..the few customers received are treated with more 'care'*

- **Business closure & staff layoffs** are coupled with exploring new business avenues & increased use of social media channels for business communication are ongoing.
- Where business owners appear to be on the **'winning' side**, namely **'digital space'**, they are taking full advantage of the same, and working more in **collaboratory mode** with clients.
- And fortunately, the pandemic seems not to have deterred those looking to **consecrate relationships**, with weddings only being postponed or simplified.

- Whilst all groups had the opportunity to **reflect and express** how they felt about the impact of the pandemic on their businesses, the **WhatsApp Bulletin Board** participants were also asked to communicate their feelings & reflections visually or by poem or verse.
- **Social Media** is used when one ‘feels down’ and which is at times met by friends following up with a phone call and encouraging words.

*Life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass...it's learning to Dance in the Rain*

*When a work lifts your spirits and inspires bold and noble thoughts in you, do not look for any other standard to judge by: the work is good, the product of a master craftsman.”  
... La Bruyere.*



### WHATSAPP BULLETIN BOARD

*We have tried to encourage WhatsApp and Zoom phone calls for them with friends and family weekly. .../I have not actually used social media as a relief...but just to listen to people's views.../ Whenever I feel down, I turn to social media especially WhatsApp status and register them there. Some friends will read and call to encourage me. In so doing, I feel some relief..*

### WHATSAPP DYAD

*we have kept our social media pages active so that they can see, and people just want to leave the house.../ So I sort reduced that compared to before, I have reduced. R1: I had increased at the beginning because of my personal use and then I reduced it again.*

### ZOOM FGDs

*I also appreciate social media platforms for providing crucial information that is business related and has kind of a touch of optimism as regards things normalizing.../ So mine is from a business angle. I am on social media to keep in touch with my customers.*

- **Keeping in touch** with friends & family both near and far are reasons to maintain **social media activity**. The younger women talk of using it for ‘**relief**’ and ‘**self development**’.
- Others, particularly **older participants** refer to social media use primarily to **promote their business activities**. And their social media use has tended to increase during this time.

- **Support received** during the pandemic, from a financial perspective, is limited. Tourism business women refer to **government support**, but which is yet to be realised. Though webinars have been hosted by government bodies (*Kenya Tourism Board*), they are seen as offering little in the way of actual support.
- On the other hand, pre-bookings & down payments from clients optimistic enough to deposit for future holidays, have provided support.
- And some refer to rent waivers as financial support received.



### ZOOM FGDs

*We don't have any kind of support as such Althea, it is just that we do a lot of forward booking, a lot of things as she had mentioned about trying to mitigate and get them to postpone their trips or whatever.../ strange I find support in being able to volunteer for a period of time.*

- However, participants view real support as largely found in **a few friends, neighbours & family members**. And this is primarily **emotional support**.
- Finding solace in helping others and **volunteering is a common theme**. This includes volunteering to help other businesses, (*eg. creatives through a South African program & food distribution*) as well as the now poor & needy. Providing moral support to clients and friends themselves also gives an element of relief in knowing that they are not alone.



### WHATSAPP BULLETIN BOARD

*The only support I feel that I have actually gotten is the fact that the landlord has agreed to waive my rent until further notice..../ A lot of financial, business and emotional support mostly come from family and friends. We do lots of referral businesses and deliveries especially snacks for families in a weekly basis,*

# Female & Male Business Owners

- On the whole, female business owners **do not consider** the pandemic as having favoured or impacted differently, **male business owners** within their respective sectors.
- However where the particular businesses are not traditionally female lead such as **transport business**, it is felt their male counterparts have **been able to adjust more successfully** by engaging in more physical parts of the business.
- At the same time it is acknowledged that **some men have greater challenges** as primary income earners and expected to continue fending for the family.



## WHATSAPP DYAD

*When it all shuts down, it shuts down for everyone. Everyone is dealing with the same consequences or issues that are coming up.../ my sector is more of a female sector and I will also have to say, on purpose, I work with females mostly and this is not because I fear working with men. I have absolutely no problem working with men, it is just that I love supporting female businesses.*

## WHATSAPP BULLETIN BOARD

*Being a lady business owner, has an adverse effect in that our male counterparts can do local rounds without raising eyebrows.... They can drive or become touts. ..../ I actually feel like maybe the male have been affected more because they never know how to handle tough times.*

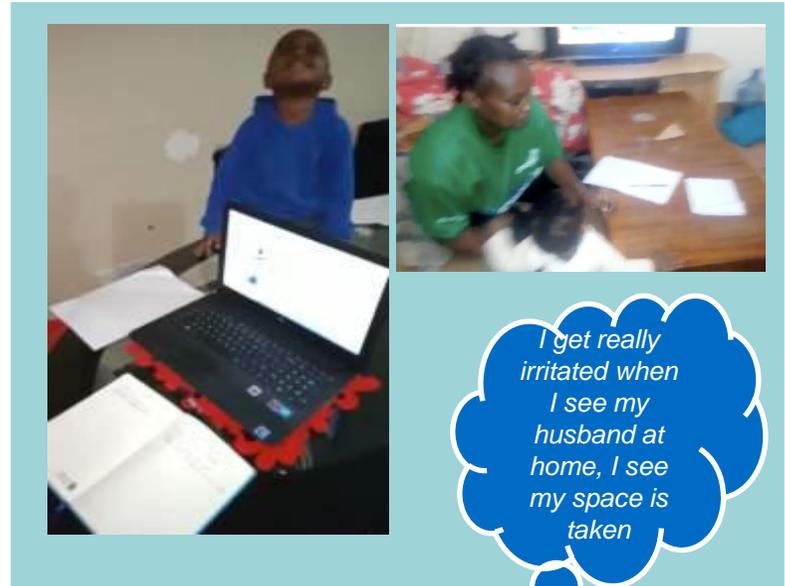
## ZOOM FGDs

*in our industry, it would have been the same because we are going through the same thing.../ I feel men would take a more strategic stand based on sort of risk, perhaps increase their appetite on risk ...we try to figure out how to save our businesses, we still have our children, .... I think many women, the toll on us is far much greater ... we are required to do so many more things. I think for many men have the luxury of primarily focus on their business.....*

- Women are viewed as **'givers'** and believe the strategies for recovery being applied by male business owners are likely to be different. Drawing on **larger business networks** and business support systems is also seen as giving them the upper hand in revival.
- Further, the ability to **solely focus** on recovery is viewed as easier for men as female business owners are more likely to have to manage family life & children's' home schooling.

# Challenges of Balancing Home & Work Life

- **Managing the new home & work life balance** produces divergence of opinion, with the key distinguishing factors being young children in the home.
- Looking after young children and their schooling largely disrupts work activities. But, even with older children, their **'anxieties and expectations'** also have to be managed most often by the female of the home.
- Where business owners have had the misfortune of needing to close down the business during this time, **parent /child bonding** for most is taking place.



**ZOOM FGDs**

*go out to the gym, running, cooking.. all so I'll get to work ..... &, continue doing my work until 4:00pm, & then leave the office. So it is basically time half day. I am enjoying it for now... now you feel more rested / the new normal that I don't like because essentially it was easy to compartmentalize.. But this one has been driving me crazy ...*

**WHATSAPP BULLETIN BOARD**

*I mean you can really do so little while you are at home.... especially me being in the fitness industry.....sometimes it's difficult to even send an email comfortably, as my 2yr old is all over the place.../ it's not rosy! As a mom with the babies around on a daily basis, it has been quite a nightmare balancing between whether to prioritize my business or the family needs.*

**WHATSAPP DYAD**

*I find it to be very difficult to be honest because both of my kids are very active and...but on the positive side I got to find a little bit more time with them so that is definitely a positive. But my working time is now longer. Before in one hour I used to process 5 couples ... now in an hour, I process only one couple*

This part of the study was used to examine the scope for **Ethnography** using the **WhatsApp Bulletin Board**. Participants captured short videos of their work environments

# Challenges of Balancing Home & Work Life

- For those where parenting is no longer part of their home routine, it has become more of a place of **relaxation and time for reflection.**
- Some have always had a **balanced work & home routine**, but now they must get used to either **spouses or children being around.**
- Whilst a few have successfully created and stuck to schedules, which effectively reduce past working hours. This is helped by **accepting the diminished urgency** of matters.



Groups sharing of work spaces

## ZOOM FGDs

*go out to the gym, running, cooking for GG and all so I'll get to work at around 12, 12:30pm, continue doing my work until 4:00pm, and then leave the office. So it is basically time half day. I am enjoying it for now... now you feel more rested / the new normal that I don't like because essentially it was easy to compartmentalize But this one has been driving me crazy .../ I get really irritated when I see my husband at home, I see my space is taken*

## WHATSAPP DYAD

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- Most female business owners **speak empathetically** about their staff. But tensions are also evident, and these mainly centre around business survival discussions.
- **Change in relationships varies** from increased frustrations with those in the home particularly house staff employed to maintain the home.
- But, **new & enlightened family relationships** are being formed with younger children.
- For many, **friendship relationships have changed** and have been positively formed. But a few cite realisations of friends not being there for them in the way that they thought they would be. A few also acknowledge their own failures in maintaining friendships, which they feel could help them now.



I think the physical space has a lot to do with the mental space.

### WHATSAPP DYAD

*it brings people closer because now you see you are paying attention to your friends you are paying attention to yourselves, to your child etc, and you are actually putting in the effort to nurture this relations.*

### WHATSAPP BULLETIN BOARD

*unfortunately the hard times has made me realize who is a true friend and who is not. I have realized not all those we call friends will come to your rescue when in need even though they may be doing better amidst the current hard economic times brought by covid-19..../ I personally have learnt to be optimistic and find other ways of making ends meet*

### ZOOM FGDs

*the office, we don't want to let anybody go, and if at all anybody goes, then it will be whole of us to go. We will have to turn off the lights together Althea as a family. So it has been quite hard..../ is a great thing because every day we are learning something that we can survive if we wanted to .../ our spaces are different .. especially the size of the house, so everybody is in different places....*

- **Physical space** in the home is seen to help maintain sound relationships amongst family members particularly older families.
- And making **practical adjustments** to lifestyles has been taken in their strides, with many feeling surprised that such changes have been relatively easily made.

- A **positive outlook** and seeing a ‘*silver lining*’ has kept most going.
- But, **despite the optimism** amongst female business owners, trying to be most things to everyone, (*thinking about how to keep one’s business afloat, ensuring the children are schooled & fed and maintaining one’s home*), the lockdown has taken its toll. **Particularly on younger business owners** as well as single parent families, where few burdens can be shared.
- The juggling of family life and additional work commitments without adequate support, has left a couple of business women **seeking external support for mental health** issues.



### ZOOM FGDs

*and I guess that was just all anxiety, sleepless nights, eating more than my usually eating.../ I crashed, ... I went through. I actually took myself to hospital .../ as a business woman with a young starter there has been rather little support and I think it is because everybody is certainly in the same space.../ I had reached a stage where I was walking 3 times a day just to manage my stress and anxiety. .../ I do have my good days and bad days in terms of stresses at work and wondering what the hell is going on,*

### WHATSAPP BULLETIN BOARD

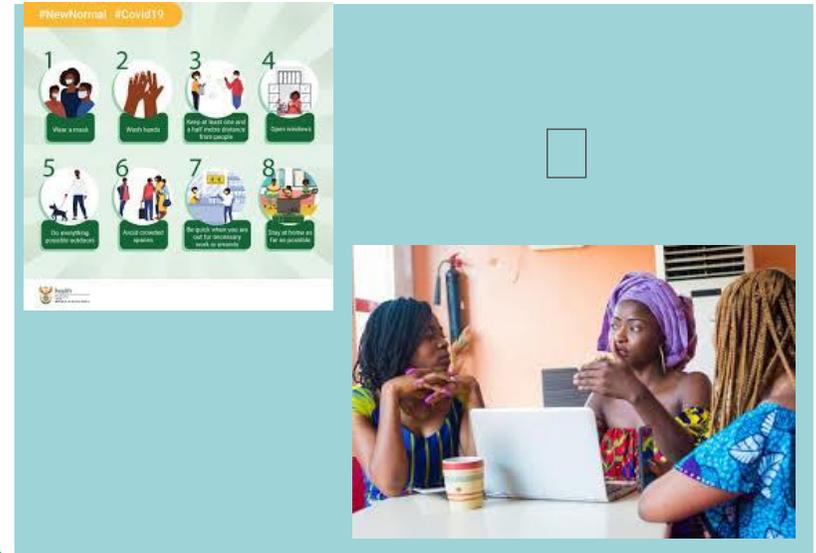
*My mental health has been compromised to some extent owing to the fact that I am the sole breadwinner around here. .../Personally I take charge of my health and I don't let situations determine my mental state. .../ There is also fear of loss of control and that I will lose family and friends to COVID. .../ My anxiety has at times manifested as depression, paralysis, and anger.*

- Others have tried to manage their mental health **spiritually and through reflection, meditation & yoga.**

### WHATSAPP DYAD

*Mental state not really, a bit of worry of course, but it gave me a bit of a break as well, it really did not affect me on a mental level. Because work wise I assume there is hope and that has played a big role.../ I don't know if it has affected my mental health but it has taught me to slow down*

- All are of the view that the future holds different things and the ‘**new normal**’ is a reality. It will take time to get back to past business levels, but the reverberating optimism continues.
- It is **soberly acknowledged** that clients will change, industries will change, and one needs to similarly change with this. Whether it be target market adjustment or actual diversification. ‘*Lean*’ and ‘*versatile*’ staffing will be required for the future.
- And time is being utilised by most to **plan and prepare** for post COVID-19 and beyond.



### ZOOM FGDs

*it is going to be a new norm, it is not going to be the same thing we did before, it is not like a continuation..... Maybe I can be the first in talking about the new normal, the new ways of holding birthday parties, the new way for weddings and funerals..../ I think the best cushion is diversification and having more than one source of revenue... a lot of things are going to change in our industry. .../ the younger generation who will be itching to travel they will cut out the middle guy which is us and go directly online*

### WHATSAPP DYAD

*I think for us in the tourism industry there will be an increase in the number of people who will travel because before everyone was focused in making money. As much as a lot of people have lost their income now they have also realised the importance of spending time with your loved ones, especially the men, they have found out that they were busy making money and the children were busy growing*

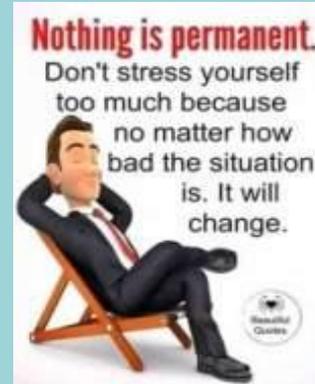
### WHATSAPP BULLETIN BOARD

*never take anything for granted and be better prepared. Maintain and nurture a strong and supportive circle of family and friends. Very likely. Low overheads being the priority.*

- **Time frame estimates** for business recovery are from 6-8 months to 1 – 3 years.
- Despite having the opportunity to spend more time with their children, **younger mothers** look forward to them returning to school, and they in turn **getting back to working** and interacting outside of the home.
- They however concede that the **time with their children** has been invaluable and now **needs to be upheld**.

# Thoughts about the Future – Outlook

- Most female business owners believe that they will **come out** of the pandemic **stronger and prepared** to take more risks.
- They will be prepared to take more risks in future business activities to **'cushion'** better against anticipated future bumps.
- Although at the same time, they feel their businesses have somewhat been less exposed to high levels of risk because of their **risk adversity** in the past.



WhatsApp Bulletin Board reflections

## ZOOM FGDs

*I would say I will be more of a risk taker because I have seen I can survive to tough times on one end and the other hand I have more time to think about what I value most.../ I am more of a risk taker simply because as I said covid has been sort of a catalyst to my business .../*

## WHATSAPP DYAD

*For me it has made me realise that, it has actually made me braver, confident because I realise that I now know what I am talking about. Before I was not sure.../ I had said before I have seen people selling their assets, they owe the bank, and that is something I did not do.../ I have gained confidence... It is easier to say that clients who were always happy with my services, but you know I have never been super confident whether I am doing this right,*

## WHATSAPP BULLETIN BOARD

*My appetite to take risks has not grown. I know I have to work on this in order to grow my business.../ The experience has made me to be wiser since I have been able to rethink the former strategy and include other activities within the same business. I feel I am prepared to take risks in the business*

- And for women, taking greater risks is still not necessarily from the financial perspective, but rather trusting themselves to more confidently go forth, with the belief that they can achieve, and survive whatever is thrown at them.

- The experience of COVID-19 has enabled most to see that they **can survive through tough times**. But they acknowledge that the journey continues. And they have to **'stay the course'**.
- Having **more time with the children**, and doing things for one's self, exercising, self reflection are all positive outcomes that are being experienced.
- And most would like to continue as the 'new normal'. But some are equally as **keen to return to the compartmentalised work, home lifestyle** of the past.



*Sometimes you don't realize your own strength until you come face to face with your greatest weakness.*  
- Susan Gale.

### ZOOM FGDs

*I am still in survival mode, and I need to get through this first.../ We will get something new coming up and so we have to brace ourselves, this was just practice .../ I now know I can survive during difficult times and incase of a next crises I will be able to take it in my stride and say I have been there, and done. I haven't still survived this one.*

### WHATSAPP DYAD

*Personally I feel things are better now that they were before because in terms of business I would like my business to thrive, but in terms of my life, I like the way it is now. You know at home everybody feels relaxed and you are not on top of each other like I have to be at work at this time or you have to do this, the child needs to dropped at this time*

### WHATSAPP BULLETIN BOARD

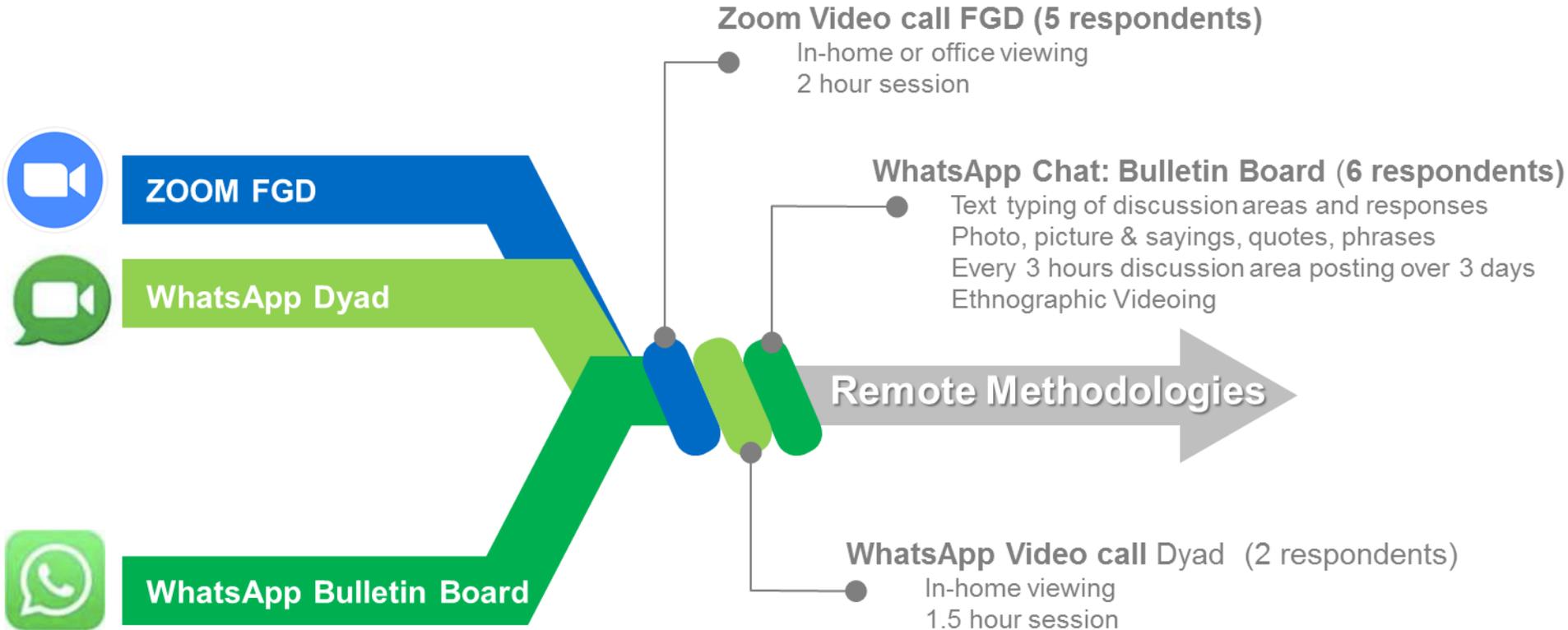
*this has made me more stronger. I'll be always prepared even during tough times because if I have survived during this pandemic then I'll be more wiser in future*

WhatsApp Bulletin Board reflections



# Discussion of Methodologies

Infinite Insight selected three online methodologies to evaluate both the comparative quality of feedback and insights as well as the technical advantages & disadvantages of the respective platforms. Both Synchronous and Asynchronous methodologies were used.

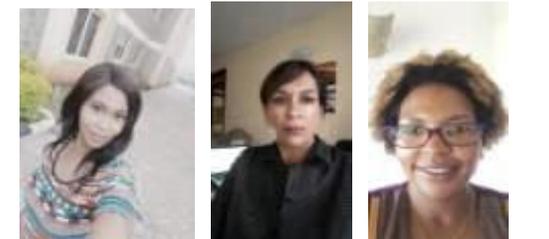




## The Discussion

- Overall the platforms and methodologies enabled rich feedback from respondents. Being in their own environments provided a level of relaxation and convenience.
- The online groups enabled flexibility in participation of respondents from different suburbs in Nairobi, geographically disbursed around the country, (Kajiado, Mombasa & Kwale).
- Whilst we cannot compare the insights garnered from the Online research with F2F ones of the same project, we believe the online groups equally provided us with the opportunity to discuss, receive depth in responses and adequately engage in probing.
- Generally, respondents interacted with each other, discussed points together and commented on each others' points. These discussions when lively, had less interrupting and talking overlap than lively discussions within a traditional F2F group.

## Female Business Owners



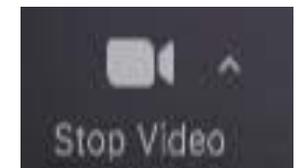


## The Technology Challenges 1/2

- Online discussions, being in environments not controlled by the organisers, can present the challenge of visual and audio interruptions, as experienced within the sessions.
- There is also potential for more background noise which at times distracts both the moderator and participants.
- Thus, there is greater susceptibility to unplanned interruptions and distractions in online real time FGDs.
- Nevertheless, prior guidance by the organisers to minimise such disturbances, as well as platform solutions works to reduce the overall impact on sessions.



## Audio Challenges

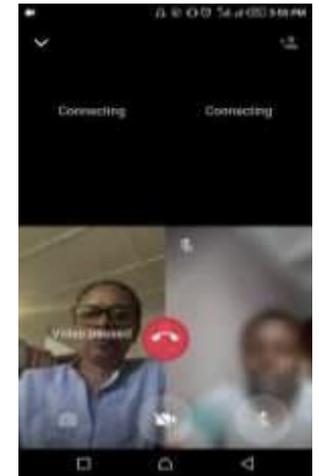
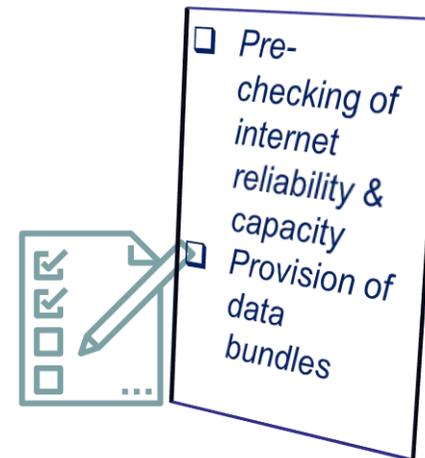




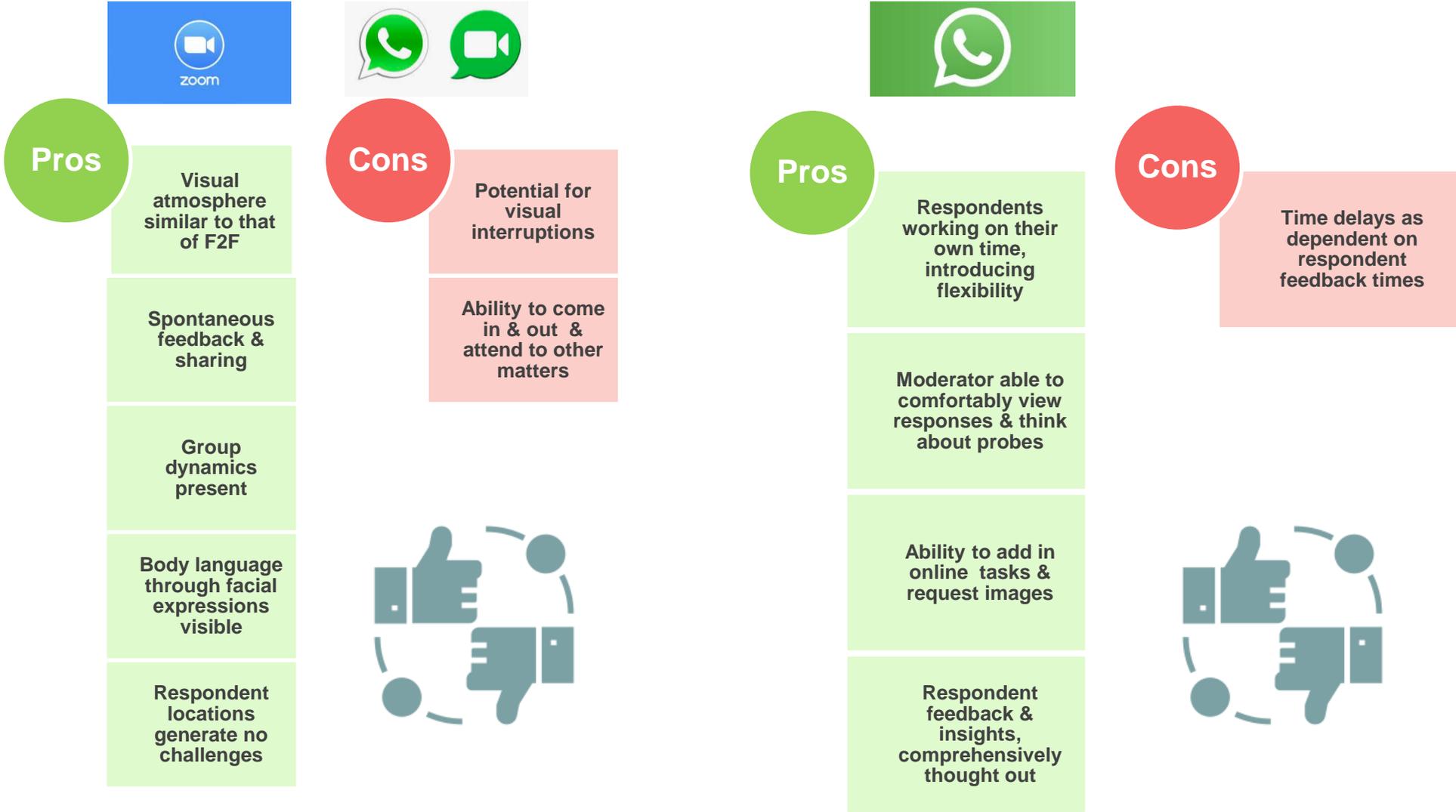
## The Technology Challenges 2/2

- All platforms require good and constant access to the internet as well as to power. This can pose a challenge in African countries, particularly when relying on the internet over long periods of time.
- Kenya however, generally scores well on the continent. And the ever increasing use of smart mobile phones and spread of internet augers well for the future.
- In this pilot, most respondents had access either to WIFI and measures were in place to ensure they had adequate data bundles where this was not the case.
- The WhatsApp Group ‘Bulletin Board’ provides a solution to potential challenges related to the need for constant and reliable internet.

## Visual Challenges



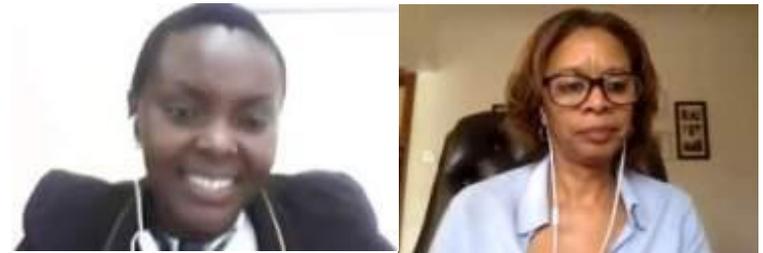
# Pros & Cons – The Methodologies



## Moderator's Feedback

- The high level of response and interactive communication provided the moderator with a forum commensurate to F2F focus groups.
- The visual sighting of all respondents also provides similar scope for rapport building and getting to know the respondents prior to the start and throughout the session. There is adequate opportunity to similarly monitor facial & non verbal expressions of the communicating respondent and partially of the group.
- Moderators less accustomed to online moderating must learn to monitor non verbal forms of communication of group participants other than those communicating during the session, as F2F moderating provides more agility in observing the group as a whole.
- **A solution to this is the co-moderator set up.**

## Moderators



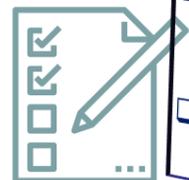
## Communication platforms



- Moderator observation techniques
- Co-group moderators

## Respondent Feedback

- Respondents on the whole expressed positive feedback about the experience of participating in the group forum.
- All felt comfortable in expressing their '*sincere*' views and commenting on others.
- Being users of Zoom & WhatsApp over this period, there was a level of familiarity with the technology.
- Respondents also expressed a preference for conducting the discussions remotely as apposed to having to attend at a venue. This particularly suited the profile of the respondents.
- Group size was considered to be important, with all expressing 5 (Zoom FGD) was comfortable and enabled the right attention to points discussed.



- Respondent familiarity with selected methodologies
- Comfortable environment

## Female Business Owners





## Moderator's Feedback

- All participants could read each others comments, with the open WhatsApp group structure used.
- And, on the whole they provided comprehensive feedback to the discussion areas.
- Providing written acknowledgement of responses, in place of a visual & verbal nods, gestures or 'Mm.. Ah ah..' is equally important to communicate acknowledgement & understanding. As is avoiding expressing any written bias or preference.
- Encouraging continued discussion and feedback is crucial where there is limited visual contact and longer time periods.
- The methodology provides time flexibility for moderator and respondents, which allows for thought out responses, rather than 'off the cuff' feedback.



## Communication platforms



### Moderator Discussion

M:Mm yes, I see where you are coming from. But do you think the public will hold out that long by themselves or will it require continued government imposed restrictions?

M: Oh dear very sorry about that Susan, but thanks for giving full and detailed feedback still. We really appreciate.

M:Good morning ladies, the sun looks to be shining where I am I hope it's the same for you all. As Hilda has said, thanks so much for your contributions yesterday, and we are looking to start off the morning with more on your businesses. We are awaiting your replies on the impact on your business, please do share with us, and please remember that photo, picture or quoted words that express how you feel about the impact on your business. Thank you.



## Respondent Feedback

- Respondent feedback on the technology, was on the whole positive.
- Most participants felt comfortable interacting through the platform and expressed comfort in the technology and being able to respond when & where convenient to them.
- A minority were less comfortable with the technology & found texting lengthy replies a challenge.
- However all respondents also felt they could & were interacting with others in the group.
- A minority initially felt uncomfortable sharing thoughts that could be read by all. But subsequently settled into providing comprehensive feedback.

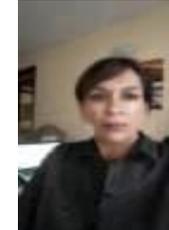


- Tips for easier typing
- Clarity in confidentiality

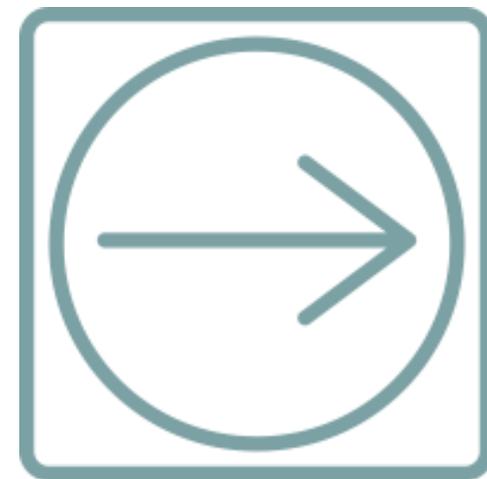
## Respondent Feedback

Hi Althea, Save for the timings, I personally believe the discussion was well conducted. WhatsApp is effective especially for evening people who like me who can give feedback after the daily hustles. Thanks Althea for moderating the sessions well.

It was an amazing experience, I actually felt at home from the beginning- you are all beautiful and wonderful ladies



- **Online qualitative research, provides an appropriate solution to Face-to-Face** research for in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. And the forums used provide a feasible and acceptable alternative source of qualitative research data collection.
- However the **demographics and socio economic classification (SEC)** of respondents participating in this study represents the higher classifications, of educated, young (30s+) and middle aged(40-60) women.
- Conducting similar projects amongst **lower SEC's** is likely to see a **greater impact** on areas such as **technical challenges** and the **limited internet connectivity**.
- Measures to address this will include the provision of **data bundles** and **pre-guidance** on the technology. Whilst using platforms such as **WhatsApp** with which lower SEC's are more likely to be familiar with will facilitate quality of discussions.



*The platforms used offers comparatively inexpensive & easy to use tools for online qualitative research*

**Infinite Insight** continues to test other technologies, and to explore the alternatives to enhance online qualitative data collection from diverse respondent demographics with the goal of continuing to deliver rich and deep insights for our clients.

## Technology Tips

- Ensure the moderator and respondents are comfortable with the platform. *The moderator should be very familiar with the platform being used*
- Provide clear Login instructions to avoid late & flustered respondents
- The Mute Button – guide on camera, microphone use & headphone use to limit noise interference
- Prepare respondents on what to expect in terms of visual viewing of the moderator and other group members. And ensure they are comfortable on ‘camera’
- Guide respondents in setting up in a quiet area away from distractions & noise. Lighting & video image should also be checked.

## Discussion Guide Tips

- It is important to ensure the DG is not too expansive: this has potential of pushing the time boundaries. Like F2F this leaves respondents fatigued and impatient.
- Moderators should be familiar to using a soft copy DG. These can allow one to identify what questions have been asked.
- For bulletin boards, the moderator should be proficient in typing. Where this is not the case, the moderator may require to work with a typist in place of the F2F notetaker.
- Any stimulus/ show cards should be pre-loaded and ready for display at the right times.



### ***Be prepared to Trouble Shoot***

- Screen freezing & drop offs / disconnections
    - Bandwidth challenges
  - Keep email, phone number of all participants close by
- Test technical set up first – moderator’s and participants***





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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LtwQdyi6Hn0>



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