

Supplementary table: Additional quotes

Theme	Illustrative quote
Mental distress symptoms	
	<p><i>“Because she could see I was down, at times I was just bored; I didn’t have a big issue but I was just bored. She would ask if I was okay and I would say I was okay from the surface but deep down I felt like even if someone sees me they would know I’m not okay. (IDI participant, Nairobi)</i></p>
	<p><i>“you just feel like your head full, you don’t even know what to do because your mind is not working well.” (IDI participant, Homabay)</i></p>
	<p><i>“when you are pregnant and stressed, those are so many burdens. You will lack appetite, lose weight and even end up lacking blood.” (IDI participant, Nairobi)</i></p>
	<p><i>“Somebody may be having stress, and you may never know that you are stressed, or something is distracting your mind until the moment ... you are taking something; you feel like there is loss of appetite.” (IDI participant, Homabay)</i></p>
Sources of mental distress	<p><i>“when one is pregnant, they sometimes act crazy. You may wake up and just blow up for no good reason. So, the counselling really helps.” (IDI participant, Nairobi)</i></p>

	<p><i>“It is usually hard, I have passed through hard times but I thank God, at times I pray but there are times I am not able to pray, those times I leave for God to do as He pleases. I have children and my husband died, though he never told me anything before he died. While he was alive and I was pregnant with the child that he left me with when he was still a baby, I went to hospital and it is when I found out that I had HIV. When I told him, he wasn’t surprised and he never said anything nor did he change. What he told me is that those doctors are lying and maybe because I had some problems back at home, it could have been the reason my blood was found to be that way. I was stupid and just took it that way, we continued staying and I don’t know what he thought, I had trusted him and never thought he could be unfaithful, so I just stayed. ... (FGD participant, Nairobi)</i></p>
<p>Men frequently mentioned as a source of mental stress</p>	
<p>Abandonment</p>	<p><i>“Many men cheat when the woman is pregnant and this hurts a lot and may lead to stress and depression. When you are pregnant you can’t think of revenging and just want to find a way of raising your children. I got to a point I was just talking to myself because it is not easy to share some of these things because some judge you” (FGD participant, Nairobi)”</i></p>
	<p><i>“Now it came to a point where we had a disagreement with my husband and he abandoned me with the baby and moved to Sindo, where he was working. Now I started developing stress, I could not sleep I am just awake, I cannot even chat, I was stressed-out and went back to the hospital.” (IDI participant, Homabay)</i></p>
	<p><i>“When you get pregnant, there are some men that don’t accept it, they expect you to behave the same and refuse to understand you. They also start having affairs when you are pregnant and this stresses but at least I struggled and made it through.” (FGD participant, Homabay)</i></p>

<p>Lack of financial support</p>	<p><i>“It is true that as mothers we go through several challenges and especially when pregnant or postpartum. Today’s men want working women, so for me I think even if you have a stubborn pregnancy, try do something that can earn you something because if you don’t this man sees you as a burden ... I urge women to have something to do to earn an income and be wise to save. When I was pregnant with the child I came with, I was stressed because he packed things and went to the village and told me to join him there. When I thought about going there, I knew that it would be a life of struggle. I went and looked for a job and up to now I am still doing it, I asked God to help me be able to feed and do everything for my children through that job, I worked until the last day (of pregnancy). (FGD participant, Nairobi)</i></p>
<p>Verbal or physical abuse</p>	<p><i>“There are other times I could feel my heart beating. I feel I am not okay. So, even when my husband would come to the house quarreling, after I over think, I would be in shock and start trembling.” (IDI participant, Nairobi)</i></p>
	<p><i>“Sometimes you would feel you’re low, there are ups and downs in the house, you get the man threatening you. You find at times you’re down, you have children, you have no alternatives and you’re wronged but you wonder where else can you go or what you can do. So, you feel it would be better if you don’t exist. You feel like there’s no one who cares about you, no one can see my feelings ...” (IDI participant, Nairobi)</i></p>
<p>Men too are hurting</p>	
	<p><i>" Men mostly like keeping quiet with their issues. An issue can bother him but he just keeps it to himself. You may find that he cannot talk about the issue bothering him and instead it hurts you. It is you whom he later comes to release the stress to. There are some who either keep silent without talking as other like chaos that even if it is a mere cup that he finds on the table... it becomes an issue. When food delays which is his fault coming late with food, when it’s not ready on time he leaves it for you. Such kind of things. Now how they handle issues differ with how they are. But mostly it is us who get hurt instead. (FGD participant #1, Homabay)</i></p>

	<i>“ If one also has an understanding husband, this can also make them very happy during pregnancy, the husband doesn't contribute to her stress.” (FGD participant, Nairobi)</i>
Coping strategies	
	<i>“I think it is better to share your stress with someone because if you keep it in, it shall harm you. When you share with people, they give you different advice and after a while you become okay.” (FGD participant, Nairobi)</i>
	<i>“as women, when we are stressed, we usually share with our close friends. You could be thinking your issue is the hardest but as you share and they tell you what they are going, you come to see that yours is even better” (FGD 1, Nairobi participant #9</i>
	<i>“When my mind is full ... I go out and go to my sister or I call her and she comes so we are just there telling our own stories (IDI participant, Homabay)</i>
	<i>“I was so stressed and kept to myself because I felt no one cared. I got to a place and would just go and spend my time in church, the pastor would talk to me and when I would go back home, I got to know how to control myself.” (FGD 1, Nairobi participant #1)</i>
	<i>“I had even decided to die and get out of earth. Now the way she [the counsellor] talked to me made my thoughts move from doing something bad in my life.” (IDI participant #3, Homabay)</i>

