



## From Insights to Action - Gender Equality in the Wake of Covid-19

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### Introduction

The UN Women Report summarizes data, research and policy recommendations on the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on women and girls, as to how it has been affecting poverty, employment, unpaid care and violence against the female population. Additionally, it brings into focus the dearth of gender data and calls for greater attention and investment to prioritize gendered effects of the crisis.

### Key Highlights

1. While majority of the **Covid-19 cases are among men (53%), women account for over 63% cases in the 85+ age cohort.**
2. Evidence suggests that the pandemic exposes and exploits pre-existing inequalities as the poor and marginalized communities stand a greater risk of being affected by Covid-19 virus.
3. Sexual and reproductive health services must be prioritized, given early evidence indicates COVID-19 has direct and indirect effects on maternal mortality, with some estimates as high as 56,700 additional maternal deaths. Additionally, particularly in Asia and Pacific, **60% women reported that they faced more barriers to seeing a doctor** because of the on-going pandemic.
4. Feminized sectors, characterized by low pay and poor pay have been hit the hardest by the pandemic, especially because the accommodation and food services sector, that have an over-representation of women workers, have been devastated by job losses.
5. Women on the frontlines are most affected by Covid-19 since they make up 70% of the health and social care workforce, as nurses, midwives and community health workers. This exposure raises their risk of infection.
6. **More women have lost their jobs or businesses due to the pandemic – 25% women vs 21% men.**
7. The negative impact on the economy, coupled with job losses and lack of social protection is expected to push, from 71 million to 135 million additional people into extreme poverty. A new economic forecast puts the figure at approximately 96 million people, of whom 47 million are women and girls.
8. The pandemic threatens to deepen the gender poverty gaps with the projections suggesting that in 2021, for every 100 men in poverty, there will 118 women, globally and it could rise to 121 women every 100 men by 2030.
9. Gaps in basic services have magnified unpaid care burdens on the female population, especially if they have members testing positive for the virus. In slums and areas with high-population density and poor sanitary conditions, women are still being forced to collect water at crowded community pumps increasing their exposure to the virus.
10. While governments have been caught up with the crises surrounding the pandemic and its ripple effect on the economy, there is little to no focus on gender issues. According to a rapid assessment of initial social protection measures to tackle the Covid-19 crisis, enacted by the governments worldwide, less than 1 in 5 were gender sensitive.
11. Emerging data highlights how violent partners have used the confinement to further their power and control with women being unable to leave home or access any help. Abuse reports and calls to hotlines have shown a significant decline and are expected to only drop further.
12. Additionally, women with disabilities are two times more likely to suffer from violence from partners and family members, and up to 10 times more likely to suffer from sexual abuse, as compared to women without disabilities. The lockdown has thus further put them at an even more disadvantageous position than they were already at, with no one to monitor their activities and the absence any visitors.
13. Evidence from previous pandemics have revealed increased violence against female health workers, femicide, racial and ethnic discrimination as well as violence. This has also been corroborated with current Covid-19 reports that state both physical and verbal attacks on health care workers.
14. Sex aggregated data, health related as well on job losses and unemployment are vital to understand the impact of the pandemic within different classifications. At the moment there's a dearth of data which makes it difficult to predict the effect of the pandemic on the most vulnerable women and girls.

Read more: <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2020/gender-equality-in-the-wake-of-covid-19-en.pdf?la=en&vs=5142>

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