Economic justice and rights: What gender data say about where we are?

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Gender gaps in employment prior to COVID-19

Employment-to-population ratio in Asia and the Pacific by sex, 1991-2018

Source: ILO modelled estimates, November 2018
Gender gaps in time allocated to paid and unpaid work prior to COVID-19

Average time spent on unpaid domestic and care and volunteer work, by sex and country

- Women
- Men

Average time spent on subsistence and paid work, by sex and country

- Women
- Men

Source: Authors’ elaboration on United Nations Statistics Division Time use data portal
**Labor force participation by sex, household type and region prior to COVID-19**

Answering key question: how COVID-19 does affect gender equality?

- Are women losing their jobs?
- Who is spending more time teaching their children?
- Are vulnerable groups getting poorer?
COVID-19 risks to further jeopardize the availability of gender data, but not its relevance

COVID-19 poses unprecedented and unique challenges to traditional methods of data collection:

- Face-to-face data collection methods not feasible due to lockdown regulations (risks of contagion, COVID-19 safety protocols);
- Prioritization of economic indicators as main measurement domain, with limited sex disaggregation (e.g., household as unit of analysis);
- Measurement of unpaid domestic and care work particularly relevant during COVID-19: the household absorbed increased demands for care and domestic work. No substitution effects with services in public and private sector (e.g., homeschooling);
- Alternative methods: unequal coverage of complete sampling frames for CATI and CAWI among countries.
With COVID-19 innovative approaches are needed

Regional roll out of UN Women Rapid and Assessment Surveys in partnership with the private sector, national Governments and international organizations
As a result of COVID-19, women’s economic resources are being hit hardest.

COVID-19 is hitting women’s income from savings, investments and properties hardest.

- **61% of women** saw decreases.
- **58% of men** saw decreases.

More women saw decreases in remittances received, a particularly relevant source of income for the poor:

- **66% of women**
- **61% of men**
COVID-19 increased the unpaid domestic & care workload, and women are bearing the heaviest burden.
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COVID-19 MULTIPLIED THE WORKLOAD AT HOME AND WOMEN ARE PAYING THE PRICE

- 85% of women are helping more*
- 63% of men are helping more*
- 67% of daughters are helping more
- 57% of sons are helping more

DOMESTIC WORKERS HAVE HELPED COPE, BUT MANY LOST THEIR JOBS SINCE THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

- 16% hired a domestic worker
- 28% asked theirs to work longer hours
- 34% fired their domestic worker

*Women and men were asked whether their partner helps more, so an assumption is made that their partner is of the opposite sex, even though this may not be the case.
Pay has fallen as formal workers see their hours reduced and informal workers lose their jobs.

The pandemic is pushing people out of paid work and shrinking earnings and wages:

- **63%** of people saw income losses from paid work.
- **50%** of women in formal employment work less hours.
- **35%** of men.

COVID-19 took informal worker’s jobs, and most lack social protection benefits:

- **84%** of women outside formal employment lack unemployment benefits or government financial support.
- **83%** of men.
Key takeaways

- Prior to COVID-19, there were gender gaps in labour force participation, with women at disadvantaged;
- The unequal distribution of unpaid domestic and care work among family and household members acts as a barrier to women economic empowerment;
- COVID-19 has deepening pre-existing gender inequalities in the world of unpaid and paid work, with women and vulnerable groups (e.g., informal workers) at disadvantage;
- COVID-19 is putting the achievement of the 2030 Agenda at stake in Asia and the Pacific region, especially for women and girls;
- Gender data is key to provide evidence on the gendered effects of the current pandemic and to inform a gender-sensitive recovery.
THANK YOU
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