



# UN Women Indonesia COVID-19 Response

Photo: UN Women/Alexandra Radu

## INTRODUCTION

Women have been at the forefront of COVID-19 response and are disproportionately affected by the crisis. In Indonesia, women make up the majority of frontline healthcare professionals and community health workers. At home, women also play important roles as caregivers for children, the sick, and elderly members of their families. Plus, school closures mean that women have taken on an increased unpaid care burden while remaining one of the main contributors or sole breadwinners of their households.

This combination of economic and social stresses brought on by the pandemic, as well as restrictions on movement, have dramatically increased the numbers of women and girls facing abuse in almost every country, and Indonesia is no exception. Many of the socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19 have exacerbated pre-existing inequalities and discrimination, both in public and private spaces.

Since the COVID-19 outbreak, UN Women Indonesia has immediately adjusted and realigned its country programme to support partners in driving a response that meets the immediate needs of women and girls. It also focuses on safeguarding and leveraging gains made on gender equality and women's empowerment through policy advocacy and programming that incorporates a gender-transformative approach to recovery.

### KEY AREAS OF INTERVENTIONS:

1. Rapid assessment and evidence-based advocacy on the gendered impacts of the COVID-19 crisis on women and girls.
2. Social protection response to COVID-19, including women's economic empowerment, livelihoods and resilience.
3. Social cohesion and peaceful societies in COVID-19 context.
4. Prevention and response to violence against women, including domestic violence

Within the UN system, UN Women is mandated to lead coordination to ensure the accountability and delivery of gender equality and empowerment of women and girls. In Indonesia, UN Women brings the gender lens to responses and is part of the first call of the Secretary-General's UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund established in April 2020, along with UNDP, UNICEF and WFP under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator Office.<sup>1</sup> Simultaneously, UN Women emphasises the

important role of civil society and women's groups and their engagement with government response and coordination with a wide range of stakeholders to ensure the COVID-19 response and recovery includes the perspective of women and girls. UN Women has adapted our existing activities and mobilized additional resources to help alleviate the adverse impact of the pandemic in Indonesia. Our interventions focus on the following:

## KEY AREAS OF INTERVENTIONS:

### Rapid assessment and evidence-based advocacy on the gendered impacts of the COVID-19 crisis on women and girls

UN Women supports the rapid assessment to demonstrate the differential socioeconomic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women and men, with particular focus on women in vulnerable and informal employment, using a combination of big data, innovative methodologies and cost-effective technology for data collection and

analysis. UN Women uses this to **inform national policy responses to support the government**, particularly the National Task Force for COVID-19 Response (Response Gugus Tugas Percepatan Penanganan Penyakit Virus Corona 2019/COVID-19).

In addition, UN Women is conducting assessments focusing on specific groups of women affected by the crisis, including women entrepreneurs and women migrant workers. It also makes gender data and evidence available for networks and services that support women so they can be better informed about the crisis, as well as to promote women's role in leading and participating in the response and recovery.

For instance, Indonesia is part of the regional assessment on the impact of COVID-19 on women migrant workers conducted across ASEAN member states supported by UN Women. Similarly, UN Women led the impact assessment of the crisis on women entrepreneurs, employers and employees within private companies, using a variety of surveys to support the business response to COVID-19 and outline specific recommendations to engage with different stakeholders in support of economic recovery.<sup>2</sup>

### Social protection response to COVID-19, including women's economic empowerment, livelihoods and resilience

Funded by the UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF COVID-19), UN Women works in partnership with UNDP, UNICEF and WFP to support institutional and intersectoral coordination of social protection responses led by the National COVID-19 Task Force.<sup>3</sup>



Aligning with the Government of Indonesia's COVID-19 Response Plan and the UN Indonesia COVID-19 Multi-sectoral Response Plan, the proposed programme is designed to operationalize UN contributions to two specific workstreams of the UN framework for the immediate socioeconomic response to COVID-19: Protecting People, Social Protection and Basic Services; and Macroeconomic Response and Multilateral Collaboration.

UN Women is applying a gender perspective to this initiative with a focus on the following specific areas:

- Technical support to Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) to develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPS) to coordinate and refer social protection services at national and subnational levels, particularly **engaging the Ministry of Women Empowerment and Child Protection (MoWECP) in strengthening essential services for women and children who experience violence during COVID-19 as part of a comprehensive social protection package** supported by UN Women in close collaboration with UNDP, UNICEF, and WFP.
- **Promoting women's economic empowerment as part of the COVID-19 response and recovery by linking private sector companies with Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs)**, supported by UN Women under MPTF COVID-19 and other programme funding sources. UN Women has also conducted consultations with selected private sector partners and government agencies to develop a practical plan and concrete solutions to enable women entrepreneurs affected by COVID-19 to have increased access to markets and finance, using online platforms such as WeLearn ([welearn.unwomen.org](http://welearn.unwomen.org)) to provide free access to information, skills and alternative funding.<sup>4</sup>
- **Integrated gender-based violence (GBV) services as part of the comprehensive social protection packages.** This includes two areas of support: (1) Helping to develop umbrella guidelines and protocol for protecting the rights of women and children in COVID-19 response and recovery, including promoting economic recovery and resilience, responding to GBV, and addressing stigmatization and discrimination against women in marginalized groups; and (2) strengthening the capacity to prevent and respond to GBV, including essential services in the COVID-19 context. In this regard, UN Women will work in close collaboration with UNFPA under MPTF COVID-19 and other programme funding sources.

## Social cohesion and peaceful societies in COVID-19 context

UN Women is supporting the community-level intervention of our Civil Society Organisation (CSO) partners, which are tailored to local circumstances, and the COVID-19 response to scale up the successful *Peace Village* initiative, conceived by UN Women and the Indonesian NGO Wahid Foundation. There are currently 10 declared Peace Villages on Java island, all of which were founded based on the lobbying efforts by women's groups established by Wahid and UN Women. UN Women's COVID-19 response includes repurposing our program to assist the women cooperatives in the Peace Villages, with financial and technical assistance for sustenance and business recovery.

Beyond exacerbating existing socioeconomic disparities, the COVID-19 crisis potentially fuels local conflict with the spread of misinformation, discrimination and stigmatisation against marginalised groups. Given its disproportionate impact in environments where the human rights of women and girls may have already been under threat, there is a critical need to continue to support grassroots women movements and organizations in the region to recover without losing the hard-won gains made over the past decades to advance gender equality and the role of women in sustaining peace and security.

Photo: UN Women/Iwan Kurniawan



UN Women continues to support women's participation and leadership in promoting social cohesion and a peaceful society in the recovery of COVID-19.

## Prevention and response to violence against women, including domestic violence

In response to the COVID-19 crisis, UN Women has been supporting partners active in preventing and ending violence against women to ensure basic social services include the most vulnerable groups of women, such as women living with HIV. In close collaboration with UNFPA, UN Women will assist MoWECP in developing umbrella guidelines and protocols to protect the rights of women and children during the COVID-19 response and recovery, including the meaningful engagement of women and girls at the community level in selected provinces.

UN Women Indonesia is also conducting a study on the implementation of local regulations on violence against women (VAW) and trafficking prevention in West Java. In response to the pandemic, the study will identify best practices for the implementation of local and provincial regulations in developing gender-responsive services for women migrant workers and their families. UN Women will also support the development of recommendations and strategies for policy advocacy in West Java, focusing on the prevention and protection of women migrant workers from violence and trafficking, thus strengthening evidence-based advocacy strategies.

As part of UN Women's repurposed programme to respond to GBV during COVID-19, UN Women also supports the distribution of personal protective equipment (PPE) kits to women migrant workers, who have returned and have been quarantined in shelters under the Ministry of Social Affairs. In addition to basic self-protection gear to prevent transmission among returnees, UN Women also delivers information packages to raise awareness among both men and women migrant workers, particularly on issues of intimate partner violence and access to services for survivors of violence.

Finally, UN Women has supported the MoWECP to develop a Cross-Sectoral Protocol on the Protection of Women Migrant Workers during the COVID-19 Pandemic. UN Women and CSO partners have conducted a series of consultations with key stakeholders, including NGO partners and a variety of MoWECP departments and local governments to finalize this important guidance.<sup>5</sup> The protocol addresses the prevention and response to trafficking and violence against women migrant workers, as well as rehabilitation measures during the pandemic in all migration cycles, including pre-departure, at work, and return. It also specifies the need for sex-disaggregated data, and the participation of women migrant workers in COVID-19 response planning and decision-making.

Across all four areas of our work, UN Women Indonesia continues to **support women and girls leading and participating in COVID-19 response planning and decision-making** from local to national levels.

## ENDNOTES

1 See, the Secretary General's UN Response and Recovery Fund, 30 March 2020, available at <https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-03/SG-Response-and-Recovery-Fund-Fact-sheet.pdf> and the Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) COVID-19, available at <http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/COV00>

2 Supported by the regional programme, WeEmpower Asia funded by EU in partnership with UN Women and private sector companies.

3 United Nations (UN) COVID-19 Response and Recovery Multi-Partner Trust Fund (COVID-19 MPTF) is a UN inter-agency finance mechanism launched by the UN Secretary-General to support low and middle-income programme countries in overcoming the health and development crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Fund's assistance targets those most vulnerable to economic hardship and social disruption

4 WeLearn is an online learning platform developed by UN Women and is supported by Sunlight Unilever to offer equal opportunities for women to start, manage and grow business, and to be better prepared to benefit from the changing world of work and market development. As of 29 May 2020, there are 5,265 registered users on the WeLearn platform. Available at [welearn.unwomen.org](http://welearn.unwomen.org)

5 Cross-Sectoral Protocol on the Protection of Women Migrant Workers during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Available at [bit.ly/perempuanmigran](http://bit.ly/perempuanmigran)

ACROSS ALL OF THE FOUR AREAS  
OF OUR WORK, UN WOMEN  
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PARTICIPATING IN COVID-19  
RESPONSE PLANNING AND DECISION-  
MAKING FROM LOCAL TO NATIONAL  
LEVELS