



**VIRTUAL INTER-AGENCY EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON IMPLEMENTATION  
OF THE THIRD UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR THE ERADICATION OF  
POVERTY (2018-2027)—ACCELERATING GLOBAL ACTIONS FOR A WORLD  
WITHOUT POVERTY: GAPS, CHALLENGES AND PROGRESS**

**SESSION 5: FISCAL AND INCLUSIVE SOCIAL POLICIES FOR POVERTY ERADICATION**

**DAY 3-WEDNESDAY 18 MAY 2022, 8-8:30 AM (NY TIME)**

**BOBO DIALLO**

**ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT SECTION**

**POLICY, PROGRAMME, AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL DIVISION, UN WOMEN**



# | CONTENT

1. Background
2. The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Women and Girls
3. UN Women's Solutions to Tackle Women's Poverty
4. Conclusion and Way Forward

# | BACKGROUND

- As clearly laid out in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and reaffirmed in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, and achieving gender equality are two of the greatest global challenges and indispensable requirements for sustainable development.
- As the eradication of poverty in all its forms is a central commitment in the 2030 Agenda, full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men must take on heightened importance. However, today, due to the COVID-19, an unprecedented health, economic and social crisis continues to threaten lives and livelihoods.

# | THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON WOMEN AND GIRLS

- The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and economic crises it created continue to be felt across the globe today. While most affected countries have seen some marginal improvements, global recovery has remained slow and so have employment generation and wage growth. This is true for most advanced and developing economies where wages remain flat and job gains are still below their pre-pandemic levels.
- The jobless recovery has worsened gender differentials in unemployment across all regions, particularly as shrinking fiscal space led to cuts in public sector and informal employment, which in many countries are a female-dominated sector. Between 2020 and 2021, average women's labour-force participation in emerging and developing economies fell by 6.1% – a decline that was 50% higher than for men.
- The crisis disproportionately affected lower-paid workers through reductions in hours worked, thereby increasing wage inequalities. Women and young women, who are over-represented in the hardest-hit sectors have suffered disproportionate job and income losses.

# | THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON WOMEN AND GIRLS (CONT.)

- The unprecedented global economic and labour market crisis triggered by the COVID 19 pandemic has hurt women disproportionately and put many families at risk of falling into poverty. Consequently, the threat of increased poverty and inequality is more than ever a concern for social justice. Overall, the crisis has exacerbated pre-existing decent work deficits, increased poverty, widened inequalities and exposed digital gaps within and among countries
- Poverty and discrimination are inherently linked, with poverty risk particularly high for women who face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, including those based on gender, ability, age, ethnicity, location, migration and family status. The pandemic has shown that women and girls in rural and remote areas continue to experience difficulties in accessing resources, information, training and services that would allow them to move out of poverty.
- The Covid-19 pandemic has put a spotlight on the global care crisis of both paid care work – essential services – and women's and girls' unpaid care and domestic work in households and communities that together allow economies and societies to function and thrive.

# | UN WOMEN'S SOLUTIONS TO TACKLE WOMEN'S POVERTY

## **Gender-Responsive Assessment of Recovery Efforts to the Covid-19 Crisis:**

- The global community is currently undergoing an unprecedented health and economic crises due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The crisis continues to deepen pre-existing inequalities, exposing vulnerabilities in social, political and economic systems which are in turn amplifying the impacts of the pandemic.
- However, given the sectoral/occupational concentration of women as well as their employment status, have fiscal stimulus measures adopted specific measures to address impacts on women's employment? Not addressing this can jeopardize women's labor force participation and their income security.
- Against this backdrop, UN Women, in partnership with the International Labour Organization (ILO) (Under the joint programme on "[Promoting Decent Employment for Women through Inclusive Growth Policies and Investments in the Care Economy](#)"), developed an applied policy guidance tool titled "[How to assess fiscal stimulus packages from a gender equality perspective](#)".

# | UN WOMEN'S SOLUTIONS TO TACKLE WOMEN'S POVERTY (CONT.)

## Assessing the gendered employment impacts of COVID-19:

Recognizing that productive employment and decent work remains the basic route out of poverty, and the disproportional impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on women, UN Women and ILO also developed an applied policy tool on “[Assessing the gendered employment impacts of COVID-19 and supporting a gender-responsive recovery](#)”. The tool considers interactions between the paid and the unpaid economy and is organized in several steps:

1. It provides a checklist of indicators to help in mapping the gender structure of a particular economy with emphasis on pre-existing gender inequalities in labour markets.
2. It shows how to trace the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on women's employment and working conditions relative to men by types of risk, including poverty.
3. It discusses policy options to support gender-equitable employment outcomes
4. It develops an organizing principle for tailoring policy responses to specific gender employment structures and socio-economic contexts to address inequalities and poverty outcomes

# | UN WOMEN'S SOLUTIONS TO TACKLE WOMEN'S POVERTY (CONT.)

## Addressing deficits in care services during COVID-19 recovery and beyond:

- The pandemic is an opportunity to transform the care economy by investing in quality, affordable, and accessible care services and infrastructure.
- Investing in care can have major economic and social payoffs for families, individuals, and societies. through what is called the triple dividend:
  1. One, investing in childcare services contributes to enhancing children's capabilities, particularly children from poorer households.
  2. Two, investing in care services facilitates women's labour force participation.
  3. And three, investment in social care service expansion has the potential to generate thousands of decent jobs both in the care sector itself as well as in other sectors through backward linkages.
- In partnership with ILO, UN Women led the development of a policy tool titled "[A Guide to Public Investments in the Care Economy Policy Support Tool for Estimating Care Deficits, Investment Costs and Economic Returns](#)". The policy tool helps strengthen the capacity of policy makers to address the care economy, by linking social protection and women's employment in the context of COVID-19.



# | CONCLUSION AND WAY FORWARD

- Considering these multiple challenges to achieve gender equality and the economic empowerment of women and girls, we need concerted action by governments, employers' and workers' organizations, and the international community. This will help prevent further reversal of gains made and accelerate progress towards achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- At the macroeconomic level, governments need to expand public and private investment in female and youth dominated sectors hit the hardest by the crisis, such as hospitality, tourism, transport, arts and recreation and some parts of retail, and those with strong potential to expand decent work opportunities, such as the care economy, education and infrastructure development.
- Finally, governments need to use the maximum available resources to incrementally plan, design, and implement a universal and gender-responsive social protection system, including social protection floors, to extend coverage to not only poor and vulnerable women, but also those in the informal sectors who very often lack basic rights and benefits such as health insurance and pensions.



“

Thank you

”