

► Policy Tool

UN Women – ILO Joint Programme Promoting Decent Employment for Women through Inclusive Growth Policies and Investments in Care

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Assessing the gendered employment impacts of COVID-19 and supporting a gender-responsive recovery¹ A country-level policy tool

Key points

- The gendered employment policy tool offers analytical frameworks and data suggestions to enable assessment of the gender differentiated employment effects of the COVID-19 crisis at the country level. It also identifies policy options to promote gender-responsive national employment strategies.
- The tool considers interactions between the paid and the unpaid economy and is organized in several steps.
- First, it provides a checklist of questions and indicators to help in mapping the gender structure of a particular economy with emphasis on pre-existing gender inequalities in labour markets
- Second, it shows how to trace the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on women's employment and working conditions relative to men, differentiating by types of risk.
- Third, it discusses policy options to support gender equitable employment outcomes and distinguishes between short-term measures and medium-term measures.
- Fourth, it develops an organizing principle for tailoring policy responses to specific gender employment structures and socio-economic contexts.

► I. Introduction

The purpose of this tool

The aim of this policy tool is to provide support to ILO and UN Women country offices on the analytical framework and data needed to:

¹ This policy tool was prepared by Marzia Fontana and benefited from comments by Valeria Esquivel, Employment Policies and Gender Specialist, ILO and Anuradha Seth, Senior Advisor, Gender and Macroeconomics, UN Women. The views and suggested approaches in this publication do not necessarily represent the position of funding partners.

- assess the immediate gendered employment impact of the containment and mitigation measures deployed by governments to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic and
- identify policy priorities in the short and medium term to promote a gender-responsive recovery.

The tool is conceived as a stand-alone diagnostic guide but can also be used as a complement to the ILO's Rapid Diagnostic Assessment (RDA),² of which it strengthens the gender analytical lens. The tool builds also on other documentation on gender and COVID-19 recently produced by the UN Women and the ILO.³ Data examples and case studies are provided whenever possible.

What this tool is

The tool proposes a checklist and indicators to help in constructing **a map of the gendered structure of a particular economy with emphasis on pre-existing gender inequalities in labour markets**. This map would highlight specific vulnerabilities and include information on the main barriers to women's access to decent jobs, taking into account a country's economic structure and social context. **This map can be used as a 'baseline' to assess how the COVID-19 crisis is impacting women's employment and working conditions relative to men, differentiating by kinds and degrees of risk**. This constitutes the main component of the exercise and is aimed at documenting the extent to which gender inequalities in the labour market are being exacerbated by the pandemic. The purpose of the data analysis is to inform a better understanding of what needs to be done to protect workers and promote decent jobs to enable a gender-responsive economic recovery.

The tool also provides an indication of policies needed to foster structural transformation trajectories that are conducive to the full realization of women's and men's economic rights. Changes in sectoral structure as economies evolve out of the pandemic will have gender implications because of different female/male employment intensities in sectors and occupations, and gender bias in norms and institutions which may hinder the achievement of greater equality. A gender employment assessment would aim **to identify policies both for improving working conditions in economic sectors where women already work in large numbers and promoting greater inclusion of women workers in new promising sectors, thus widening their opportunities**.

An economy-wide perspective

The tool is informed by an economy-wide perspective which includes both the paid and the unpaid economy. This perspective is important in its own right, as a core feature of any gender-aware economic analysis. It is especially relevant to the present assessment because crises such as COVID-19 tend to shift the boundaries between the paid and the unpaid – what gets produced in the market (and by whom) and what must be provided at home (and by whom), with important socio-economic implications. **Reports of the initial impact of the crisis on gender distribution of both paid and unpaid care work indicate a reinforcement of existing gender bias in both labour markets and within homes in several countries,⁴ thus giving urgency to policy measures for preventing cycles of negative interaction between paid and unpaid work.**

² ILO, 2020. "Rapid Diagnostics for Assessing the Country Level Impact of COVID-19 on the Economy and Labour Market – Guidelines". ILO Technical Brief. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/documents/publication/wcms_743644.pdf

³ United Nations, 2020. "The impact of COVID-19 on Women" UN Secretary-General's Policy Brief, April 2020. New York: United Nations. <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/04/policy-brief-the-impact-of-covid-19-on-women>. UN Women, 2020. "Addressing the economic fallout of covid-19: pathways and policy options for a gender-responsive recovery". Policy Brief N.15. New York: UN Women <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/06/policy-brief-addressing-the-economic-fallout-of-covid-19>. ILO, 2020. "A gender-responsive employment recovery: Building back fairer". ILO Policy Brief https://www.ilo.org/emppolicy/pubs/WCMS_751785/lang--en/index.htm

⁴ ILO, 2020. "A gender-responsive employment recovery: Building back fairer". ILO Policy Brief https://www.ilo.org/emppolicy/pubs/WCMS_751785/lang--en/index.htm. UN Women, 2020. "COVID-19 and the care economy: immediate action and structural transformation for a gender-responsive recovery". Policy Brief N.16 New York: UN Women <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/06/policy-brief-covid-19-and-the-care-economy>

The COVID-19 crisis

Since the WHO declared COVID-19 to be a global pandemic in March 2020, governments in both the global North and global South have locked down cities and countries, and imposed travel restrictions and bans of public gatherings, with significant effects on people's livelihoods and economic and social life. Some of these restrictions are being gradually relaxed, and some other restrictions are re-instated, depending on the severity of the virus. In most cases these restrictions are accompanied by a range of economic support measures aimed at preventing long lasting damage and facilitating economic recovery. Strategies vary across countries, and public responses are uneven and rapidly evolving, depending on a country's exposure to the virus, its institutional and fiscal capacity as well as governments' political orientation. According to the new global gender tracker, a database developed by UN Women and UNDP that tracks policies introduced by governments to deal with the COVID-19 crisis, most countries so far are failing to adequately address women's needs in their social protection and jobs responses to the pandemic.⁵

As reported in the 6th ILO Monitor, as of September 2020, the vast majority of the world's workers continued to be affected by some kind of workplace closure. The ILO Monitor estimates that there was more than a 17 per cent decline in global working hours during the second quarter of 2020 (compared with the fourth quarter of 2019), which is equivalent to 495 million full-time jobs.⁶ The effects of both initial containment measures and mitigating measures are being experienced differently by different groups of people, depending on the economic structure and conditions of their country, on how they earn their living and where they live, their gender, ethnicity and migration status as well as other factors. Preliminary assessments show that the negative impact of COVID-19 and related interventions are exacerbating income and wealth inequalities as well as inequalities of opportunities and outcomes in many countries.⁷

Women bear the brunt of the crisis

Women everywhere are bearing the brunt of this crisis because of the compound effect of many factors. They are at higher risk of job losses not only because they are disproportionately employed in sectors highly affected by the lockdown (such as accommodation and food services, and retail trade) but also because they tend to be the first to be dismissed in any sector, due to their more tenuous employment situation relative to men (i.e. their lack of seniority and/or greater prevalence of new and diverse forms of work). Moreover, they are at higher risk of physical and mental distress because they are overrepresented among key workers in the health and care sectors workforce, and face higher demands on their unpaid care work due to temporary closure of schools and care provision facilities, as well as reduced availability of non-COVID related health services.

For example, in the United Kingdom, figures reported in *The Guardian* indicate that at the end of May 2020, mothers were 47 per cent more likely than fathers to have permanently lost their job or quit since the start of the crisis. *The Guardian* article also reports cases of pregnant healthcare workers who said they had been pushed into working during the crisis, while others complained of being laid off, suggesting, in both cases, an erosion of employment rights for pregnant women. In the meanwhile, the UK early child education and care sector, in which 97 per cent of the workforce is female, is on the brink of collapse.⁸ In India, a number of sources reported that the working conditions of front-line health workers such as the Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) and *Anganwadi* workers, have become particularly hazardous. These

⁵ See <https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/news-centre/news/2020/undp-and-un-womens-newly-launch-covid-19-global-gender-response.html>

⁶ ILO, 2020. *ILO Monitor: COVID-19 and the world of work. Updated estimates and analysis*. Sixth Edition. Geneva: ILO. https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/coronavirus/impacts-and-responses/WCMS_755910/lang--de/index.htm

⁷ Belser, Patrick. 2020. "COVID-19 cruelly highlights inequalities and threatens to deepen them" Comment Geneva: ILO. https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_740101/lang--en/index.htm; Blundell, R. et al. 2020 "COVID-19 and Inequalities" *Fiscal Studies*, vol. 41, no. 2, pp. 291–319 (2020) 0143-5671; IMF. 2020. "Without help, low income developing countries risk a lost decade", IMF Blog, August 2020. <https://blogs.imf.org/2020/08/27/covid-19-without-help-low-income-developing-countries-risk-a-lost-decade/>; Sen, Kunal. 2020. "Five ways coronavirus is deepening global inequality" UNU-WIDER Blog August 2020. <https://www.wider.unu.edu/publication/five-ways-coronavirus-deepening-global-inequality>

⁸ "COVID-19 crisis could set women back decades, experts fear" *The Guardian* 29th May 2020; "Women bear brunt of Covid-related work stress, UK study finds" *The Guardian* 9th October 2020.

workers are overwhelmingly women. Not only are they facing high risk of infection due to lack of personal protective equipment (PPE), but they have also become targets of attacks as they go on their daily household visits to assess the spread of the disease.⁹ Still in India, a study of individuals surveyed during the strict nationwide 'lockdown' in April 2020 finds that, of the women and men who were employed pre-lockdown, women were about 20 per cent less likely to be employed than men.¹⁰ The same study finds that hours spent on domestic work increased for both women and men, but the increase was higher for women. Similar evidence on the disproportionate increase of unpaid domestic work and care experienced by women is found in other countries such as Argentina, Turkey and Spain.¹¹

Some women are at a significant disadvantage, such as those who are migrants or refugees; those who are in the most insecure forms of informal employment where 'social distancing' is impracticable (e.g., personal care workers);¹² and those with problematic family situations due perhaps to their children and other relatives' special care needs or/and exposure to domestic abuse.

For all these reasons, it is important that employment impact assessments expose this diversity of circumstances and take account of how gender intersects with other sources of vulnerability to determine terms of inclusion in (or exclusion from) labour markets. **To avoid reproducing gender and other inequalities, policies for economic recovery must pay attention to the causes of pre-existing unequal gender patterns in the world of work and address structural constraints inhibiting women's access to decent jobs.**

This policy tool is organized as follows. Section II recalls the constitutive elements of the ILO's RDA. Section III uses the RDA as a starting point to develop a detailed gendered employment diagnostics and is further divided in subsections outlining four main steps. Section III.a describes indicators and data needed to construct the statistical picture of an economy as gendered structure and section III.b shows how to trace gender-differentiated employment effects of COVID-19 by type of risk (e.g., not only risk of employment loss but also higher risks of disease exposure and deteriorating working conditions for those women continuing to work). Section III.c is about examining interactions between paid and unpaid work. Section III.d identifies challenges likely to be faced by especially vulnerable groups of female workers. Section IV offers guidance on policy measures that can be used to inform a gender-aware approach to recovery efforts focusing on both short-term and medium-term policy responses. It emphasises that short-term policy measures must be conceived as building blocks towards more equitable medium-term development strategies. Section V summarises key points.

► II. Main elements of the RDA for country-level labour market impacts of COVID-19

In order to assist country offices in conducting real-time assessments of the employment effects of COVID-19, the ILO has developed a rapid diagnostics tool,¹³ which, as shown in figure 1, is organized around four main areas including: 1. Overview of socio-economic situation, 2. Labour market transmission mechanisms, 3. Identifying workers most at risk and 4. Policy responses.

⁹ "India's Army of 600,000 Virus-Hunting Women Goes on Strike" Bloomberg, 6th August 2020. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-08-06/india-s-army-of-600-000-virus-hunting-women-goes-on-strike>

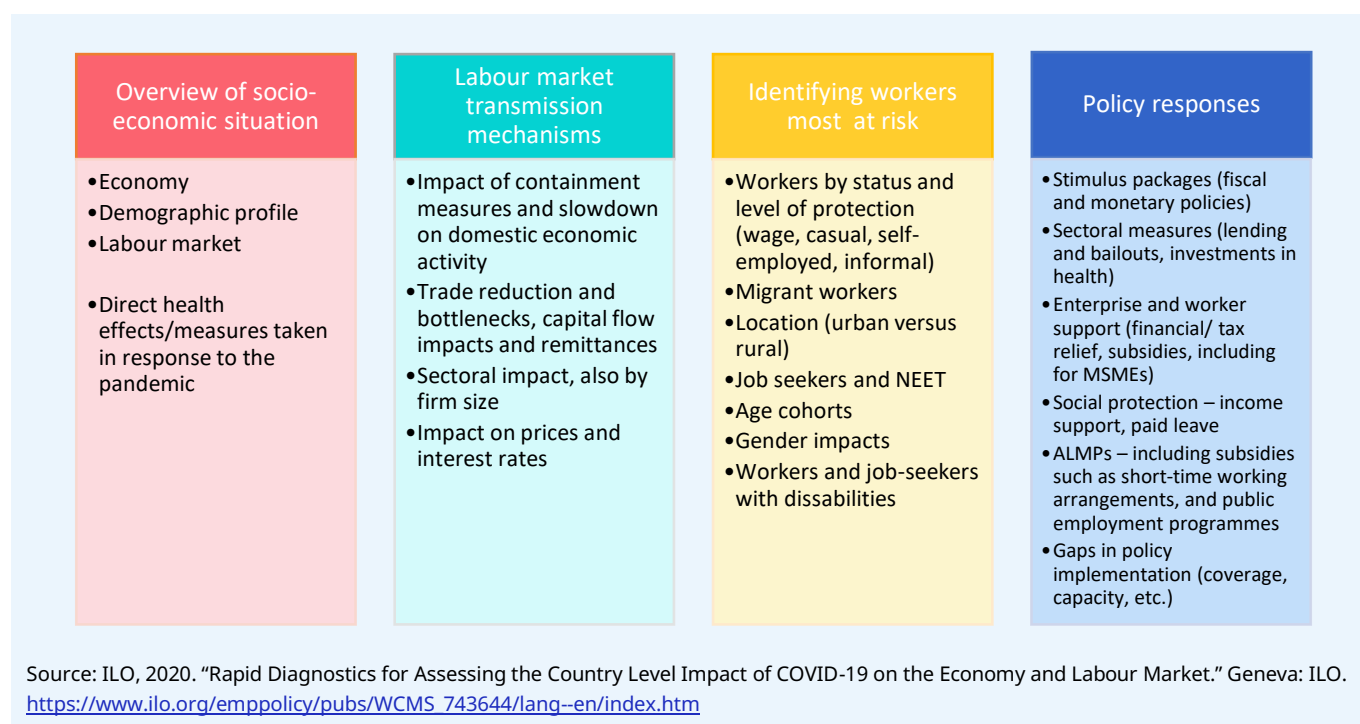
¹⁰ Deshpande, A. 15 June 2020, "The Covid-19 Pandemic and Lockdown: First Effects on Gender Gaps in Employment and Domestic Work in India" Ashoka University Discussion Paper in Economics N.30. In absolute terms, more Indian men lost employment than women (due to large pre-existing gender gaps in employment) but, in relative terms, women were more likely to have lost their job due to the lockdown.

¹¹ ILO, 2020. A gender-responsive employment recovery: Building back fairer. Policy Brief. Geneva: ILO.

¹² The ISCO 53 occupation 'personal care workers' is the most female dominated occupation in the world (88 per cent of workers in this occupation are women as documented at <https://ilostat.ilo.org/these-occupations-are-dominated-by-women/>).

¹³ ILO, 2020. "Rapid Diagnostics for Assessing the Country Level Impact of COVID-19 on the Economy and Labour Market." Geneva: ILO. https://www.ilo.org/emppolicy/pubs/WCMS_743644/lang-en/index.htm

► Figure 1. Four sections of a rapid diagnostics



In a first step, the socio-economic overview is intended to offer insights into the economic structure of a country and the demographic characteristics of its population, the extent of the pandemic and related immediate responses as well as key features of its health sector and its resilience. In a second step, the description of labour market transmission mechanisms identifies both direct and indirect channels, and aims to highlight sectors and occupations that have been especially affected either by the 'lockdown' directly or by disruptions in supply chains, travel, remittances and declining global demand. Ideally, this description would pay particular attention to the nature and extent of deterioration in working conditions and/or job availability by employment status, gender and age. The third step, involving identification of workers most at risk, goes further, by deepening our understanding of the specific vulnerabilities of, and challenges for, particular categories of workers, due for instance to their gender, migration status, disability and/or place of residence. Finally, the analysis of policy responses is meant to document the range of planned measures in the short to medium run—such as governments' overall support packages, targeted sectoral interventions, social protection and active labour market policies—and to identify gaps in policy design and implementation.

Building on this RDA, the gendered employment tool described in the following sections uses a similar framework to suggest additional analytical insights and questions to help further illuminate possible gender dimensions in each of these four areas.

► III. Assessing gendered employment impacts of COVID-19

Considering the economy as a gendered structure is a common starting point of feminist economic analysis. The concept of economies as gendered structures emphasises that economies comprise both a paid economy, the output of which is counted as contributing to economic growth as measured by GDP, and an unpaid economy, which supplies services directly concerned with the daily and intergenerational reproduction of people, through their care, socialisation, and

education.¹⁴ **The statistical picture of the economy as a gendered structure, if appropriately disaggregated in terms of production sectors and workers' characteristics, can provide a useful baseline from which to understand the gender direct and indirect employment effects of the COVID-19 crisis.** By highlighting pre-existing inequalities in labour markets, it can help assess whether proposed policy responses are contributing to redress gender-based bottlenecks to women's access to decent work opportunities, and identify remaining gaps.

Special attention needs to be paid to gender differentials in jobs and conditions of work in sectors affected by different types and degrees of disruption. For example, there are sectors that had to shut down or significantly slow down, due to direct or indirect causes (i.e. the sectors that the ILO COVID-19 Monitor rates as high-risk in terms of job losses such as the hospitality sector). Of these sectors that had to shut down, some might be able to recover more easily than others (e.g., some predicts that tourism and the arts will be negatively affected for a long time, whereas other subsectors might be more agile in adjusting). Other sectors have continued to function because they are deemed essential, but now operate under difficult conditions and greater exposure to infections (most notably the health and care sectors). Yet other sectors are emerging in new forms as people and economies adjust to the new circumstances (e.g., manufacturing of specific products such as hand sanitizers and face masks, food retail, on-line shopping).

Women and men working in each of these sectors are likely to experience different risks related to: i. employment loss, ii. physical and mental health, and iii. erosion of labour rights and deterioration of working conditions. These gender differences need to be traced and documented. The unpaid domestic sphere is experiencing significant disruption as well, with different effects on women and men, and different implications for their ability to **remain in the labour force and engage in paid employment**. It is therefore useful to also **document changes in both overall levels of unpaid work and its gender distribution, taking account of variation across family circumstances**.

This section shows how to build the foundations of this baseline in four main steps: Step 1. Building the 'pre-existing' gendered employment structure of an economy, Step 2. Identifying gendered employment impacts of COVID-19 by type of risk, Step 3. Considering interactions between paid and unpaid work, and Step 4. Including the most vulnerable workers.

a. Step 1: Using available statistics to build the gendered employment structure of an economy

The concept of economies as gendered structures emphasises that economies comprise both a paid economy, the output of which is counted as contributing to economic growth as measured by GDP, and an unpaid economy, which supplies services directly concerned with the daily and intergenerational reproduction of people, through their care, socialisation, and education.¹⁵ Unpaid care work is not counted as contributing to economic growth, but, as noted by Elson, it clearly makes an indirect unmeasured contribution, since, without this work, there would be no people to produce economic growth. Both the paid and the unpaid economy are characterised by gender inequalities, such as are manifest in the division of labour. Women have more limited access to paid jobs and occupations compared to men in the labour market and bear disproportionate responsibility for unpaid care and domestic work. Large businesses are often led by men, with few women also in decision making positions.¹⁶ Households are subject to internal gender inequalities in income, consumption, asset ownership and decision-making.¹⁷

¹⁴ UN Women, 2016. *Towards Gender Equality in Vietnam. Making Inclusive Growth Work for Women*, Hanoi: UN Women Viet Nam; Elson, D. and Fontana, M., 2019. 'Conceptualizing Gender-Equitable Inclusive Growth' Chapter 1 in *Gender Equality and Inclusive Growth: economic policies to achieve sustainable development*, D. Elson and A. Seth (eds). New York: UN Women.

¹⁵ UN Women, 2016. *Towards Gender Equality in Vietnam. Making Inclusive Growth Work for Women*, Hanoi: UN Women Viet Nam; Elson, D. and Fontana, M., 2019. 'Conceptualizing Gender-Equitable Inclusive Growth' Chapter 1 in *Gender Equality and Inclusive Growth: economic policies to achieve sustainable development*, D. Elson and A. Seth (eds). New York: UN Women.

¹⁶ ILO. 2019. *Women in business and management: the business case for change* / International Labour Office. - Geneva: ILO. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_700953.pdf

¹⁷ UN Women. 2019. *Progress of the World's Women 2019-20: Families in a changing world*. New York: UN Women.

Building the statistical picture of a specific economy with attention to its gendered employment structure requires collecting and analysing data on several dimensions. With regard to the paid economy, it requires sex-disaggregated data, not just on the quantity of employment, but also its quality. This would involve measuring the extent of gender-based occupational and sectoral segregation, types of employment contract, hours of work, workplace safety, gender earnings gaps as well as level of earnings. **As a general rule, it is preferable to choose statistics that capture terms of inclusion and give some indication of women's capacity to achieve goals rather than merely count how many women are in work.**

For instance, when the information is available, it is important to report not only employment to population ratios but also employment status (e.g., how many women relative to men are 'employers' vs. how many women relative to men are 'unpaid contributing family workers'). There is consensus in the literature regarding the heightened vulnerability of women who work as contributing family workers. Undertaking unpaid work on the family farm or enterprise does not provide women with direct access to either income or employment-related benefits and is unlikely to challenge their subordinate position within the family. On the other hand, being an 'employer' often denotes management and decision-making power and greater entitlements and is an employment status rarely held by women. Importantly, sectoral analysis requires a focus on the proportion of women and men in each sector (the degree of sectoral feminization) as well as the position that women (and men) hold in the occupational hierarchy within each sub-sector.¹⁸ Ideally, both occupations and sectors would be reported at a fine level of detail (e.g., at least two digit-level ISCO/ISIC code, preferably a higher digit-level).

Disaggregated data on financial governance and financial inclusion would also be critical for gender analysis, and it would be preferable to report the average size of loans women-led SMEs are able to borrow (and the interest rate they must pay), for example, rather than simply the 'proportion of small-scale industries headed by women with a loan or line of credit' (as in SDG 9.3.2).

Whenever possible, **data should be disaggregated not only by sex but also by other factors such as stage in the life cycle, place of residence (rural vs. urban), educational attainment and migration status of workers, to capture how gender intersects with other sources of disadvantage.** For example, it is widely documented that mothers of young children face a severe penalty in accessing quality jobs and earnings.¹⁹ Moreover, globally, more than 30 per cent of all young women were not in employment, education or training (NEET) before the crisis, compared to about 14 per cent of young men. Women aged 15-24 face particularly high NEET rates in lower-middle income countries.²⁰ When in employment, women in this age range are overrepresented in less protected forms of work such as temporary and gig employment, which means greater exposure to the negative consequences of economic crises compared to other labour market participants. Fresh evidence from a few high-income countries indicate young women were indeed hardest hit by redundancies in the first stage of the COVID-19 response, when female-dominated sectors such as retail, hotels and hairdressing salons shut overnight.²¹ Evidence from a number of low-income countries also documents the vulnerability of those women who, after retirement age, need to continue taking up (precarious) paid work, to avoid poverty, and simultaneously care for their older relatives. Older women are often among the caregivers responding to the pandemic, especially in contexts where health systems and long-term care provision are weak. Their vulnerability is therefore now exacerbated by their greater health risks from contracting the virus.²²

Being an international migrant with low levels of formal education poses particular challenges for a woman, and often exposes her to occupational risks and stigma. The lower legal status often accorded to migrant women in hosting

¹⁸ Calculating aggregate indices of segregation such as the Duncan Index has limitations when women's employment is significantly lower than men's, as is the case in many countries. If the overall number of women working is small relative to the number of men, the Index would not accurately capture the degree of sectoral feminization.

¹⁹ Addati, L., Cattaneo, U., Esquivel, V., Valarino, I., 2018. *Care work and care jobs for the future of decent work*. Geneva: ILO.

²⁰ ILO, 2020. "Preventing Exclusion from the Labour Market: Tackling the COVID-19 Youth Unemployment Crisis." ILO Policy Brief. https://www.ilo.org/emppolicy/pubs/WCMS_746031/lang-en/index.htm

²¹ ILO, August 2020. "Youth & COVID-19: Impacts on jobs, education, rights and mental well-being". https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/youth-employment/publications/WCMS_753026/lang-en/index.htm

²² United Nations. May 2020 "The impact of COVID-19 on older persons" Policy Brief. New York: United Nations. <https://www.un.org/development/desa/ageing/wp-content/uploads/sites/24/2020/05/COVID-Older-persons.pdf>

countries in turn limits the claims they can make as workers, in terms of both their labour rights and access to public services. In Jordan, for instance, international migrants working in garment factories are entitled to a lower legal minimum wage than local workers and, in recent years, have often been subjected to violations in their workplace such as bullying and confiscation of passports and work permits.²³ Recent reports from factories manufacturing medical gloves in Malaysia seem to suggest increased exploitation of migrant workers while trying to meet production targets in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Violations of labour rights exposed by these investigations include low wages, excessive overtime, illegal deductions from workers' salaries, poor living conditions and lack of social distancing arrangements.²⁴ Ongoing accounts of the impact of COVID-19 on domestic workers in developing regions, many of whom are international migrants, report of many migrant domestic workers and cleaners trapped in host countries, with no income, no recourse to public funds and nowhere to go.²⁵ And the list goes on.

With regard to the unpaid economy, statistics are required on unequal patterns of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, as well as usage of services that can reduce such work, like electricity, water (in those countries that lack basic infrastructure) and care services. These require time-use data, disaggregated by household income, place of residence and family composition whenever possible. Time-use surveys are the main source of these data, and countries are increasingly collecting them.²⁶ Data on public spending on social services, ideally combined with gender-disaggregated beneficiary assessments, can help in capturing the extent to which responsibility for care provision is distributed between families, the State and other institutions, and the extent of care deficits. Both the unequal gender division of unpaid domestic and care work and the availability of services to alleviate it are changing under COVID-19, mainly to the detriment of low-income women. **It is important to document the main factors that underlie the current intensification of unpaid work for women, and to monitor whether decisions over social spending allocations that are included in recovery measures are guided by gender equality and inclusiveness criteria.**²⁷

Assembling all these data at the country level requires examining many sources and surveys. Labour Force Surveys, Household and Living Standards Surveys, Enterprise Surveys, Time Use Surveys, other surveys on more specialized issues (such as water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) or childcare provision) when available, and administrative data from relevant ministries, are all potential sources of sex-disaggregated data. Ideally, they should be used in combination with each other as well as other (non sex-disaggregated) data such as national accounts. Whenever possible, preference should be given to surveys that are conducted regularly and enable frequent updates. It is also good practice to supplement statistical snapshots with studies that examine the evolution and determinants of unequal gender patterns over time, when these are available. Rapid assessment surveys to corroborate initial findings and/or fill gaps on aspects not sufficiently explored in existing surveys should also be used.

The quality of statistical data is likely to vary considerably: some data are likely to be under-reported (e.g., the extent of informal employment) and some of the breakdowns (e.g., by migration status or disability) will be invariably difficult to obtain. It is therefore essential to complement and corroborate findings through a variety of other sources such as phone-

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