UN FRAMEWORK FOR THE IMMEDIATE SOCIO-ECONOMIC RESPONSE TO COVID-19

UN Women: Gender Lens Analysis
30 April 2020
The socio-economic response framework provides an integrated support package offered by the United Nations Development System (UNDS) across five streams of work. It is the strategy and blueprint, in line with the Secretary General’s report.

A significant proportion of the UN’s existing US$17.8 billion portfolio of sustainable development programmes will be adjusted and expanded towards COVID-19, without losing sight of the promise of the 2030 Agenda.

The focus is on the here and now at country level. Its timeframe is 12 to 18 months as an immediate development offer, to be implemented by UN Country Teams.
Gender equality is framed as a cross cutting issue to build back better from the pandemic. Gender equality is situated as the most pervasive inequality with economies built on the “backs of unpaid labor.” Gender equality and the inclusion of women is sited as critical to the socio-economic response and the attainment of the SDGs.
The document clearly states **the need for a gender lens in designing socio-economic responses** (including women’s roles as frontline workers, caregivers, community leaders and in the informal economy) (p9) and **human rights and gender analysis to inform the design of policies** and ensure disaggregated data (p34).

Reference is made to ensure that there is no backsliding on limited gains made and **SDG 5** guiding the response as being crucial (p6), while recognizing that the crisis risks further exclusion and discrimination (p5).

Women are recognized as the majority of **frontline health workers**, as well as those shouldering the disproportionate amount of **unpaid care work** (p6).

Women and youth are included as **one of the most at-risk populations** (p7).

The UN’s offer includes: **Extensive connections with civil society and women’s groups**, including a recognition of the leadership these groups have (while also recognizing that many of these groups are now facing their own challenges (p9).

The UN also offers sex-disaggregated data analytics, including gender responsive analysis (p10).

**UNDS to support member states to implement existing normative commitments** on human rights and gender equality (p35).
HIGHLIGHTS OF GENDER-TARGETED ACTIONS

1. **HEALTH FIRST: Protecting health services and systems during the crisis**

   The **UNDS will focus** on the health, psychosocial needs and work environment of frontline female health workers. Community engagement to improve access to health information & essential services, particularly for women and young people.

2. **PROTECTING PEOPLE: Social protection and basic services**

   The **UNDS will support** governments to rapidly design and implement cash transfer programmes, including for women informal workers. Ensure that basic essential services for survivors of GBV remain intact, and that new methods are rolled out.

3. **ECONOMIC RESPONSE & RECOVERY: Protecting jobs, small and medium-sized enterprises, and the informal sector workers**

   The **UNDS will support** women-owned enterprises through capacity building and by integrating their proposed solutions in procurement. Technical support to women SME entrepreneurs through unconditional cash distributions via digital wallets.

4. **MACROECONOMIC RESPONSE AND MULTILATERAL COLLABORATION**

   The **UNDS will work** with governments to propose design of gender-responsive fiscal stimulus packages by identifying entry points for both cushioning the impacts of the crisis and for ensuring economic recovery.

5. **SOCIAL COHESION AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE**

   The **UNDS will use its expertise** and convening power to foster social dialogue and consensus with women’s organizations about key measures related to the socio-economic response to COVID-19.
# HOW DOES THE UN SOCIO-ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK MAP TO UN WOMEN’S GLOBAL PROPOSAL ON COVID-19

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You can find a copy of UN Women’s Global Proposal [here](#).
Maintaining essentially services, particularly for young women, including maternal health

Work with youth and women’s organizations, religious and traditional leaders, volunteer groups, and persons living with disabilities & other at-risk populations, through the Global Partnership on HIV-related Stigma and Discrimination

Provide special support for pregnant women and women caring for newborns and young children, as well as tailored health care interventions for survivors of gender-based violence, women with disabilities and women living with HIV/AIDS

Ensure women’s leadership in health sector response strategies (as women make up 70% of the sector workers)

Gender analysis of the health care response, including who has access to what services (and identifying barriers)

Creating better access for health care workers and caregivers to women-friendly personal protective equipment and menstrual hygiene products.

The H6 partnership has a track record of improving SRMNCAH outcomes in countries with weak health systems. The collaboration of H6 could be tasked to respond to COVID.
Directing COVID-19 social services for women and children in particular

Support to CSOs in ensuring continuation of basic essential services on GBV, including flexible funding

Leverage the UN package on essential services to end GBV

Repurpose the Spotlight Initiative to increase service delivery

Expand shelters, hotlines and distribute knowledge on GBV services and information

1.1 Services to address violence against women and GBV are increased and expanded including those provided by CSOs

1.2 Advocacy and media campaigns including in local languages and targeting men are in place and reach the widest possible audience to prevent VAW

1.3 National policies are supported to address GBV, including prevention and response services to women and girls most left behind

Outcome 1: Impact of GBV is mitigated and minimized, including through coordinated UN System Support
UNW / ILO Joint programme: “Promoting Decent Employment for Women through Inclusive Growth Policies and Investments in the Care Economy” to be scaled up

- Development of gender responsive fiscal stimulus packages. Rapid and gender-responsive socioeconomic assessments, labor market and business environment diagnostics.

- Strengthen the care economy (health and education) where women are the majority of the workforce

- Support to micro and small businesses, especially women-owned enterprises, including to become part of the global economy through capacity building and by integrating their proposed solutions in procurement

- Technical support to women micro and small entrepreneurs through unconditional cash distributions via digital wallets

- E-commerce and digital solutions to allow secure access to services needed at the time of crisis, particularly by vulnerable groups. Replicate the E-Trade for Women initiative helping digital entrepreneurs in developing counties to become a force for change and economic recovery from the COVID-19 crisis

- Cash transfers and in-kind transfers to informal workers and self-employed, including domestic workers and casual workers, relying on existing social protection systems where possible

Outcome 2: Social Protection Mechanisms and Stimulus Packages properly serve women and girls

- 2.1 Governments invest in social protection that targets affected women and girls and front-line health care workers.

- 2.2 Targeted fiscal assistance to women including female headed households is available through digital money and supports financial inclusion.

- 2.3 Government and private sector partners support women-owned enterprises and build their capacity including through procurement.

Outcome 3: People support and practice the equal sharing of unpaid care work

- 3.1 Social mobilization measures are in place, including leveraging UN Women’s HeForShe network and other men’s organisations, to promote messaging on equally sharing the burden of care.

- 3.2 Strengthened advocacy and communications efforts of civil society actors to promote equal sharing of care work in target countries.

- 3.3 Policy measures are supported in the recovery phase of COVID-19 to support the care economy.
Working with governments to design gender-responsive fiscal stimulus packages by identifying entry points for both cushioning the impacts of the crisis and for ensuring economic recovery.

- Fiscal measures must be informed by a gender analysis.
- Support measures to self-employed workers, female-headed households, informal workers and other vulnerable populations.
- Strengthening statistics, including gender data.
- Closing the digital divide *(though the proposal does not go into details)*.

- 5.1 Gender coordination mechanisms in place to promote gender mainstreaming in COVID-19 response.
- 5.2 Technical support on gender mainstreaming is available to key actors.
- 5.3 Gender-disaggregated data highlighting impacts on women is available and analysed to inform COVID-19 response.
- 5.4 Gender report card of fiscal stimulus assesses the quality of gender-responsive effort by national governments in COVID-19 policy levers and response plans.
5 SOCIAL COHESION AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

- Engage leaders, including women leaders, reverse negative trend on civic space
- Leveraging access to more than 11000 women’s organizations in 170 countries
- Broker access for community leaders, in particularly women, in decision making
- Ensure that local and national responses are designed in a gender and conflict sensitive manner
- Leverage women’s political participation, good governance and the rule of law
- Amplify work of Trust Fund on EVAW and Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund
- Generate sex disaggregated community data

Outcome 4: Women and girls affected by COVID-19 lead and participate in decision-making

- 4.1 Women leaders in a range of sectors (governmental, private sector and civil society including women health workers) have access to information to enable their fullest role in COVID-19 response
- 4.2 Promote and support quotas and affirmative action mechanisms to ensure participation of women in decision making bodies for COVID-19 response
- 4.3 CSOs supported to play their fullest role including through remote support
UN WOMEN PROGRAMME WORK THAT CAN BE LEVERAGED

Here are some recommended UN Women programmes that can be adapted towards the COVID-19 response...

- Spotlight and UN Joint Package on Essential Services to End VAW
- UN Trust Fund on VAW and the Women Peace and Humanitarian Fund
- Women Count gender data and statistics programme and COVID-19 data hub
- EVAW Safe Cities Program (data generation, awareness raising and continuation of services)
- Buy from Women digital platform
- Driving procurement policies for women owned enterprises
- Rural Women’s Economic Empowerment Program
- Achieving gender equality through climate-resilient agriculture programmes
- UN Women’s Gender-Responsive Budgeting work, to strengthen capacities in gender analysis, gender budget tracking and impact assessments; to capture and publicly report gender equality allocations to inform gender responsive fiscal stimulus packages
- Women Leadership, Empowerment, Access and protection (LEAP) and Second Chance Education (SCE)
- Decent work, Cash for work and economic empowerment (including e-wallets)
- Work through national CSO partners, including UNTF and WPHF partners
- Cross cutting engagement with women’s organizations and leaders, gender mainstreaming, gender analysis and the development of gender responsive policies
EXEMPLARS OF PROGRAMMES FOR THE COVID-19 CONTEXT
MEETING IMMEDIATE NEEDS, SAFEGUARD DEVELOPMENT GAINS, LAYING FOUNDATIONS FOR JUST RECOVERY

- **India**: Developed a WhatsApp-based Chatbot to ease GBV reporting.
- **Sudan**: Developing an app for women in the informal sector to connect with service providers.
- **LAC-RO & ECLAC**: Convened all national women’s machinery.
- **Serbia**: Provide access to psycho-social support, safe houses & shelters, hygiene & humanitarian kits to 14K women.
- **Jordan**: Provide cash-based interventions via blockchain technology in camps.
- **WCAR**: Support women’s associations & cooperatives to produce PPEs.
- **South Africa**: Provide virtual learning & support to WOBs.
- **Fiji, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands**: Protecting livelihoods of women market vendors.
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Thank you!