



MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS CHECKLIST FOR INTEGRATING GENDER EQUALITY IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UN FRAMEWORK FOR THE SOCIO- ECONOMIC RESPONSE TO COVID-19



PURPOSE OF THE CHECKLIST

In April 2020, the Secretary-General released the “UN

framework for the immediate socio-economic response to COVID-19” (the UN framework).

The UN framework serves as the basis for the United Nations’ urgent socio-economic support to countries in the face of COVID-19, putting into practice the UN Secretary-General’s report “**Shared Responsibility, Global Solidar-**

ity report: Responding to the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19”.

The purpose of this checklist is to share minimum requirements for the integration of gender equality in the implementation of the UN framework, for immediate health system and socio-economic support in response to COVID-19. The primary audience for this checklist is UN Country Teams (UNCTs) engaged in socio-economic assessment, design, implementation and

monitoring of technical support, operations and programming for COVID-19 responses. The checklist is intended to provide UNCTs that are undertaking gender/intersectoral analyses and/or members of the Gender Theme Groups (GTGs) in UNCTs with guidance on the minimum requirements to effectively integrate gender equality in UNCT COVID-19 recovery and socioeconomic response plans. This checklist is not a stand-alone guide but should be used in conjunction with the **UN framework**.

This checklist was developed by **the United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality** (IANWGE) for which UN Women’s Executive Director is the Chair and the Director of its UN System Coordination Division serves as its Secretary. The Network, which is comprised of gender specialists from 60 United Nations offices and departments, funds and programmes and specialized agencies, draws on the expertise of its members to ensure system-wide coordination and cooperation on gender mainstreaming and gender equality issues across the United Nations system. The checklist was developed by an IANWGE working group of gender specialists led by UNICEF, WHO, UNDP and UN Women. Other members of the working group include UN DESA, DCO, FAO, ICSC, IFAD, ILO, ITCILO, IOM, OCHA, OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNCDF, UNECE, UNEP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN Habitat, UNODC and WFP.



WHY IS A GENDER EQUALITY CHECKLIST NEEDED?

This COVID-19 gender equality checklist provides simple “how-to” recommendations to translate gender equality principles into a gender-responsive and principled humanitarian COVID-19 response.¹ While it may not be possible for all actions and responses to be gender-transformative during humanitarian crises, it is important that UN actions are not gender-discriminatory or gender-blind. The checklist is designed to guide analysis, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, during and after programme implementation across the three domains relating to women’s and girls’ empowerment and gender equality in COVID-19 responses:²

- 1. Leadership and participation:** Meaningful participation of diverse women and girls in key consultative structures for decision-making and their influence on decisions are reflected at all stages of the COVID-19 response.
- 2. Protection and safety:** Physical and psychological safety and security of all women and girls, the ability and capacity of programmes to prevent, mitigate and respond to gender-based violence (GBV); accessible and available services; and mechanisms to address and redress GBV and access to other personal protections, as relevant to humanitarian context.
- 3. Economic wellbeing:** Women’s participation in livelihood activities and decent employment, their access to social protection and assets and their ability to generate a sustainable income over which they have control.

WHEN TO USE THE CHECKLIST?

The checklist can be used to guide the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of COVID-19 responses. The checklist covers the three domains relating to gender equality and women and girls’ empowerment (GEWE) in country-level COVID-19 response plans and actions.

WHO IS THE AUDIENCE?

The primary audience for this checklist is UN Country Teams (UNCTs), especially members of the Gender Theme Groups, engaged in the assessment, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of technical support for COVID-19 responses in countries across the world.

HOW SHOULD THE CHECKLIST BE USED?

The checklist includes a list of considerations that can be adapted according to context and programmatic action. It is organized according to the five pillars of The UN Framework with checks for the three domains of GEWE referenced above.³ The checklist should be used in the preparation and implementation of UNCT COVID-19 Response Plans.

All UNCT COVID-19 Response Plans should aim to allocate at least 15% of funds towards gender-targeted interventions.⁴



1 For a detailed list of definitions used to guide this document, please refer to: WHO Gender mainstreaming for health managers: a practical approach: https://www.who.int/gender-equity-rights/knowledge/health_managers_guide/en/

2 Adapted from the UN Women Rapid Assessment Tool Guidance Note to Evaluate Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Results In Humanitarian Contexts: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/05/rapid-assessment-tool-to-evaluate-gewe-results-in-humanitarian-contexts>

3 For a detailed toolkit on “how-to” integrate gender in socio-economic response, please see UNDP’s guide to carrying out a Gender-Responsive Socio-Economic Assessment of COVID-19 Impacts. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ehN37zYqw6euDqaKitsyZAZR9oiwJVnt/view>


4 In 2010 the Secretary-General committed the Peacebuilding Fund to set a target of at least 15 percent of UN-managed peacebuilding funds to be spent on projects that promote women’s specific needs, advance gender equality or empower women. Since then, this target has been adopted by several other UN entities, including UNICEF and UNDP.




UN FRAMEWORK RESPONSE PILLAR	✓	GENDER INTEGRATION “MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS”
 <p>1. HEALTH FIRST: PROTECTING HEALTH SERVICES AND SYSTEMS DURING THE CRISIS</p>		<p><input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that frontline health and care sector workers have access to appropriate, adequate and women-friendly personal protective equipment, COVID-19 testing, menstrual hygiene management facilities and products, and flexible working arrangements, with specific arrangements for those caring for the elderly and/or sick at institutions or at home, and midwives.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that all women and girls have safe and reliable access to soap, water, menstrual hygiene products and facilities.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Support the full and meaningful participation and leadership of a diversity of women and women’s organizations, including national women’s machineries, in health sector responses at all levels and stages.⁵</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Ensure decent working conditions such as occupational health and safety, equal remuneration and adequate support, including transport, childcare, health services and insurance, and other social support and protections, for all responders, particularly women frontline workers who are often most at risk.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that health systems continue to provide services that are acceptable, accessible, available and of quality level (AAAQ), to meet the holistic needs of diverse women and girls without any form of discrimination including due to sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, ethnicity, colour, civil status, socio-economic status, or migration status.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Maintain essential health services for women and girls in vulnerable situations during the COVID-19 response, including the provision of sexual and reproductive health (SRH) information and services including the supply of contraceptives and safe abortion services, to the fullest extent of the law.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Provide safe and confidential access to culturally appropriate and gender-sensitive COVID-19 related accurate information and health services, including testing and treatment.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Encourage all partners and UN teams to adopt zero tolerance measures against sexual harassment/sexual exploitation and abuse, including in recruitment, and ensure a gender-sensitive grievance mechanism is in place.</p>
 <p>2. PROTECTING PEOPLE: SOCIAL PROTECTION AND BASIC SERVICES</p>		<p><input type="checkbox"/> Provide gender-responsive social protection programmes – such as unconditional cash transfers, public work programmes and asset transfers – for women and girls from all economic sectors across the age continuum to mitigate the impact of the pandemic, foster recovery, and build resilience for future shocks. These should be married with holistic empowerment programmes that engage both men and women in addressing harmful social norms that negate economic empowerment or could result in backlash. For detailed guidance on gender-responsive social protection, please refer to additional resources in the IANWGE compendium.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that social protection programmes under COVID-19 do not increase women’s unpaid work.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Extend social protection measures to cover informal workers, and facilitate processes to formalize informal work.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Engage civil society organizations, particularly grassroots women’s rights organizations and traditional and religious leaders, to support and deliver basic essential services, social protection measures and GBV responses, including flexible funding to respond to increased GBV during COVID-19.</p>

5 Women make up 70% of the health workforce. WHO (2019) Gender equity in the health workforce: Analysis of 104 countries





UN FRAMEWORK RESPONSE PILLAR	✓ GENDER INTEGRATION “MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS”
 <p>2. PROTECTING PEOPLE: SOCIAL PROTECTION AND BASIC SERVICES</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Develop national policies with associated budgets to address the increased prevalence of GBV during the pandemic, including violence prevention, protection of women and girls, and response services.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Expand capacities of shelters and hotlines, and amplify communications on the availability of GBV hotlines and other support mechanisms; also explore how technology can support those in quarantine to access GBV services, being mindful of accessibility, confidentiality and privacy matters that arise with such technology.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure the availability and accessibility of legal aid, judicial protection and other essential police and justice services for women subject to violence during the COVID-19 pandemic, including through electronic or other remote means, the continuation of existing measures and through special duty shifts, and potentially associated training for handling GBV cases virtually, for lawyers, prosecutors and judges.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Support caregivers through parents’ groups, mental health support, cash-based subsidies etc. and encourage equal sharing of child care work.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure the continuation of education for children and young people, particularly girls and young women, through remote learning and other innovative approaches in ways that do not overburden unpaid care givers and taking into account the gender digital divide.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Require that all COVID-19–related funding includes gender-analyses with an intersectional lens and, at the minimum, sex, age and ethnicity -disaggregated data. When possible, disaggregate data to give visibility to LGBTI groups.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Include GBV risks and risk mitigation strategies in risk assessments and project monitoring and evaluation.

UN FRAMEWORK RESPONSE PILLAR	✓ GENDER INTEGRATION “MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS”
 <p>3. ECONOMIC RESPONSE AND RECOVERY: PROTECTING JOBS, SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES, AND INFORMAL SECTOR WORKERS⁶</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Support women’s access to economic and financial resources, including public and private credit, bank accounts, saving schemes, loans and grants from both informal and formal sources.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure the protection of women in the agricultural sector, through cash transfers, decent working conditions and occupational health and safety.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure the provision of financial services and support mechanisms targeting women’s economic activities as producers, processors, traders and entrepreneurs, especially for micro, small and medium enterprises.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Facilitate women’s access to markets by addressing mobility constraints, transportation restrictions and market disruptions.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Provide digital solutions to support women micro-and small entrepreneurs, including through unconditional cash distributions, expansion of networks and markets.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure family-friendly workplace policies, including within UN entities, to protect employees, reduce stress, and support improved child and family well-being, including paid parental leave schemes.
	<input type="checkbox"/> For women in vulnerable employment in the frontline of the COVID-19 response, undertake measures to ensure occupational health and safety, hygiene and decent working conditions in line with WHO guidance and ensure a workplace free of violence and harassment in line with the ILO Convention No.190.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Support the elimination of the gender pay gap among the COVID-19 related workforce.

6 All of these measures should be married with holistic empowerment programmes that engage both men and women in addressing harmful social norms that negate economic empowerment or could result in backlash.



UN FRAMEWORK RESPONSE PILLAR	✓ GENDER INTEGRATION “MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS”
 <p>4. MACROECONOMIC RESPONSE AND MULTILATERAL COLLABORATION</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Assess, inform and monitor gender equality in the context of fiscal stimulus packages with a focused attention on the size of fiscal stimulus and available funding to meet the needs of women and girls; how the fiscal stimulus is being financed, including an assessment of whether financing mechanisms are biased or not towards women; and the design of the fiscal stimulus package to determine whether policy measures account for and prioritize the needs of women and girls. <input type="checkbox"/> Integrate gender considerations in all national economic crisis recovery initiatives including in planning, budgeting and monitoring, post COVID-19. This includes adopting a Do No Harm approach, by ensuring that interventions do not reinforce existing power imbalances which not only underpin GBV, but also undermine broader social cohesion and sustainable recovery. <input type="checkbox"/> Include, at a minimum, sex, and age disaggregated data in the planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of COVID-19 recovery plans, as well as reporting, and encourage disaggregation by other stratifiers, such as ethnicity and disability dependent on context. <input type="checkbox"/> Promote gender-transformative changes through COVID-19 response plans, including by challenging gender-stereotypes, empowering adolescent girls, and engaging men and boys. <input type="checkbox"/> Promote gender-responsive budgeting as the norm in the post COVID-19 environment. <input type="checkbox"/> Support progressive and gender-responsive taxation to secure fiscal space to invest in social protection and basic services.

UN FRAMEWORK RESPONSE PILLAR	✓ GENDER INTEGRATION “MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS”
 <p>5. SOCIAL COHESION AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that COVID-19 related quality, reliable information is accessible to diverse groups of women and girls, bearing in mind cultural contexts, local languages (for e.g. for indigenous peoples, migrant and refugee women etc.), disabilities, and gaps in access to information and communication technologies (ICTs). Be mindful of the increased care duties borne disproportionately by women and girls that may impede their ability to participate and address such impediments. <input type="checkbox"/> Consult with, engage and promote organizations working for the rights of diverse groups of women and girls to lead and participate in and meaningfully influence COVID-19 responses. <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that COVID-19 related information is accessible to those with no access to televisions, phones or the internet. <input type="checkbox"/> Take measures to increase accessibility, affordability and safety of internet access for women and girls, including through measures to combat online bullying and harassment. <input type="checkbox"/> Undertake digital skills training with specific focus on women and girls. <input type="checkbox"/> Support governments in promoting and protecting human rights throughout their COVID-19 response, including efforts to ensure emergency COVID-19 related legislation upholds international human rights standards and that civic spaces for civil society, including human rights defenders, are protected.

Note: UN Agencies have developed numerous thematic tools to guide gender analysis of socio-economic assessments and responses, that can be used to complement specific dimensions of the checklist. A detailed list of gender related resources from various UN entities can be accessed through the [IANWGE compendium on integrating gender considerations in the response to COVID-19: Key messages and actions from UN entities](#). [COVID-19 and Gender Monitor](#) provides indicators to track gender-responsive policy action on COVID-19.