

GENDER AND COVID-19 IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN:

Integrating gender into the response framework

María Noel Vaeza
Regional Director
Americas and the Caribbean



**UN
WOMEN**

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE AMERICAS AND THE CARIBBEAN

COVID19 - Impacts and Implications are different for women and men

Women are at the forefront of the response (health professionals, care workers, community volunteers) and bear higher physical and emotional costs

- Saturation of the health system
- Lack of means for protection of health and care workers

Women are still the most affected by unpaid care work, especially in times of crisis

- Care of sick people
- School closures
- Difficulty in supplying basic goods

Women suffer higher rates of underemployment and are over-represented in the informal sector, many of them in the economic sectors most affected by the crisis (trade, tourism)

- Informal workers
- Domestic workers

Women are over-represented in SME ownership and some of them have greater difficulties in accessing credit and financial services and in using ICTs

- Lack of liquidity
- Greater difficulty to reconvert or adapt their business



COVID19 - Impacts and Implications are different for women and men

Difficulties in collecting money transfers (because of confinement) and in complying with conditionalities

- Difficulties with cash receipts
- Conditionalities linked to the health and education of their children

In an emergency context, the risks of violence against women and girls are increased and exacerbated by isolation measures

- Domestic violence
- Isolation
- Obstacles to access protection orders

Women are more affected by the lack of food security and access to basic goods and services (water/energy)

- Difficulties in accessing safe and nutritious food
- Lack of water, electricity

Irregular migration of women and girls generates greater risks of lack of protection and access to basic services. The outbreak has led to increased stigma

- Xenophobia
- Discrimination
- Human trafficking



There will be no effective response to COVID-19 if impacts on women are not addressed and gender dynamics are not integrated into the response



Recommendations



Ensure availability of sex-disaggregated data and gender analysis

**Allocate sufficient resources to respond to the needs of women and girls
Avoid reduction of funds for existing programmes**

Ensure that the immediate needs of women working in the health sector are addressed

Promote policy measures to recognize, reduce and redistribute the overload of unpaid work within households

Adopt direct compensation measures for informal workers, including domestic and migrant workers. Ensure their inclusion in cash transfer programmes

Promote specific strategies for women's empowerment and economic recovery (access to credit, financial services, technology, new markets)

Recommendations



Ensure continuity of essential services to respond to violence against women and girls

Prioritize essential multi-sectoral basic services, including social, food and health services, including sexual and reproductive health

Adopt measures to ensure access of migrant and refugee women to health, employment, food and information services

Involve women in all phases of the response and in national and local decision-making
Promote direct consultation with women's organizations

Support women's organizations at the community level to ensure that public health messages, prevention and response strategies reach all women

THANK YOU

María Noel Vaeza
Regional Director
Americas and the Caribbean



**UN
WOMEN**

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE AMERICAS AND THE CARIBBEAN