

Promoting Women's Economic Empowerment in the COVID-19 Context

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Abstract

When health crises like COVID-19 emerge, the shocks to economic, social, and health systems can have different implications for women and girls, with gendered impacts across various dimensions of wellbeing. This paper, part of a series documenting the gendered impacts of the pandemic, focuses on women's economic empowerment. It begins with a conceptual framework illustrating how the pandemic, associated response measures, economic contraction and different coping strategies intersect with underlying gender norms and inequality in ways that differentially affect the wellbeing of women and girls. It then synthesizes the existing evidence on how the COVID-19 crisis and associated response measures have impacted women's paid and unpaid work, entrepreneurship, and earnings across sectors in low- and middle-income countries. The paper proceeds to outline economic response measures from national governments and multilateral development banks and the extent to which gender inequalities have been considered in these measures to date. The paper concludes with recommendations aimed at donors and policymakers to ensure the COVID-19 recovery does not exacerbate pre-existing gender gaps in the economy.

Keywords: gender; women's economic empowerment; informal employment; pandemic response; COVID-19; gender equality; labor market participation; entrepreneurship; SME; agriculture; care work.

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Introduction

As donor institutions and governments seek to provide relief and support recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and global recession, CGD's new [COVID-19 Gender and Development Initiative](#) aims to ensure that their policy and investment decisions equitably benefit women and girls. Through the initiative we seek to deepen decision-makers' understanding of the gendered impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and recession and the containment, economic, and social policy responses to them, as well as propose evidence-based solutions to support an inclusive recovery. Recognizing that the academic and policy dialogue around gender inequality in the COVID-19 context has largely emphasized challenges facing women and girls in high-income settings, our analysis centers on women and girls in low- and middle-income countries (LICs and MICs).¹

In this paper, we examine the impact of the COVID-19 global recession on women's formal and informal work and employment in low- and middle-income countries, including entrepreneurship, wage and salaried work, work in subsistence and commercial agriculture, and unpaid housework and care work, and make recommendations to promote women's economic opportunities and empowerment. We begin with a brief summary of a conceptual framework developed by drawing on evidence of past crises' gendered impacts and women's and girls' coping strategies in response to crisis. Turning to the COVID-19 context, we then address three key questions:

1. **What are the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, global recession, and associated policy measures on women's and girls' outcomes?** In this paper, we focus on economic empowerment: the extent to which women and girls can freely harness their own capabilities to seize economic opportunities, unencumbered by restrictive household or community norms and government policies. Economic empowerment as an ultimate outcome includes objective achievement (e.g., access to paid work or increased income) and subjective empowerment (e.g., increased self-esteem; decreased stress) (Buvinic et. al 2020a). Our approach to unpacking the impacts of COVID-19 on women's and girls' economic outcomes in LICs and MICs is two-fold: a synthesis of the emerging evidence (see Annex A for methodology) and original data analysis, drawing upon data from the International Labor Organization, FinMark Trust, Google mobility data, the Oxford Policy Response database, and other sources.
2. **What are donors and low- and middle-income country governments doing in response?** In line with CGD's traditional focus, our key audiences for this paper are donor institutions, primarily multilateral development banks (MDBs) and other development finance institutions (DFIs) that aim to reduce poverty and promote

¹ Where research has focused on the COVID-19 crisis' impacts in lower-income countries, much of it has not focused on gender-differential impacts. See Khamis et al., *The Early Labor Market Impacts of COVID-19 in Developing Countries: Evidence from High-Frequency Phone Surveys*, World Bank Group, <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/35044/The-Early-Labor-Market-Impacts-of-COVID-19-in-Developing-Countries-Evidence-from-High-frequency-Phone-Surveys.pdf?sequence=6>.

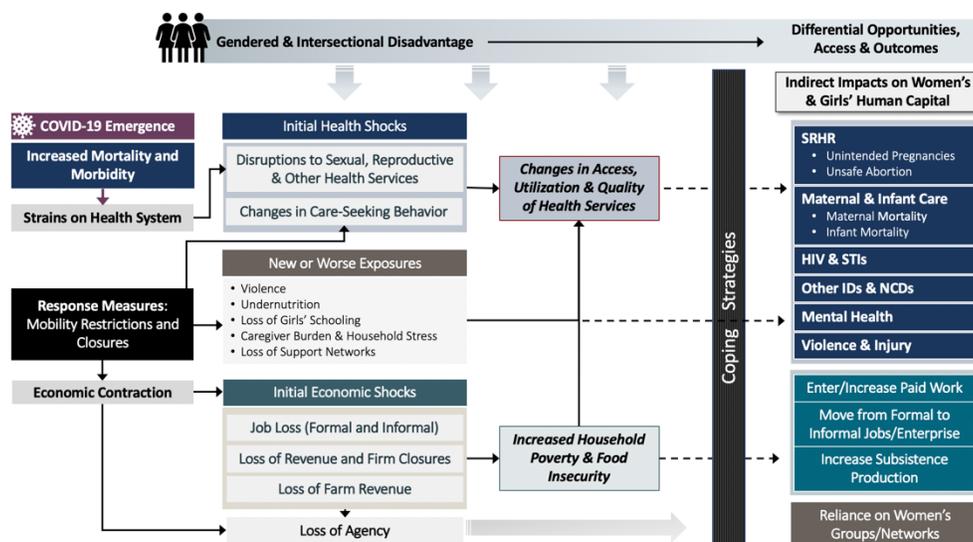
inclusive development. To complement existing efforts to map gender-sensitive policy responses from national governments, we review MDBs’ project appraisal documents and other relevant resources to shed light on the extent to which donors’ COVID-19 response efforts to date have integrated considerations of gender.

3. **What else needs to be done?** We highlight current limitations on data and evidence that must be addressed to ensure that response and recovery efforts are well-informed. We also draw upon evidence of what works to promote women’s and girls’ economic empowerment and compare what the rigorous evidence suggests donors and policymakers should prioritize to their COVID-19 response efforts to date.

The Effects of Health Crises on Women and Girls: A Conceptual Framework

We draw upon the historical evidence base to develop a conceptual framework on the impacts of crises on women and girls and apply the framework to a growing evidence base on the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The conceptual framework traces the ways that women’s and girls’ lives are impacted by a health crisis, both directly and indirectly. It identifies effects that appear immediately or in the short term, effects that lag in time, and coping strategies women and girls develop to weather crises (Figure 1). These different effects and mechanisms are summarized next. For a more detailed exposition of the conceptual framework, see our accompanying paper, *The Impacts of Health Crises on Women & Girls: How Historical Evidence Can Inform Assessment and Recovery through a Gender Lens*.

Figure 1. The Impact of Health Crises on Women and Girls: A Conceptual Framework



Direct Impacts of Health Crises and Response Measures: Though mortality and morbidity levels vary by the degree of communicability and severity of symptoms of a given disease, all health crises result in increased mortality and morbidity absent swift and effective intervention. Especially where diseases are highly contagious and containment measures are not imposed swiftly and effectively, a pandemic will place enormous strain on healthcare systems. To limit mortality and morbidity, governments traditionally respond to health crises by seeking to contain the spread of disease, in turn restricting individuals' mobility and access to schools, health and support services, and income-generating activities. The combination of heightened health risks and containment measures combine to impact economic activity. Economies are likely to contract, as businesses are forced to close and supply chains are disrupted, at least temporarily, resulting in widespread unemployment, lost income, and decreased aggregate demand for goods and services (World Bank 2020a).

Initial Shocks and Impacts of Health Crises and Response Measures on Women and Girls: As the health sector responds to the urgent epidemic threat and containment measures are imposed, women and girls may face challenges accessing essential health services, including but not limited to maternal care and contraceptive services (Church et al. 2020). Extended time in the home can increase unpaid care and exacerbate exposures to gender-based violence (Bhalotra et al. 2019). Economic contractions may lead to a loss of both formal and informal sector jobs, with a resulting loss of income and a reduction in the assets that individuals and households are able to acquire or retain (ILO 2021). Self-employed individuals running both formal and informal businesses of various sizes/stages of growth (micro, small and medium) will also experience losses in revenue and difficulties accessing credit—and may be forced to shut down permanently (Di Bella 2011). Loss of income for wage workers, entrepreneurs, and those in the agricultural sector will increase household poverty and food insecurity (ILO 2021). Finally, women's and girls' agency, ability to make independent choices, and broader wellbeing are also at risk from the combined effects of economic insecurity, increased risk of gender-based violence, challenges in accessing essential health services, and managing increased unpaid care work.

Downstream Impacts of Shocks and Coping Strategies on Women's and Girls' Well-Being: In light of income reductions, households may reduce education and spending on health to meet other basic needs. Evidence suggests boys may be prioritized to return to school, while girls may be kept home longer to care for younger siblings and do housework to free up the mother's time for paid work (Duryea et al. 1999). School closures, combined with restricted access to contraception and other sexual and reproductive health services, mean adolescent girls are more likely to get pregnant, resulting in increased fertility rates, as well as increased unsafe abortion rates where abortion is illegal or otherwise inaccessible (UNESCO 2020).

Women and girls may need to explore alternative work opportunities, often with lower earning potential and fewer protections. The evidence has shown that this 'added worker effect' is sensitive to household income: low-income women join the paid workforce to insulate against the risks of household poverty and food insecurity, whereas higher-income women exit the workforce (Cerutti 2000; Humphrey 1996; Judisman and Moreno 1990; Lee and Cho 2005; Sabarwal, et al. 2011; Skoufias and Parker 2006). Women who experience job

loss in the formal workforce may resort to informal wage work or entrepreneurship, taking on employment with lower wages and fewer benefits and labor protections to make ends meet. Women and girls living in rural areas may turn to increased subsistence production, especially in response to rising food insecurity. Evidence suggests that, as more workers crowd into the informal sector, those previously operating within it may be pushed out. Each of these coping strategies may result in reverse (urban to rural) migration, as those previously working in factories or as informal traders, for example, may return to rural communities to engage in subsistence agriculture (de Janvry and Sadoulet 2011; Antonopoulos 2009; von Braun 2008). As in non-crisis periods, women are likely to rely on the support of women's groups and networks in times of economic contraction, though containment measures imposed in health crises, combined with members' reduced incomes, may limit the support these groups are able to provide (de Hoop et al. 2020).²

The gendered effects of crisis can be intergenerational and inter-cohort, resulting in losses for future generations' human capital. As crisis negatively impacts outcomes for older women, younger women and girls witness these impacts and may be discouraged to pursue further education, employment, and other opportunities (Miller and Babiarz 2014; Goldin and Katz 2002). A final point worth emphasizing is the fact that the risks to women and girls outlined above do not originate with the onset of crisis; they are magnified as a result of it. The fact that crisis exacerbates, but does not create, these forms of gender inequality is important to keep in mind in designing and implementing longer-term recovery and development efforts.

In the next section, we summarize the emerging evidence on the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic, global recession, and associated policy measures are having on women's and girls' outcomes in low- and middle-income countries guided by the conceptual framework described above.

How is Women's and Girls' Economic Empowerment Impacted by the COVID Crisis?

In applying the conceptual framework to the COVID-19 context, we focus on job and income loss, loss of revenue and firm closures for women-owned firms, increased unpaid care work, and women's coping strategies—entering the paid workforce, moving from formal to informal jobs, and increasing subsistence production. (Other accompanying papers focus on other impacts and coping strategies, including those related to health and social protection.)

² "Women's groups" is an umbrella term commonly used to refer to different models of economic, health, and community groups with a primarily female membership, and include self-help and savings groups. Groups' models of operation vary but may aim to promote women's economic or broader empowerment (de Hoop 2020).

Impacts on Employment and Earnings

Unlike in past crises where typically men's employment has suffered more, early evidence on COVID-19 reflects disproportionate impacts on women's employment, working hours, and wages relative to those of men. The COVID-19 crisis has not (yet, at least) generated an 'added worker effect' common in non-pandemic economic shocks and instead worsened existing gender inequalities in employment outcomes in many countries. Social norms that position women as secondary wage earners within households or place the burden of increased care work on women likely factor into the reasons women have been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 crisis.

Differing sectoral impacts of the pandemic also play a role. In May 2020, the International Labor Organization (ILO) suggested four sectors at high risk of severe COVID-19 impact: accommodation and food services; real estate, business, and administrative activities; manufacturing; and the wholesale/retail trade.³ Globally, those sectors accounted for 41 percent of women's employment compared to 35 percent of men's employment (ILO 2020a).⁴

The most recent ILO estimate is that the employment loss measured in working hours for women worldwide was 5.0 per cent in 2020, versus 3.9 per cent for men (ILO 2021). The employment to population ratio fell 2.6 percent for women compared to 1.8 percent for men in low income countries, and 2.7 percent for women compared for 2.5 percent for men in upper middle income countries. In lower middle income countries, the decline was 2.3 for women and 4.1 percent for men (ILO 2021).

In the May-June 2020 period, surveys by the World Bank across Indonesia, Mongolia, Vietnam Cambodia, Myanmar, Lao PDR, and Papua New Guinea found that a somewhat larger percentage of women working pre-crisis had lost their jobs than men (Kim et al. 2020).⁵ The Center on Gender Equity and Health's quarterly reviews suggest similar results for Bangladesh, India, South Africa, Zambia, and the Philippines (Center on Gender Equity and Health 2020; Center on Gender Equity and Health 2021). In India, unemployment has lasted longer for women than for men. While April saw a large contraction in employment for both men and women, employment had recovered by August 2020 for men while it remained somewhat depressed for women (Deshpande 2020). In Colombia, the shutdown in early 2020 led to a higher reduction in the probability of having a formal job for women than for men (Garcia-Rojas et al. 2020).

³ Note that these include both formal and informal sectors.

⁴ Beyond these global averages, there are regional and country-level variations. For example, women in Tunisia are less likely to be employed in professions able to be performed remotely; the reverse is true in Pakistan (Center on Gender Equity and Health 2020). See also GRADE analysis based on household surveys taken during the 2018 and 2019 period across 16 countries in Latin America. The authors predicted that 30 percent of men and 33 percent of women who worked before COVID-19 could not leave their homes to work, resulting in a 26 percent loss of employment income for men and 22 percent for women (Gutierrez et al. 2020).

⁵ These results may be subject to revision.

In a survey of BRAC program beneficiaries, household headship made a difference in the probability of losing income during the pandemic. Male heads of household were more likely to report lost income in Rwanda, Nepal, and Tanzania, but women heads of household were more likely to report lost income in Afghanistan, the Philippines, and South Sudan (BRAC 2020). CARE reports that 55 percent of women surveyed across 40 countries cited income loss as the greatest impact of COVID-19 on their lives, compared to 34 percent of men surveyed (CARE 2020).

In Ethiopia, a representative phone survey of female garment workers finds that 41 percent of respondents employed in January 2020 were put on leave or terminated by July 2020, leading respondents' basic expenditures to exceed their incomes, as well as high levels of food insecurity and reverse migration as a coping strategy (Meyer et al. 2021). A survey in India, Kenya, Ghana, and South Africa found that 35 percent of young women were unable to continue with their regular paid work after the onset of the pandemic (Chakma 2020). More evidence is needed to determine how women are impacted differently across the lifecycle.

There is also evidence of differential gender impacts across countries, driven in part by the impact of COVID-19 shutdowns on sectors where men make up the majority of employees. Based on 2010–2016 microdata, ILO and WIEGO find that in Asia and the Pacific as well as the Middle East, a greater share of employed women are in agriculture than of employed men, but the reverse is true in Latin America. In Southern Africa and Latin America, women are over-represented in services, while the Middle East sees the share of employed women working in services similar to the share of employed men (ILO and WIEGO 2019).

In Lebanon in April 2020, 39 percent of those surveyed who had been working pre-COVID were permanently laid-off from their jobs, while 38 percent were temporarily laid-off.⁶ The situation for men—with 81 percent permanently or temporarily laid off—was even worse than for women (who were at 71 percent). This was primarily because the male-dominated construction sector was particularly hard hit (Kebede et al. 2020a). Similarly, in Jordan, where a larger proportion of employed women have permanent formal employment, men suffered a larger employment shock than women. More women than men were granted paid leave and fewer women than men have been permanently dismissed: 19 percent of Jordanian men were permanently dismissed compared to 15 percent of women (Kebede et al. 2020b).

To provide additional evidence, we look at data for 68 countries from the ILO covering employment outcomes from 2019 into the third quarter of 2020. The data confirms the negative impact of the COVID-19 crisis on employment for all, some evidence of gendered impacts, if heterogeneous, and some evidence that the scale of gendered impact depends on the severity of the COVID-19 caseload and mobility reductions within countries. (The ILO data we were able to access do not make it possible to distinguish

⁶ These numbers and those for Jordan refer to citizens. Separate analyses were conducted for refugee employees.

between formal sector and informal sector employment and earnings. More evidence specific to impacts on informal work is discussed below.)

Table 1 looks at the limited data available from LICs and MICs and compares labor force and earnings outcomes by gender pre-COVID and into 2020. Note *earnings*, as defined by the ILO, includes regular pay, with the data often obtained from household surveys. On the other hand, *employment* includes all types of work, including self-employment, even a single hour, measured during a short reference period, often obtained from labor force surveys (ICLS 2013).⁷

**Table 1. Earnings and Employment Percent Change after COVID-19
by Income Group, Sector, and Sex**

Income	Broad Sector	Sex	Earnings Change (After/Before-1)*100	Employment Change (After/Before-1)*100	Earnings Countries Count	Employment Countries Count
Lower middle income	Agriculture	Female	-3.30	-6.40	3	2
		Male	-1.50	0.43	3	2
	Industry	Female	-9.10	-4.70	3	2
		Male	-7.00	-8.60	3	2
	Services	Female	-7.20	-7.80	3	2
		Male	-7.60	-9.20	3	2
	Total	Female	-8.20	-6.30	3	4
		Male	-6.90	-5.30	3	4
Upper middle income	Agriculture	Female	5.60	-4.80	6	8
		Male	-1.20	-2.70	6	8
	Industry	Female	3.50	-9.30	7	8
		Male	0.43	-13.00	7	8
	Services	Female	5.00	-13.00	7	8
		Male	4.10	-11.00	7	8
	Total	Female	4.90	-9.70	7	11
		Male	3.10	-9.00	7	11
High income	Agriculture	Female	8.30	-4.10	2	6
		Male	1.50	-0.48	2	6
	Industry	Female	4.80	-1.60	2	6
		Male	3.10	-0.16	2	6
	Services	Female	7.70	0.47	2	6
		Male	6.40	1.10	2	6
	Total	Female	6.70	-2.10	3	39
		Male	4.50	-1.90	3	39

⁷ See also Alon et al. 2020.

The earnings variable can decrease (increase) in two ways: 1) by an actual decrease (increase) in pay, or 2) by a change in employment where the remaining people in regularly paid jobs have lower (higher) pay. This second mechanism is captured partly in the employment variable, which tracks all types of paid employment and not just regularly paid employment. It appears that employment fell somewhat more for women than men across both lower and upper middle-income countries, while there is no data available for low-income countries. The picture on earnings (given a person is regularly employed) is more mixed, with lower-middle-income countries seeing larger drops for women than men and the reverse being true in upper-middle-income countries. In upper-middle-income countries and high-income-countries, it is possible that women had an increase in pay; but what is more likely is that lower-paid women left regular employment. Thus, this data is consistent with more women than men moving from regular to irregular employment, or out of employment altogether, during the pandemic.

Next, we focus on the employed population gap between men and women. The employed population is the number employed divided by the population ages 15–65.⁸ The gap is the percent difference of men over women, so that values over zero reflect more men employed than women, and values less than zero reflect more women employed than men. We use this measure to see if and where women have felt a disproportionate impact of the COVID crisis in terms of employment.⁹ (Note that overall employment fell across the board; in these calculations we examine if women’s employment fell faster than men’s employment).

⁸ Employed persons are those who worked for a minimum of 1 hour during ILO’s reference period. The population is persons aged 15–65, from World Bank 2020 population projections from <https://databank.worldbank.org/source/population-estimates-and-projections>.

⁹ We used the World Bank’s rapid household surveys to calculate the difference in reports of stopped work during 2020 by gender of the household head. The data suggested 25 percent of female-headed households compared to 22 percent of male-headed households saw stopped work in low-income countries, 35 to 29 percent in lower-middle-income countries, and 50 to 36 percent in upper-middle-income countries. We do not report detailed results because subsequent to our analysis the World Bank raised concerns about the representativeness of the underlying data. See *COVID-19 High-Frequency Monitoring Dashboard 2020* from <https://www.worldbank.org/en/data/interactive/2020/11/11/covid-19-high-frequency-monitoring-dashboard>. To examine the differential effects of COVID-19 on men and women with different burdens of childcare, we observe ILO data where it is available—on the employed population from Brazil, Mexico, North Macedonia, and Costa Rica. Across all levels of children, men have similar levels of employment during and pre-COVID (“pre-COVID” is defined as the mean of all observations from 2015 to March 31, 2020. During COVID is defined as the mean of all observations after April 1, 2020. Equal-weighted means on a country-group level were used). For women, greater care burden led to lower baseline levels of percent of the population employed. However, the effects of COVID for the four countries was not associated with greater effects on employment among women with greater care burden.

More details on the variables are available in the appendix, along with the [full regression results](#). In short, they suggest:

- Variation in pre-existing employment inequality explains the considerable majority of inequality during the COVID period. A more gender-equal sector in non-pandemic times remains more equal in pandemic periods.
- Mobility, case rates, and public health rigidity are all significantly correlated with women losing more employment than men in middle-income countries. Here, a positive coefficient indicates that conditional on pre-COVID gaps, women are losing more employment than men. As case rates and resulting public health measures increased, and mobility decreased, we see women lose more employment compared to men.¹⁰ This is not the case in high-income countries (where the gap is correlated primarily with GDP per capita).¹¹ Returning to pre-COVID mobility (and low case rates) may be necessary to unwind any growth in unequal employment outcomes between women and men. Note, however, that besides mobility, the statistical significance of these effects is heavily dependent on the inclusion of Colombia, Peru, and South Africa.¹²

We undertook similar analysis using data from the World Bank’s Enterprise Surveys, looking at firms in 11 LMIC and UMIC countries and examining the percentage point change since December 2019 in the proportion of permanent, full-time, female, private-sector workers as a percentage of all of permanent, full-time, private sector workers.¹³ The percentage point change ranged from a drop of 2.8 percent in Niger to a rise of 1.7 percent in Togo, with an average of approximately zero. Running a regression analysis similar to that run on the ILO data, we use independent variables of sector dummies, GDP per capita PPP, median monthly income PPP, and the COVID response measures as above. The school closures variable here was excluded, as all of the countries analyzed had closed their schools at the time of the survey. Since the enterprise survey was taken at different times for each country and each survey, we use data, where possible, based on the date the survey was conducted.¹⁴ Results are similar to those from ILO data analysis: pre-COVID gender inequalities account for the considerable majority of employment inequality during COVID, and there is some evidence of a gendered effect correlated with the severity of the COVID-

¹⁰ The positive coefficient on economic measures is confounded by collinearity between economic measures and severity of the pandemic.

¹¹ We attempt to control for collinearity issues by separately regressing each independent variable, using quarter dummies and a pre-COVID lag as controls. There are still many endogeneity and multicollinearity issues with this specification, and thus we do not interpret our results as causal.

¹² Sector dummies, when included, were insignificant. A measure of cash transfers was highly collinear with quarter dummies, so was excluded.

¹³ That is, Female 2020 workers / Total 2020 workers—Female 2019 / Total 2019 workers

¹⁴ To prevent lookahead bias, we apply a one-day lag to these variables prior to merging. However, the firm will likely have laid off or furloughed its employees prior to the survey being conducted. So, we do not attempt to perfectly align variables such as “cases” with when employees were actually laid off or furloughed.

19 outbreak (a more severe outbreak is associated with a disproportionately large impact on women’s employment).

Finally, we relied on data from Finmark Trust tracking surveys, carried out in seven sub-Saharan countries: Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Uganda, and Zambia. Averaging across the sample, 26 percent of both women and men said their earnings stayed the same in the COVID-19 period compared to pre-COVID levels, whereas 69 percent of women said their earnings decreased compared to 68 percent of men, and 5 percent of women said their earnings increased to 6 percent of men. The country with the largest gap between men and women is Ghana, where 59 percent of women reported decreased earnings compared to 52 percent of men.

Table 2. Proportion of People Reporting Lower Incomes from One Year Prior, Sex-disaggregated

	M	F
Ghana	52	59
Kenya	79	79
Nigeria	66	66
Rwanda	81	85
South Africa	44	43
Uganda	83	82
Zambia	69	71

Data Source: FinMark Trust (2020)

To emphasize: our analysis looks at the differential outcome of the COVID crisis and public health responses on employment and earnings between women and men across countries. Both men and women have seen employment declines. The literature review and our data also suggest heterogeneity across countries: some will have seen a significantly larger gendered impact on employment (with women losing more jobs than men) than others. Furthermore, the data is very sparse. If countries want to make data-informed gender-based policies during crisis situations, better data-gathering processes need to be in place.¹⁵

That said, the available evidence suggests, first, unequal labor force outcomes in the COVID crisis can be primarily explained by unequal labor force outcomes prior to the crisis: fixing structural inequalities remains a priority. Second, the available evidence suggests that employed women in some LICs and MICs may be disproportionately affected by the scale of the health crisis and public policy responses to close schools and limit mobility.

¹⁵ For an innovative approach to accomplishing this for formal firms, see Bachas et al.2020.

Impacts on Business Operations

Women-owned firms have been more likely to close since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.¹⁶ These firms are concentrated in consumer-facing sectors where the demand shock has hit hard, and they are also smaller and with thinner capital buffers than men-owned firms, in part helping to explain their higher closure rates. A phone survey of 1,190 enterprises in Jordan, 8 percent of which were owned by women, found that many women-owned enterprises did not have savings or reserves to survive beyond a month (Kebede et al. 2020b). An analysis based on Facebook data shows that women-owned businesses globally are 5.9 percentage points more likely to close their businesses than men-owned ones, controlling for region (Goldstein et al. 2020). In sub-Saharan Africa, 41 percent of women-owned businesses closed versus 34 percent for men-owned; in Latin America and the Caribbean, these figures are 40 percent versus 29 percent, and in South Asia, 51 and 45 percent, respectively. FinMark Trust data suggests that women-owned firms' ability to generate income has been disproportionately affected in both retail markets and services (such as hairdressing, catering, and domestic services). In Uganda, 61 percent of women-led small businesses have failed to generate income compared to 22 percent of men-led businesses. Rwanda and South Africa show similar trends (FinMark Trust 2020). A survey of 1,300 women SME owners in 30 African countries found that 80 percent had to shut down at least temporarily. Of those that remained operational, 41 percent had reduced work hours, 34 percent had laid off workers, and 25 percent had reduced employees' pay (UN Women, ImpactHer and AfDB 2020).

Using a sample of 37,000 businesses from 52 countries between April and September of 2020, Torres et al. (forthcoming) find that women-led microbusinesses, as well as women-led businesses in the hospitality industry and those in countries more severely affected by the COVID-19 shock, have all been disproportionately impacted compared to businesses led by men. Despite these gendered impacts, women-led firms are less likely to have received support from governments (Torres et al. forthcoming).

A small sample survey of women entrepreneurs across 32 low- and middle-income countries found that only 8.4 percent of women surveyed had received financing from the government and only 6.3 percent had received a formal business loan (Cherie Blair Foundation for Women n.d.).

One explanation for why the COVID crisis may have hit women's businesses harder than men's businesses is that women more than men have diverted time from working in the business to doing unpaid care work. In June 2020, globally 23 percent of women business owners surveyed reported spending six or more hours per day on care work compared to 11 percent of men (Facebook, OECD, and World Bank 2020). In South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, more than 80 percent of business leaders reported that domestic tasks were interfering with their work. By October, 18 percent of women business owners and 10 percent of men business owners globally still reported spending six or more hours on

¹⁶ 'Women-owned,' ideally defined as both percentage of ownership and governance (see [IFC definition](#)), here may be defined differently in each publication cited in this paper.

care work (Facebook, OECD, and World Bank 2020). A survey of Nigerian entrepreneurs also reflects women business owners' increased domestic responsibilities during the COVID crisis (SME.NG n.d.).

The three types of needed support most commonly cited by all SME owners were salary subsidies, tax deferrals, and access to loans and credit guarantees. But for many women entrepreneurs the list is different. Nearly a quarter of them reported the need for support in taking care of family members impacted by COVID-19 as one of the top three critical measures needed.

WEConnect International, a global network that certifies businesses as women-owned and connects them to corporate value chains, is conducting quarterly surveys of the women-owned businesses in its network. The 446 survey respondents are spread geographically around the globe in North America, Latin America, Europe, Asia, and Africa. Most of the businesses are SMEs: forty-nine percent of survey respondents employ 1–4 workers and 43 percent employ 5–49 workers (WEConnect 2020). The businesses are heavily concentrated in service industries or retail trade: only 12 percent are in manufacturing, agriculture, or construction.

In the second quarter of 2020, 84 percent of women business owners reported a significant decline in sales and 58 percent anticipated a further decline in Q3. For 60 percent of businesses, the Q2 sales declined 50 percent or more. Some challenges encountered in Q1 showed little improvement: 40 percent of women business owners reported losing face-to-face customers to digital providers of goods and services, as compared to 43 percent in Q1, and 48 percent reported cancelled contracts versus 51 percent in Q1. A third of business owners reported the need to seek new sources of capital versus 38 percent in Q1. A quarter of the owners reported increased care demands for family that cut into time available for the business, as compared to 27 percent in Q1 2020. Other problems improved: in Q1 31 percent reported shortages of inputs needed for production, which fell to 17 percent in Q2. The top two needs reported did not change from Q1 to Q2: (1) adjusting products or services to remain relevant, and (2) securing immediate funding to remain operational (WEConnect 2020).

Women business owners are doing their part to adapt: according to WEConnect data, 62 percent are cutting unnecessary costs; 43 percent are shifting to digital business models; 42 percent are creating a new business line in response to local or global demand; and 41 percent are growing a business line in response to local or global demand (WEConnect 2020). Torres et al. also note that women-led micro-firms are more likely than men-led firms to report increasing the use of digital platforms as a coping strategy (Torres et al. forthcoming).

With each of these data points, it is important to note that there were challenges to identifying women-owned firms prior to the pandemic, especially those operating informally or without ties to formal financial institutions. As a result, data may be skewed to over-represent more successful women-owned businesses, indicating that the impacts to all women-owned businesses may be worse than the existing data suggests.

A Focus on the Informal Sector

Globally, the majority of the employed population works in the informal economy in unregistered micro enterprises or in jobs with no formal employment contracts, avoiding tax obligations but receiving no job entitlements, including social security and unemployment benefits. Informal employment is particularly prevalent in low-income countries and for employed women in these countries. They are street vendors, home-based workers in global or domestic value chains, waste pickers, domestic workers, short term wage workers, and subsistence level microentrepreneurs. The most recent ILO estimates show that 61 percent of the globally employed population earn a living in the informal economy and that in low-income countries 92 percent of women workers (versus 87 percent of men workers) are informally employed (ILO and WIEGO 2018). These large numbers mean no protection floor for the majority of workers when confronted with a global recession.

Past global economic crises have led, broadly, to reductions in formal employment and increases in informal employment for both women and men (see, for instance, Bosch and Maloney 2008, and Jutting and de Laiglesia 2009, both documenting the effects of the 2008 global financial crisis). Formal employment tends to be pro-cyclical—when economies are doing well, formal employment increases—whereas informal employment tends to be countercyclical. There are exceptions, however, depending on the nature of the informal employment and its link with sectors of the economy that are directly affected by economic contractions. For instance, during the 2008 crisis, waste picking in Ahmedabad, India collapsed because of a sharp decrease in the global supply of waste. Waste pickers, a majority of them women, lost their main source of income (Buvinic et al. 2017).

If the recession triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic behaves similarly to past economic shocks, women's participation in informal employment should increase or at least remain the same (to cope with a fall in household income and increased food insecurity). Possible trends include: (a) women workers losing formal sector jobs may move to informal jobs; (b) women in informal employment may shift to more precarious informal jobs or increase (decrease) work efforts; (c) formerly inactive women may join informal employment ('added worker effect'); and/or (d) women in informal employment may withdraw from the paid workforce (become 'inactive') and shift their time to home production and/or subsistence production through family farms. The latter may especially be the case for microentrepreneurs facing depleting business capital from drying up of credit, savings, and other sources of cash or in-kind capital.

The evidence to-date on the effects of the massive disruption in labor markets from the COVID-19 pandemic on women informal workers in low- and middle-income countries (with the caveats mentioned earlier about the limitations of the data in mind) suggests that:

Informal jobs have been hit hard in this pandemic, more so than in past economic contractions, and drops in earnings have been sharp. Both women and men informally employed have been affected to a much greater extent than in past economic crises, with an estimated 17.3 percent decline in global working hours (for the second quarter of 2020) and a more severe decline of 23.3 percent working hours in low-income countries (ILO 2020c).

This may be due in part to the stringency of lockdown measures, not present in past economic crises. Lockdowns in large cities seemed to have resulted in a massive drop in earnings for informal sector workers, both men and women. WIEGO's interviews with more than 2,200 informally employed individuals in 12 cities around the world reports that more than two-thirds of respondents had zero earnings during the height of the lockdown in April 2020, and less than half of pre-COVID earnings when the lockdown eased somewhat two months later (Roever and Rogan 2020).

Jobs dependent on international or regional trade and value chains seem to have suffered most, according to anecdotal evidence. The closing of international borders and markets seem to have had sizeable impacts on informal women traders in West Africa, reducing paid work and income (Laouan 2020). Reduction in the demand for minerals in Peru (metal mines) and Colombia (coal mines) has resulted in losses in jobs for women in the informal economy linked to mining (van Teijlingen and Hogenboom 2020). The short-term collapse in the global garment trade has had ripple effects in supply chains in Asia and the Pacific leading to significant job losses and wage cuts for garment workers, most of whom are women and some of whom are employed informally. The region employs 65 million garment workers, of which 35 million are women (ILO 2020d).

The ILO reports that by early June, the employment of 72.3 percent of global domestic workers (and 55 percent of those working informally) was impacted negatively by COVID-19 (ILO 2020e). WIEGO reports that 97 percent of domestic workers surveyed in Ahmedabad reported zero earnings during lockdown (Roever and Rogan 2020). Domestic workers, the vast majority of whom are women, are also often migrants without access to social protection programs in their destination country, leaving them especially vulnerable to economic crisis.

Unlike trends for the formal sector, women's informal sector jobs may be somewhat more protected than men's, but with a significant decline in working hours, and some evidence suggests that drops in women's earnings have been greater than in men's earnings. Data is also still limited, especially for the informal sector, and trends may shift over time. A survey of members of the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) found that seven months after lockdowns had lifted, 22 percent of respondents had no income. Domestic workers have seen their incomes cut in half on average, and construction workers by 65 percent (Nanavaty 2021). The ILO forecasts that, of the 740 million women working in the informal economy, 11.42 percent work in high-risk sectors, compared to 32 percent for men, suggesting that women's informal jobs may be somewhat more protected than men's, in contrast to dynamics unfolding in the formal sector (ILO 2020a).

A rapid gender analysis in Bangladesh also suggests that job losses among informal workers are somewhat greater for men than for women (25 percent versus 17 percent) but that women are more likely to report a reduction in earnings (UN Women 2020). A phone survey of the urban poor in Bangladesh finds that women are 13 percent more likely than men to report wage loss and a 14 percent larger wage loss, and more men (59 percent) than women (52 percent) expect to remain in jobs (Genoni et al. 2020). A phone survey of households and enterprises in Iraq found that women are less likely than men to report a reduction in

working hours (27 percent of women and 23 percent of men report working as usual), but women report a greater loss of income (Kebede et al. 2020c). Men, however, reported a slightly greater income loss than women (78 percent versus 76 percent) in a phone survey of Lebanese and Syrians in Lebanon, including small scale entrepreneurs (Kebede et al. 2020a).

Some evidence suggests a transition from formal to informal employment and increasing informality, especially for women. Predictions for Latin American and the Caribbean suggest that the recession will increase informal employment through the temporal suspension of formal employment relationships, especially in the highly informal service sector where women predominate as workers (ECLAC and ILO 2020). A survey of the self-employed in Mexico found a sharp fall of women wage earners (a decrease of 6.2 percentage points) in favor of self-employed women workers (an increase of 1.9 percentage points) (ILO 2020f). Contact-intensive sectors in Colombia (personal care services, hospitality, restaurants) have been hit hardest by the crisis, increasing informality and the gender wage gap, with survey data suggesting that women heads of household were most affected by the crisis (Garcia-Rojas et al 2020).

A sharp decline in agricultural revenues and a shift from cash crops to subsistence farming has been suggested for both women and men farmers, with women likely more impacted longer-term. A survey of 300 SEWA members in India in April determined that agricultural workers are shifting to subsistence farming because the cost of agricultural inputs has increased and access to markets has been curtailed (SEWA Bharat 2020). A study in India and Nepal found that 27 percent and 29 percent of women farmers in each location, respectively, reported their regular source of extension services was unavailable during lockdowns (Alvi et al. 2021). In Myanmar, 16 percent of surveyed farm households reported difficulties in purchasing inputs and 65 percent experienced challenges selling the harvest due to COVID-19 (Lambrecht et al 2020). Across Uganda, Ethiopia, Nigeria, and Malawi, nearly a quarter of a million households are estimated to have lost farm income due to the pandemic (Josephson et al. 2020).

Early results from Kenya suggest that while men farmers have already begun to recover their livelihoods, women have not. Between September and December 2020, the proportion of men farmers reporting income loss fell from 82 percent to 64 percent, while women farmers reporting income loss has remained consistently high at about 85 percent (Ndegwa 2020). Similar results come from Ghana, with 10 percent fewer men reporting income loss in October compared to September, while only 2 percent fewer women reported income loss (Chamboko 2021). In China, gender of the farm owner was a significant factor in long-term negative effects of the pandemic, but not for negative short-term effects (Du et al. 2020).

In West Africa, an estimated 50 million people were at risk of food insecurity and malnutrition over the summer due to COVID-19, up from 17 million people prior to the pandemic (Oxfam 2020). Where farmers are having difficulties purchasing inputs for commercial production and having difficulties selling what they produce, and where food insecurity is on the rise, it may be expected that farmers will shift from commercial to subsistence production, though little evidence to confirm this trend is currently available. Emerging evidence from SEWA members in India suggests that smallholder farmers have

made several adaptations to the COVID context including taking online orders, finding new linkages with vendors, and providing home delivery via electric rickshaws (Nanavaty 2021).

Women’s time in unpaid domestic and care work seems to have increased, especially for more vulnerable households headed by women, but increases in overall work hours do not seem to be too large, perhaps due to women’s decreased time in paid work. SEWA members in India reported in a phone survey that home-based and domestic workers had not been paid, that savings had dried up, but that time use or care work had not changed (SEWA 2020). This and other anecdotal evidence counter the widely held assumption that all women’s overall time burdens have increased dramatically as result of the pandemic. Instead, overall time burdens may just be increasing at the very ends of the spectrum, that is, for more ‘elite’ women—those concentrated in the formal sector, with higher incomes and levels of education, and previously able to rely on schools, childcare centers, and domestic workers to manage paid work and caregiving responsibilities—as well as for more vulnerable women-headed households. For women-headed households in Colombia, for example, the probability of dedicating more time to domestic work increased by 13.5 percentage points for them, compared to 5.7 percentage points for all women (Garcia-Rojas et al 2020).

The main coping short term mechanism of the informally employed, both men and women, has been depleting savings and borrowing money. Some informal workers were able to successfully pivot and take up new work during the height of the pandemic, such as waste collectors in India shifting to janitorial work in hospitals or home-based workers turning to produce food items (Nanavaty 2021). But evidence of these adaptations remains limited, and the reach of government cash transfers, food aid and/or other social protection measures is reported to have been inadequate (Roever and Rogan 2020). WIEGO interviews in 12 cities around the world show that drawing down savings and borrowing money have been main avenues of the informally employed to cope with the sharp drop in income from the economic crisis (Roever and Rogan 2020). Women’s proclivity to save may have protected poor families from the worst effects of the crisis (Buvinic et al. 2013b; Buvinic et al. 2019; Bastian et al. 2018).

The Role of Women’s Groups

Pre-COVID evidence points to the role of women’s groups—including self-help groups, village savings and loan associations, and other community-based networks—in insulating against shocks and promoting various aspects of women’s economic empowerment, including increasing women’s access to information, improving business and farming practices, and boosting self-confidence, self-reliance, and financial-risk taking, with benefits for women’s business profits, savings, and subjective well-being (Buvinic et al. 2020b; Buvinic and O’Donnell 2016; de Hoop et al. 2020).

Anecdotal evidence suggests that these networks have played an important role in fostering resilience and providing support in the COVID-19 context, in spite of limitations on their face-to-face interactions and financial constraints of members. Particularly in groups that have microfinance or livelihoods components, members may be better able to weather

economic shocks through consumption smoothing and improved access to assets and social protection (de Hoop et al. 2020). But longer-term economic impacts of the COVID crisis may disrupt groups' abilities to save and lend. Qualitative evidence from Nigeria suggests that savings group members are reluctant to take out loans when their businesses have closed and they are uncertain about their ability to repay (Agene and Onyishi 2020). Evidence from India already demonstrates groups' limited ability to save during the height of the pandemic, with both the number of groups able to save and the amount of savings dropping from January through April 2020 (de Hoop et al. 2020).

Because of this drop off, financial assistance from the government targeted at women's groups can play an important role. The National Rural Livelihoods Mission, supported with a \$750 million loan from the World Bank, aims to reduce poverty in India through the formation and support of women's self-help groups across the country. These groups are pivotal in ensuring that cash transfers are delivered to 'last mile' populations and help households to meet basic needs through the establishment of community kitchens and the production of sanitizer and masks. The collaboration between women's groups and state and local government may contribute to mitigating the short-term negative consequences of the crisis (Shaji 2020).

Containment measures have disrupted in-person meetings, but evidence of adaptations is emerging. Some groups have pivoted to communicating over digital platforms, though gaps in mobile phone access prevent digital communication from being fully inclusive and evidence suggests that subjective empowerment gains are less likely realized through digital engagement (Sanyal 2020). In Uganda, many groups have shifted activities to WhatsApp (de Hoop et al. 2020). Early reports from India, however, indicate that self-help groups have not been able to continue regular activities such as loan disbursement and collection (Sanyal 2020). More evidence is needed to document the impacts that women's groups are having in promoting resilience and how donors and governments can best support the adaptations they are making in the COVID context.

To conclude this section:

- As in past crises, early evidence suggests that the COVID-19 crisis has resulted in formal job losses for all, as well as revenues losses for firms and resulting business closures, leading to increased household poverty and food insecurity. The crisis has also increased unpaid care work, while not necessarily increasing total work time burdens, and perhaps concentrated among certain demographics of women. All these effects are still based on incomplete evidence.
- Unlike in past crises, women's sectors seem to have been hit harder than men's sectors by containment measures and economic contractions and may have limited women's ability to realize the 'added worker effect.' Instead, depleting savings and borrowing money seems to have been a main coping mechanism, especially among the informally employed, both women and men.

- Early evidence suggests a move from formal to informal work in some economies. A similar move from commercial to subsistence farming for women farmers has yet to be documented across contexts. Globally, informal workers have experienced mass loss of income and working hours due to lockdown measures.
- Women-owned firms have resorted to a number of coping strategies, including cutting costs, repositioning their businesses using digital platforms, and adapting their products and services to respond to needs in the COVID context. Women business owners place greater emphasis on the constraints that their increased COVID-related caregiving needs place on their time available to devote to their businesses. More evidence is needed on extent and effectiveness of efforts to keep businesses operational.
- Women’s groups and networks have sought to promote resilience and provide support to local communities—but have had their regular operations disrupted by containment measures and economic contractions. More evidence is needed on the impacts these groups are having on individual outcomes.
- This evidence also suggests, importantly, heterogeneous responses depending on economic and social contexts. The informalization of work as a survival strategy for both women and men seems more likely to occur in upper middle- and high-income countries than in lower-middle income countries, perhaps because in the former group of countries labor markets are more developed and able to generate jobs more easily. While the evidence is scant, it suggests that in poorer middle-income countries, women are more affected than men by losses in jobs and earnings.
- The evidence also suggests that mobility constraints affect the employment options of women more so than of men in poorer economies but not in wealthier ones.
- Emerging evidence leaves big knowledge gaps in terms of the poorest and most vulnerable women and girls; the result is likely an underestimation of COVID-19’s impact on women and girls holding the most precarious informal and agricultural jobs. Additionally, evidence is still sparse on various sub-populations of women and adolescent girls. More research must be done to examine the intersectional impact of the pandemic, including for women of different ages, migrant status, education level, race/ethnicity, disability status, and other factors.
- The pandemic is still unfolding, and trends picked up by the early evidence reviewed here may change significantly over time.

How Have Policymakers and Donors Responded?

Drawing upon evidence from past crises, researchers and advocates have expressed concern that policies and financing packages aimed at responding to COVID-19’s health, social, and economic impacts will be gender-blind, ignoring the unique needs and constraints of women and girls and risking their exclusion from benefits (Wenham et al. 2020). In an effort to

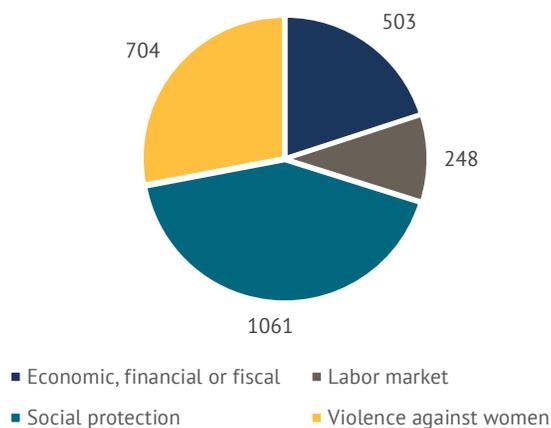
move quickly to deploy cash, in-kind assistance, stop-gap financing, and other forms of support, donors and governments may place a priority on expediency to the detriment of inclusion, in particular risking the exclusion of groups that face disproportionate vulnerabilities, including the women and girls most in need. Here we seek to explore the extent to which COVID-19 response measures are designed intentionally to reach and benefit women and girls.

Review of Governments’ COVID-19 Response Efforts

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP), with substantive leadership and technical contributions from UN Women, is tracking the extent to which COVID-19 policy responses from national governments and territories are gender-sensitive—defined as “seeking to directly address the risks and challenges that women and girls face during the COVID-19 crisis” (UNDP and UN Women 2020). Tracked measures include those that relate to economic security and empowerment—labor market measures, fiscal and economic measures, and social protection measures—as well as those aimed at reducing the risk of violence against women and supporting survivors. To date, the tracker’s data only reflects policy commitments rather than implementation, so outcomes will need to be measured to see the result of good intentions.

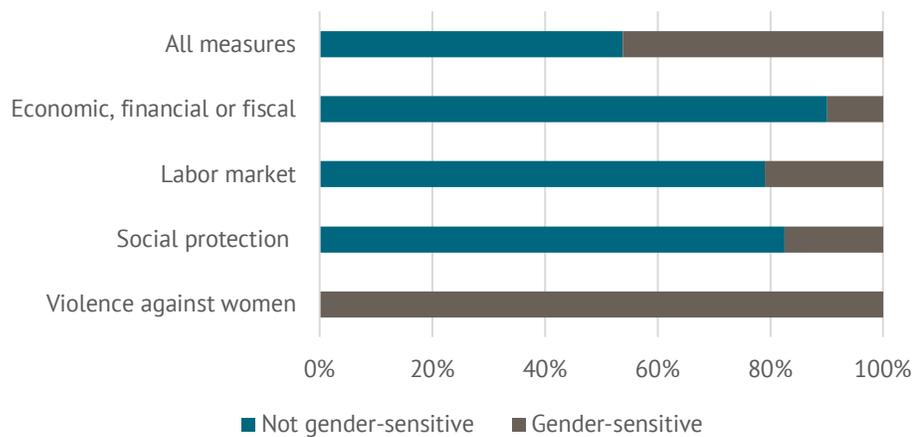
The tracker reflects 1,813 fiscal and economic, social protection, and labor market measures of over 200 countries and territories. Just 177 measures—concentrated in 85 countries and territories—are found to be gender-sensitive in “targeting women’s economic security,” amounting to less than 10 percent of all measures (UNDP and UN Women 2020).

Figure 2. COVID-19 Policy Response Measures by Governments, by Category



Data Source: UNDP (2020)

Figure 3. Policy Response Measures by Governments, by Category and Gender-Sensitivity

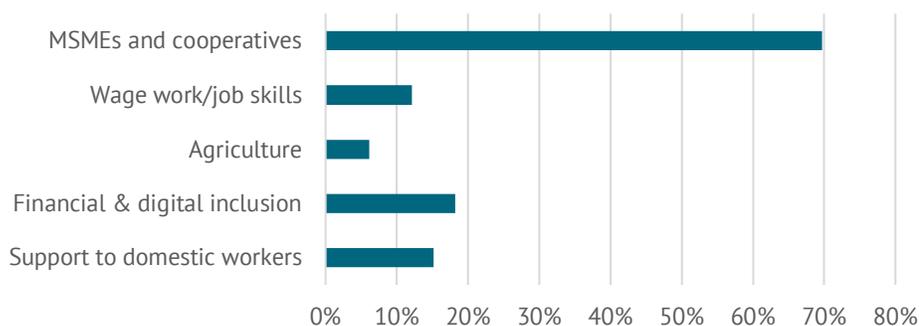


Data Source: UNDP (2020)

According to the tracker’s data, 35 countries have taken 50 fiscal and economic measures to support women-dominated sectors of their economies, with these measures making up about 10 percent of the total fiscal and economic response globally. Of these 50 fiscal and economic measures, 20 (40 percent) have been announced by low- and lower-middle-income country governments, with just 4 measures (8 percent) in place across the 26 countries that an analysis from Data2X and Open Data Watch indicate are most vulnerable to the crisis’ effects from a gender perspective (Buvinic et al. 2020c). Documentation of the fiscal and economic measures currently deemed “gender-sensitive” could benefit from additional contextualization. We need a clearer understanding of how these support measures, aimed at sectors in which women predominate, compare with other measures taken by governments to support sectors where men predominate, as well as whether women as entrepreneurs, employees, and farmers within targeted sectors are benefiting from support.

The tracker reflects that 53 out of 248 labor market measures (21 percent) are gender-sensitive. Of these, 20 measures focus on addressing unpaid care burdens, with an additional 33 addressing women’s economic security in other ways. The latter category includes support to small businesses owned by women and women’s cooperatives, support to sectors where women predominate (e.g., tourism in Tunisia), and support to domestic workers, the vast majority of whom are women. On the whole, we find 23 of 33 measures (69.7 percent) focus on supporting micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs); 4 of 33 (12.1 percent) on job protection, creation, and skills training; 2 of 33 (6.1 percent) on agriculture; 6 of 33 (18.2 percent) on promoting financial and digital inclusion; and 5 of 33 (15.2 percent) on support to domestic workers (see Annex B for more details).

Figure 4. Gender-Sensitive Labor Market Policies, by Category



Data Source: UNDP (2020)

Of the 20 labor market measures focused on unpaid care, none come from low-income countries and just two come from lower-middle-income countries: Bolivia and Uzbekistan. Many of the measures aim to promote flexible work arrangements—those that are only possible for a subsection of the working population and unable to extend to those whose job responsibilities cannot be performed remotely, the vast majority of the workforce in lower-income settings. Additional measures—those falling under the category of social protection—also address unpaid care work burdens, with 111 measures total focused on unpaid care (6 percent of the total response).

Overall, just 9 percent of labor market policies in vulnerable countries are gender-sensitive, compared to 38 percent for other LICs and LMCs (Buvinic et al. 2020c). We see variation by region; for example, the tracker registers no labor market measures that prioritize or are targeted to women in Central and Southern Asia, and there are only four measures addressing unpaid care work in sub-Saharan Africa, those in Angola, Burundi, and Cabo Verde (2). Overall, too few countries have prioritized considerations of gender in their fiscal, economic, and labor market policy responses to the crisis, suggesting that women are not being positioned as economic actors with specific needs and constraints to address in response efforts.

Review of Donor Institutions' COVID-19 Response Efforts

To complement existing efforts to map gender-sensitive policy responses from national governments and territories, we review MDBs' project appraisal documents (PADs) and other equivalent project documents to shed light on the extent to which donors' COVID-19 response efforts to date have integrated considerations of gender.¹⁷ Recognizing that bilateral donor governments may turn inward to address domestic health and economic crises, we prioritize multilateral development banks as institutions most likely

¹⁷ Equivalent documents include program documents (PGDs) for development policy grants from the World Bank, 'Report and Recommendation of the President to the Board of Directors' documents from the ADB, and project appraisal reports from the AfDB.

to take a lead role in global development response and recovery efforts, beginning with a review of documents from the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and the African Development Bank (AfDB).

Our initial analysis is limited to projects for which project documents are publicly available, and we plan to supplement our early findings as more are published, recognizing the potential for gender integration to strengthen over time in COVID-19 response and recovery efforts, as well as expand our analysis to projects being rolled out by other institutions. As with the national-level responses tracked by UNDP and UN Women, it will be similarly important to track the implementation of MDB projects over time to gauge the extent to which disaggregated data is being published and gender-specific targets are being met.

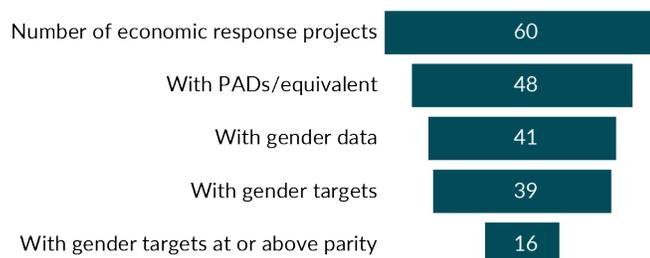
We conduct this preliminary analysis focused on countries eligible for support under the World Bank's International Development Association (IDA), which offers concessional loans and grants to the world's poorest countries, as well as any non-IDA countries reflected as most vulnerable to the crisis from a gender perspective according to the analysis conducted by Data2X and Open Data Watch (see Buvinic et al. 2020c). This results in a sample of 77 countries: 74 eligible for IDA support and three additional countries highlighted in the Data2X/Open Data Watch analysis: Angola, Eswatini, and Ukraine.

Our search yielded 60 projects (out of 195 total projects since March 1, 2020) with at least one component related to economic recovery/development—27 (45 percent) from the World Bank, 24 (40 percent) from the ADB, and 9 (15 percent) from the AfDB. Of these 60 projects, 48 (80 percent) had project documents available allowing us to gauge the extent to which gender and other forms of inequality have been considered in the projects' objectives, indicators, and targets. Of the 48 projects with project documents available for review, 12 (25 percent) are in countries registered as most vulnerable to the COVID crisis from a gender perspective according to Data2X and Open Data Watch.

We find that 41 of these 48 projects (85.4 percent) include gender-focused results indicators, with 13 (27.1 percent) of these projects calling for at least some form of intersectional data, whether related to age, disability status, migrant status, or other demographic characteristics. We find 39 projects (81.2 percent) setting targets related to women's inclusion as beneficiaries or how they will benefit from the investment. These targets fall into two categories: those that aim to ensure that women make up a certain percentage of beneficiaries (e.g., a target calling for a certain percentage of financing to be allocated to women-owned firms) and those that focus on improving women's economic outcomes, but with no explicit comparison to men's (e.g., a target that calls for 70 percent of women beneficiaries to participate in income-generating activities). We note that of 93 total

indicators setting targets for women’s inclusion as beneficiaries, 25 (26.9 percent) call for (at least) gender parity—i.e., women to be 50 percent or more of project beneficiaries.¹⁸

Figure 5. Projects with Economic Development Components, March 1–December 31, 2020

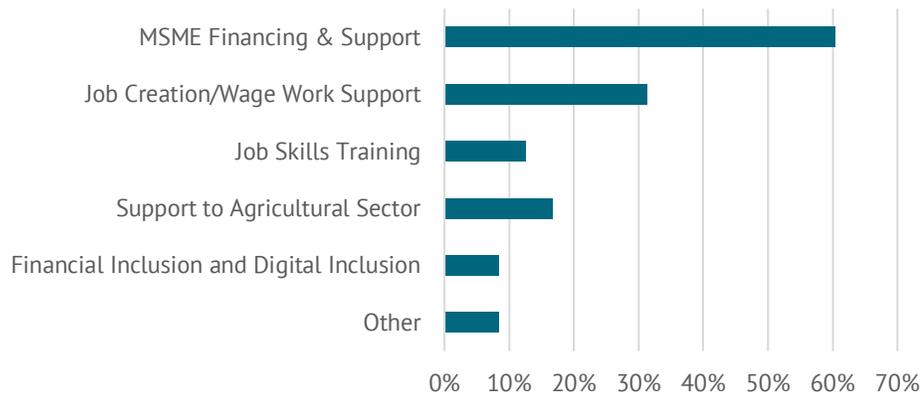


Reflected in projects’ gender indicators and targets, MDBs are tracking progress on promoting aspects of women’s economic empowerment in the COVID-19 context in five key areas. These are:

- support for micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprises through loans, grants, tax concessions, and other forms of assistance (included in 60.4 percent of projects with PADs);
- protection and/or creation of paid jobs (included in 31.3 percent of projects with PADs);
- creation or continuation of training and apprenticeship programs to develop beneficiaries’ job skills (included in 12.5 percent of projects with PADs);
- provision of agricultural inputs and services to farmers (included in 16.7 percent of projects with PADs);
- and the promotion of individuals’ access to financial and ICT services (included in 8.3 percent of projects with PADs).

¹⁸ In the 26 countries identified as most vulnerable by Data2X and Open Data Watch, we find that 10 of 12 projects include gender-focused indicators, with just 2 projects calling for at least some form of intersectional data. (These projects are the World Bank’s Financial Inclusion and Entrepreneurship Scaling Project in Malawi, which calls for the collection of sex- and age-disaggregated data, and the ADB’s COVID-19 Rapid Response Program in Malawi, which calls for disaggregated data by sex and industry.) We find 9 projects (75 percent) setting targets related to women’s inclusion as beneficiaries or to their outcomes as a result of the project. Only 27 percent of indicators setting targets for women beneficiaries relative to men on these projects call for (at least) gender parity.

Figure 6. Percent of Projects with WEE Indicators, by Topic¹⁹



In mapping projects' areas of focus against the evidence we review above on COVID-19's gendered impacts, we note a number of gaps to fill. First, the vast majority of gender-specific indicators and targets fall within the realm of MSME support and the creation or preservation of paid jobs. However, relatively few gender-sensitive efforts focus on support to farmers or aim to increase agricultural productivity—a potential gap to address in light of the high concentration of women's work in agriculture in lower-income countries, as well as the fact that populations previously working informally may increasingly resort to subsistence production in light of containment measures and resulting economic contractions (ILO 2019; World Bank 2017b).

Notable exceptions include the Asian Development Bank's COVID-19 Rapid Response Program in the Solomon Islands, which aims to support at least 10,000 farmers by June 2021, grounding the activity in gender analysis and collecting sex-disaggregated data on beneficiaries reached. The project will prioritize support to subsistence farmers in the form of inputs such as fertilizer, pesticides, and training; subsidizing freight costs; and providing support to ensure proper pricing, compliance with food safety standards. Other exceptions are the World Bank's Rural Enterprise and Economic Development Project in Nepal, which aims to reach farmers with agricultural assets and services (though notably sets a target of reaching only 17 percent women), and the AfDB's COVID-19 Crisis Response Budget Support Program in the Central African Republic, which aims to provide agricultural inputs to farm households, 50 percent of which will be headed by women.

¹⁹ Many indicators reflected above come from the same projects: 41 percent of projects with project documents have indicators in only one category; 31 percent have indicators that span two categories, 10 percent have indicators spanning three categories, and 2 percent have indicators spanning four categories. The remaining 16 percent of projects did not have any gender-focused indicators. The most common overlaps were among projects with indicators in MSME financing, job protection and creation, job skills training, and financial inclusion.

Second, projects lack a focus on reducing and redistributing women’s and girls’ disproportionate unpaid care work; just one project—the World Bank’s Second Additional Financing for COVID-19 Response under Social Safety Nets Modernization Project in Ukraine—aims to provide small-scale entrepreneurs with temporary child benefits. The extent to which other interventions aimed at supporting women’s economic empowerment, such as job skills training and apprenticeship programs, are considering and addressing women’s unpaid care and domestic work is unclear. Finally, projects do not include a focus on supporting domestic workers, in contrast to the policy measures announced by governments aimed at these workers.

What Else is Needed?

Though evidence remains limited, much of it reflects the COVID-19 crisis’ disproportionate negative impact on women’s employment, income, and the survival of women-owned businesses, along with an increase in unpaid care work responsibilities. Our review of donors’ and policymakers’ efforts to address these gendered impacts offers reasons for optimism, while suggesting that more action is needed to ensure a gender-responsive economic recovery from COVID-19. We conclude with a series of recommendations aimed at donors and policymakers:

Fill population data gaps. We need more data on the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis in low- and middle-income country contexts, especially for those who cannot be reached by the mobile phone surveys deployed to understand the crisis’ health, economic, and broader social effects. Those lacking access to mobile phones are likely most vulnerable to the risks of extreme poverty and food and shelter insecurity as a result of employment/income loss, but policies and programs designed based on data that excludes them will likely be limited in effectiveness.

Additionally, high frequency and sex-disaggregated reports on basic economic conditions such as earnings and employment within low-income countries and lower middle-income countries are sparse. The ILO compiles quarterly data from labor force and household surveys, but available data on second and third quarter 2020 was available almost exclusively in high-income and upper middle-income countries (see Table 1).

The World Bank’s COVID-19 High-Frequency Monitoring Surveys were conducted in 70 countries in 2020 and eventually will be conducted in over 100 countries. Data collected through these surveys is being used to inform programs: in Zambia and Indonesia, for example, World Bank staff used survey data to design and monitor the disbursement and coverage of cash transfer and other economic relief programs. However, as noted by the World Bank team leading data collection efforts, “information collected is only representative of phone owners who are willing to respond to the survey,” (Sabatino et. al 2020) departing from traditional household surveys, which do not rely on individuals’ access to technology and are likely to be more representative, especially of the most vulnerable demographics. World Bank staff have confirmed that data collected through the high-frequency monitoring surveys in some countries are not representative of all women, in part due to the gender gap in mobile phone ownership.

Rapid response survey collection using mobile phones and other information technologies should purposefully work to overcome these sampling selection biases and cover excluded populations through innovative methodological techniques, including random digit dialing, rather than directing outreach to heads of household, who are disproportionately men (and even data collected from women heads of household is not representative of other populations of women and girls). Emerging efforts to test new methods to reach the excluded should be encouraged and expanded significantly.

Improve gender data on women’s work, especially in the informal and unpaid care economies. To better understand the impacts of the pandemic on the most vulnerable women and girls, data needs to address longstanding challenges in measuring women’s work, which include undercounting women’s paid activities, especially in informal rural employment and in agriculture, and failing to measure the unpaid care work of women and men. The most comprehensive and recent analysis on informal work by women was undertaken by the ILO in 2018 (Bonet et al.), but results are not kept up to date and cannot be easily rerun with existing publicly available data, limiting their use to inform real-time policy decision-making. The informal economy size is estimated by survey-based measures, which lack country-year coverage, or model-based measures, which rely on many assumptions. Measures that use both are beneficial for retrospective analysis, but are also not updated in real-time (Elgin et al. 2019).

Better data is also needed on women’s enterprises. This crisis has further emphasized the need to be able to identify and target women-owned SMEs quickly in order to provide support, but these businesses are less likely to be tied to formal financial institutions. Even when businesses are formally registered, financial institutions do not systematically track those that are women-owned, making it difficult to target relief efforts.

International data producing and standard setting agencies have in recent years begun to address the issues of measuring women’s work. The World Bank has improved measuring women’s work in agricultural surveys; it needs to expand the reach of this program to cover a larger group of countries. The ILO and WIEGO have a longstanding collaboration to improve measuring informal employment. This program needs to be funded to cover all countries and get better data on the rural informal economy. ILO with Data2X, the UN Statistics Division, and partner governments are working on harmonizing guidelines for time use surveys, the main tool to measure unpaid care work, and testing less expensive, more practical ‘light’ time use survey modules that could be included in labor force surveys. UN Women has launched a significant program of improvement of and capacity building on gender statistics at the national level in a number of countries and should expand country coverage (UN Women n.d.).

The above programs are some of the most salient efforts to improve the system of internationally comparable gender statistics with an emphasis on measuring women’s work. While high frequency, rapid response surveys have been the preferred tools to pick up the immediate effects of the pandemic, ramping up all these more traditional programs that produce representative comparable statistics is an urgent priority both to design evidence-

based inclusive recovery policies and to monitor and evaluate the impact of these policies on women's economic empowerment.

Identifying and agreeing upon a simplified measure (or measures) of women's economic empowerment that can be used cross-culturally is another research priority. The benefits of these data investments will be long-term and extend well beyond the impacts of the pandemic. In the short term, researchers using high frequency phone surveys should strive to minimize gender biases regarding measuring women's work that may carry over to these rapid instruments from surveys used prior to COVID-19's onset.

Rigorously and systematically monitor and evaluate the benefits of COVID-19 related mitigation and recovery measures on women and girls. Beyond understanding the crisis' impacts on vulnerable populations, there is a need to improve data on the extent to which women and girls are being reached by and benefiting from economic mitigation and recovery/development projects. It is paramount that women and girls, especially in low-income countries and populations, are included in these efforts and are strengthened economically. The risk that recovery programs could further marginalize women economically should be avoided.

Good monitoring and evaluation (M&E) requires good gender data and institutional commitment and openness to track progress, learn lessons, and modify policies and programs if needed. The ongoing as well as future gender data collection efforts mentioned above should be harnessed for gender-informed M&E of the outcomes/impacts of recovery policies and investments. Results frameworks should be strengthened to measure changes in women's economic participation and empowerment, and a harmonized set of women's economic empowerment indicators should be included in these frameworks. This will enable comparisons of economic empowerment outcomes from recovery measures within and across institutions.

Importantly, donors and governments should document successes and challenges they are facing in ensuring that their recovery policies and programs benefit women and girls. What has worked well? What are persistent challenges? Has the "gender lens" been strengthened during the pandemic? Following the Paris Development Banks Statement on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, 2X Challenge and the Gender Finance Collaborative recommendations for making women and girls central to COVID-19 response, and other institution-specific statements, all international financial institutions and other donor organizations should report on implementation progress. This will set the scene for more gender integration not only in recovery but longer-term (2X Challenge 2020).²⁰

Act using existing evidence. Increasing and improving data collection should not delay action relying on the evidence already at donors' and governments' disposal. Decision-

²⁰ Our recommendation for institutional progress in tracking and reporting project/investment outcomes is consistent with those we put forth in light of findings from CGD's Gender Equity in Development Finance Survey. See <https://www.cgdev.org/sites/default/files/gender-equity-in-development-finance-survey.pdf>.

makers can rely on existing evidence to take actions that expand women’s and girls’ economic opportunities and empowerment. There is increasingly rich evidence to compare what donors and policymakers are currently doing versus “what works” and identify where investments are needed (e.g., childcare support; investment in women’s networks). This evidence should be used for both “more and better” policies and projects.

“More” begins with a bigger pot to draw on that privileges investing in economic opportunities for the majority of especially vulnerable and excluded populations. An analysis by Duggan and colleagues (2020) of World Bank lending in 2020 showed that this lending was not on track to meet disbursement commitments, curtailing the ability of low- and middle- income countries to increase social spending in response to the crisis. Countries need the fiscal space to prioritize social protection and other inclusive recovery measures and donors should substantially increase financial flows to these countries. More specifically, donors should ensure equitable support to sectors where women predominate—and monitor that women benefit from this support. Targeting service sectors will have the effect of targeting support to women, who are often overrepresented in these industries, in particular tourism, transport, entertainment, cleaning and remunerated domestic services (ILO 2020g; UNDP 2020a).

“Better” means that more policy and finance measures must pay attention to gender; the design of future recovery efforts must be grounded in gender analysis and robust gender-informed M&E of these measures. Gender targets and gender tracking mechanisms of donor agencies should emphasize outcomes and results frameworks rather than inputs and good intentions. When gender targets are set (for instance, percentage of project resources directed to women and girls or percentage of women and girls who will benefit from these resources), these targets need to be both ambitious and measurable.

Inclusive recovery/development policies should be able to (a) equip women and girls with the tools to take advantage of economic opportunities when labor markets expand and (b) ensure that labor and financial markets are not biased against women. This entails:

1. **Providing cash assistance plus access to saving instruments in the immediate term to individual women and girls (including through savings groups), except in cases where unintended negative effects could result (Buvinic et al. 2020b).**²¹ The extent to which donors and governments have integrated a focus on gender into COVID-19 cash transfer programs and other forms of social assistance is explored through an accompanying background paper on the gendered dimensions of social protection in the COVID-19 context.

²¹ Negative effects may include increased intimate partner violence as power dynamics in the household shift, however growing evidence indicates that cash transfers are much more likely to decrease intimate partner violence than risk increases (See Buller et al. 2018).

2. **Expanding women’s and young women’s access to financial services and ICT**—with particular effort to reach the excluded. Expanding individual access to mobile phones, IDs and bank accounts (and reliable lending and saving instruments) is particularly important for empowering women economically. This expansion of access includes both increasing women’s demand for these services and fighting often entrenched biases against women in their supply. The collection of sex disaggregated demand- and supply-side data is being advocated by the gender leads in international financial institutions (IFIs), the Women’s Financial Inclusion Data partnership, the Financial Alliance for Women, Women’s World Banking, Alliance for Financial Inclusion and others as a way to increase women’s financial inclusion by changing the awareness and practices of financial sector providers regarding the women’s market. As an example of this movement, the Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (We-Fi), a World Bank coordinated IFI-led initiative providing a suite of financial and non-financial services to women-owned SMEs, is in discussions around a potential WE Finance Code (modeled on a recent successful private and public sector collaboration in the UK to launch a similar code) that aims to increase the collection of supply-side sex-disaggregated data on SMEs.
3. **Strengthening active labor market policies directed at women and young women**, including hard- and soft-skills vocational and business training programs and financial literacy. There is rich evidence on what works (and what does not) to inform the design of these policies and programs, including the use of a ‘bundled’ approach combining asset provision, skills training, and other forms of support when targeting very poor women, as well as designing interventions to address women’s time and mobility constraints, reducing the risk of attrition (Buvinic et al. 2013b; Buvinic and O’Donnell 2016). In light of gaps reflected in donors’ and policymakers’ COVID response efforts to date, increased attention should be given to supporting women in the agricultural sector, as well as considering women’s unpaid care and domestic responsibilities in designing labor market policies and interventions.
4. **Providing tailored support to women-owned businesses.** Women’s businesses are particularly hard hit because they are heavily concentrated in personal service industries that rely, at least traditionally, on face-to-face interaction. Helping them adapt, including by improving digital access, literacy, and skills, should be a priority both for short-term business survival and long-term business growth. From the emerging evidence, access to financial capital also seems to be a key intervention to help with the survival and recovery of women-owned firms. Women business owners have less access to external funding from banks or other formal sources, meaning regulatory forbearance for banks and grace periods and eased repayment terms offered by banks often do not benefit women business owners. Government grants to help businesses survive long enough to adapt and recover are especially important for women entrepreneurs. However, a key lesson learned from prior economic shocks is that while it is essential to support businesses and to prevent the

failure of otherwise viable businesses, propping up non-viable businesses can also hurt longer-term recovery (Paci et al. 2010).

For SMEs and larger women-owned firms, banks should be better informed about the overall financial status of their corporate clients and should make this information available to the institution or council in charge of assessing firms' viability. Any public assistance provided should be complementary to continued credit being offered by banks and may be conditioned on restructuring the firm's balance sheet to ensure the firm's viability in the longer-term. When it comes to small and micro firms, grants may be a better option, provided that there is adequate information on the firm's viability and the grant can be curtailed if it becomes clear the firm will not survive. For example, the grant could then become a transfer if the firm was a poor family's source of income (Rojas-Suarez and Powell 2020).

Women-owned MSMEs also face significant non-financial barriers such as inadequate physical infrastructure and restrictive legal and regulatory frameworks which tend to be most onerous for the smallest firms. Especially for these firms, support should be holistic and encompass concessional access to inputs and equipment for sectors such as agriculture, and technical assistance to accompany women-led businesses in the application process. Government measures should also be an integral part of the packages.

5. **Similarly, providing tailored interventions to women farmers.** Women farming through larger commercial ventures (the minority in low- and middle-income countries) need access to financial capital so their businesses can survive until agricultural markets improve or open up again. The majority of women small and subsistence level farmers working on their own plots or the family farm need a package of bundled interventions, including access to quality inputs, land titles, credit, markets, technologies, and training, to improve their farm productivity and income. Importantly, the supply of agricultural services and products has to target women farmers rather than overlooking them (a commonplace occurrence in the past—and a risk based on our review of donor and policy responses to date).
6. **Strengthening the care economy.** Though evidence is scant on the extent to which care burdens have increased for women and girls in lower-income contexts, care responsibilities are a very real constraint for women entrepreneurs as well as women workers. Beyond addressing gender norms to redistribute care work within the household, public investment in the care economy and fostering of innovative private business models that extend affordable access to care services to more women business owners and households is a critical investment in productivity—and could be a key element of development agendas aimed at 'building back better' through inclusive recovery efforts. Future CGD work reviewing donor institutions' current investments in the care economy will help to provide a clear baseline that can help to inform where more and better investments are needed.

7. **Supporting women's groups and networks.** Pre-COVID evidence, and some early evidence specific to the COVID context, points to the role of women's groups in promoting resilience and providing support during times of crisis (Buvinic and O'Donnell 2016, 2020; de Hoop et al. 2020). More evidence is needed to document the impacts that women's groups are having in promoting resilience and how donors and governments can best support the adaptations they are making in the COVID context.

Conclusion

Especially in low- and middle-income settings, COVID-19 has not just been a health crisis, but a much broader social and economic one, with long-term implications for countries' development. That said, the current evidence suggests that the pandemic and resulting global recession have merely magnified pre-existing gender inequalities. To address women's unequal economic opportunities and outcomes, we need to address underlying systemic issues, since gender gaps in the economy will not disappear with the distribution of vaccines. As donors and governments take action to ensure recovery from the COVID-19 crisis and preparation for the next one, an important objective is to track and make sure that women benefit equally with men from economic and labor market recovery policies and investments. The international community must guard against men displacing women working in hard-hit sectors of the economy once resources flow back into these sectors. Gender-informed results frameworks and close monitoring of recovery investments are needed.

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Annex A. Search Methodology

The review of the empirical literature entailed systematically combing through relevant academic journals, organizational publications, impact evaluations, policy documents, and meta-analyses for the latest evidence on women's economic empowerment relevant to the COVID-19 context (or relevant historical contexts). Some program and case study materials were included as rigorous evidence is scarce at this early stage. The search for resources was conducted in four phases:

1. The search terms listed below were used in the databases listed below. The total number of search results was recorded per database. For databases that do not support long strings of search terms, the list was simplified.
2. In the second round, titles and abstracts were screened for relevance.
3. Finally, the remaining papers were read in full and underwent a final round of screening for relevance. They were excluded if they were not directly linked to women's economic empowerment.
4. The results of the systematic search were also supplemented by resources sent by other researchers and partners or resources found through other bodies of work that had relevance for this review.

Databases/resources searched:

- Gender and COVID-19 Working Group
- EMERGE
- JSTOR
- ScienceDirect
- Director of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)
- EconPapers
- Google Scholar
- National Bureau of Economic Research
- Social Science Research Network
- Web of Science
- Scopus
- EconLit
- Wiley Online Library
- World Bank
- ILO
- 3ie Impact Evaluation Repository
- J-PAL
- IPA
- IMF

- IDinsight
- IDB
- ADB
- AfDB
- EBRD
- Islamic Development Bank
- ECLAC
- UNECA
- UNESCAP

Search terms:

(“Women” OR “female” OR “men” OR “male” OR “gender”)

AND

(“COVID-19” OR “COVID” OR “coronavirus” OR “pandemic” or “health crisis” or “economic crisis” or “economic depression” OR “economic shock*”)

AND

(“economic empowerment” OR “financial literacy” OR “empowerment” OR “financial inclusion” OR “financial services” OR “banking” OR “digital financial services” OR “mobile money” OR “mobile banking” OR “mobile wallet” OR “digital banking” OR “microcredit” OR “credit” OR “microloan” OR “microfinance” OR “finance” OR “SME” OR “small enterprise” OR “microenterprise*” OR “medium enterprise” OR “small-medium enterprise” OR “business training” OR “skills training” OR “vocational training” OR “small business” OR “entrepreneurship” OR “entrepreneur” OR “informal labor” OR “informal worker” OR “informality” OR “wage employment” OR “employment” OR “paid work” OR “wage labor” OR “wage work” OR “salaried work” OR “labor force participation” OR “salaried employment” OR “savings” OR “VSLA” OR “ROSCA” OR “rotating savings” OR “village savings” OR “group savings” OR “income” OR “revenue” OR “profit” OR “household decision-making” OR “remittances” OR “labor market” OR “microsavings” OR “land rights” OR “property rights” OR “land titling” OR “property titling” OR “job services” OR “mobile phone*” OR “farmer associations” OR “agricultural inputs” OR “subsistence” OR “livelihood*” OR “mentor*” OR “farmer field schools” OR “business network*” OR “microcash” OR “child care” OR “childcare” OR “creche” OR “daycare” OR “care work” OR “school closure*” OR “time use” OR “time poverty” OR “stay-at-home order*” OR “stay at home order*” OR “care burden” OR “unpaid work” OR “unpaid care” OR “unpaid labor” OR “contributing family work*” OR “firm certification” OR “internship” OR “apprenticeship” OR “information on jobs” OR “job matching” OR “employment information” OR “job information” OR “farmer field school”

Annex B. COVID-19 Global Gender Response Tracker Data – Gender-Sensitive Labor Market Measures

Country	Policy Measure Description	MSMEs and Cooperatives	Wage Work/ Job Skills	Agriculture	Financial & Digital Inclusion	Other/ Unknown
Argentina	National Program for Socio-productive Inclusion and Local Development "Promote Work". Its objective is the improvement of employability and the generation of new productive proposals, through the completion of studies, job training and the certification of skills of people in situations of socioeconomic vulnerability. It also includes the creation and strengthening of productive units to promote social inclusion and increased income. The program provides for a protected income to employment, those who enter the formal job market, and their income exceeds the minimum wage, vital and mobile, will remain in the program during the first year of the employment relationship. Beneficiaries of the "Make the Future" and "Community Productive Projects" programs can access the program. Through an agreement between the Ministry of Women, Gender and Diversity and the Ministry of Social Development, the inclusion of people in situations of gender-based violence is contemplated. In addition, the Ministry of Women monitors these cases to facilitate security and access to opportunities for women and LGBTI + people who enter the program.		✓			
Chile	The Journey of the Entrepreneur platform targets women who want to start businesses or professionalize through training in administration, finance, marketing, innovation, leadership and personal development, in response to the COVID-19 crisis. This initiative has the support of the organization Women of the Pacific (Mujeres del Pacífico).	✓				
Chile	Provision of virtual trainings to promote women's export entrepreneurship. Training on commercial logistics and business perspectives in the current situation are carried out for women who are exporters or those with an exportable offer who participate in ProChile's activities. Among the trainings carried out, the workshops on "Export Logistics for Women Entrepreneurs" and "Women Entrepreneurs of the Wine Industry" stand out.	✓				

Chile	Virtual platform for the of women's enterprises to generate exchange and support. The "#PasaElDato" (Pass the Info) platform is a virtual community to disseminate services and products offered by women through their social media accounts in the context of confinement.	✓	
Colombia	With the support of the Ministry of Finance and Public Credit, the Presidency created an autonomous fund to promote, finance and support women entrepreneurship, its formalization and strengthening in Colombia (Decree 810 of 2020). This fund will be administered by a public fiduciary, which will be selected by the Vice President of the Republic.	✓	
Colombia	The Vice Presidency announced 100 billion pesos in credit lines for women entrepreneurs. Together with Bancoldex, the National Guarantee Fund and INNPulsa, are working on the design of a credit line that serves women microentrepreneurs.	✓	
Colombia	The gender machinery (Presidential Council for Women's Equity) in alliance with Facebook will develop a training program for women on digital entrepreneurship. The Campaign "Colombia is an Entrepreneurial Woman" aims to train 30 thousand female entrepreneurs through free virtual workshops.	✓	✓
Costa Rica	The Program "+Women, +Nature" is part of the initiative to promote gender equality in the biodiversity sector (water, protected areas and forests). It will make three financial instruments available to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on women. The "FONAFIFO by your side" credit has a line of credit of 5 million colones with trusteeship guarantee, a ten-year term and a fixed rate of 4% per year for productive development, working capital, infrastructure, equipment and innovative projects related to the forest.		✓
Costa Rica	The Human Formation Program "Advancing Women's" has been adapted to virtual access. This program aims to improve the living conditions of impoverished and socially vulnerable women, access to women's rights, access to sexual and reproductive rights, leadership, autonomy and decision-making power. Around 4,500 women throughout the country complete the virtual program.		✓

Ecuador	Information campaigns on the rights of paid domestic workers in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Within the framework of the Inter-institutional Round Table to Support the Rights of Paid Domestic Workers, of which the National Council for Gender Equality takes part, along with other State institutions, organizations of paid domestic workers, international cooperation organizations and the academy, information and communication pieces are disseminated on the labor rights of domestic workers and health protection measures. Information campaigns are aimed at employers as well as paid domestic workers. In addition, a statement by the Bureau and the Commission on Workers' Rights and Social Security is published, which urges different competent actors to guarantee safe work for paid domestic workers during the health emergency.			✓
Egypt	Medium, Small and Micro Enterprises agency has allocated a financing portfolio amounting to 5.4 billion to finance projects for women in particular in border and upper governorates through a strategy for the advancement of Egyptian women projects and young graduates, and it is expected that 216 thousand micro-projects will be implemented over five years and 250 thousand jobs and projects will be funded through banks and civil society organizations that cooperate with the agency.	✓		
Egypt	Ministry of Communication and Information Systems (ICT) launched a package of educational program for women to prepare them for labor market including new technological tools to help women in the areas of e-marketing and e-commerce to ensure they are empowered economically.		✓	✓
Egypt	The National Council for Women through its Women Business Development Center (WBDC) has connected with women from different governorates within its project (AL Mashghal) to produce masks that can be sold to the public, in accordance with the latest government decision that all citizens should wear masks in public spaces.	✓		

Georgia	Women's Economic Empowerment through small grants and economic programs. To mitigate the socio-economic effects of COVID-19, the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development has expanded economic support programs, such as Enterprise Georgia. As a result, some pre-conditions and barriers to applying to the program were eliminated that would allow more women to apply. Moreover, women-run businesses and women-applicants will receive extra points during the assessment.	✓	
Guatemala	Access to financing for women entrepreneurs. A loan of 200 million dollars is approved to meet the financing needs of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), prioritizing women entrepreneurs and particularly in rural areas of Huehuetenango, Quetzaltenango, Quiché, San Marcos, Totonicapán and Alta Verapaz. Through this instrument, SMEs will be able to present expansion and growth plans, contribute to the generation of jobs and the economic recovery of the country. The initiative has the support of the United States Finance Corporation for International Development.	✓	
Honduras	The "Strategic Alliances in favor of Female Entrepreneurship in Honduras" program is launched virtually with the aim of strengthening micro-enterprises led by Honduran women. Through this strategy, new support programs for micro and small businesses are promoted for reactivation in the context of the pandemic and existing projects are strengthened, such as the Ciudad Mujer centers, in which through the economic autonomy module women are trained in entrepreneurship. It is expected that, through this program, women will be able to access low-interest financing, train in areas such as digital commerce, and improve their access to national and international markets. This initiative is financed by the Central American Bank for Economic Integration. It lasts for 18 months and will be executed by the Ministry of Foreign Relations and International Cooperation.	✓	✓
Liberia	The Market Women and Small Informal Petty Traders Bank Loan Program is approved, with modification to add credit unions and related entities registered and doing business before January 1, 2020. The Government will fully pay the loans owed by market women, and petty and small traders in affected counties as part of the requested budgetary reallocation. This will be a strong stimulus for these individuals. They have built their businesses from scratch	✓	

with little or no help from the government and deserve protection during these trying times. This program will further help the banks to increase lending to new borrowers.

Mexico	The Ministry of the Interior launched the Facebook initiative "She Makes History", which offers financial education to 15,000 women entrepreneurs to contribute to the economic recovery of Mexico, after the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.	✓	✓
Mexico	The IMSS reported that it would grant solidarity loans to more than 22,300 domestic workers.		✓
Mexico	The initiative Microcredit program "Tandas para el Bienestar" was launched to grant one million microcredits for 25,000 Mexican pesos (around 1,100 dollars) for people who are enrolled in the program. This program grants direct productive credits, without intermediaries, with interest rates of 0% to people between 30 and 67 years old who have a micro-business with more than 6 months of operation and who are residents of a locality belonging to the coverage areas of the program (of medium, high or very high marginalization or with high rates of violence). In addition, credits are granted as a priority to women who live or have experienced gender violence and who are in a situation of vulnerability. According to data from the National Institute for Women, 71% of the beneficiaries of this program are women.	✓	✓
Morocco	In the industrial sector, measures have been taken to support very small and small and medium enterprises (VSE/SME), including those headed by women, through the establishment of a guarantee mechanism, known as "Damane Oxygène", with the Central Guarantee Fund (Caisse Centrale de Garantie-CCG). This new guarantee product is aimed at mobilizing additional financing resources for enterprises whose cash flow is in difficulty due to a decline in their activities. Under this "Damane Oxygène" programme: 17.600 companies have benefited from an amount of 9,5 billion euros in loans.	✓	
Morocco	The Ministry of Tourism, Handicrafts, Air Transport and Social and Solidarity Economy has put in place measures to facilitate the certification system for cooperatives to produce 30,000 reusable masks per day. 15 cooperatives have been certified with a total of 103 members, 100% of whom are women.	✓	

Morocco	In the agricultural sector, the Ministry created a digital platform for the presentation and marketing of local products from women's cooperatives. In addition, these cooperatives have benefited from support in terms of logistics, product delivery and communication. Also, in order to prepare for the de-confinement, the Ministry of Agriculture has set up a protocol concerning the procedures to be adopted at the level of farms and units for the valorization, packaging and processing of agricultural products.			✓	✓
Nigeria	The government has approved a three-month repayment moratorium for all TraderMoni, MarketMoni and FarmerMoni loans, part of the GEEP program. TraderMoni is a loan program of the Federal Government that is specifically for petty traders and artisans across Nigeria, while MarketMoni is specifically targeted at women, and FarmerMoni at farmers. Overall, women compose 59% of GEEP recipients.	✓		✓	
Nigeria	The Jobs for Youths and Women Post Covid project brings together some of the key elements already existing in this Plan including road construction and maintenance, digital economy and education. It also contains additional elements such as the creation of a national public works programme to create 774,000 jobs (in all 774 local governments) and empowerment schemes designed to boost the capacity of women in artisanal employment and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). The Jobs For Youth Project will support the creation of jobs through: Training in digital skills in partnership with private sector providers like Google, Microsoft, IBM and Cisco; Direct labor in a National Public Infrastructure Maintenance project; Provision of start-up capital and entrepreneurship skills for young Nigerians and for women.	✓	✓		✓
Palestine (State of)	The Palestine Monetary Authority launched a low-cost financing programme "Istidama" to support sustainability of Medium and Small Enterprises (MSME) including women-run MSMEs with a total value of US\$3 million to address the economic consequences of COVID-19. The programme will be partially funded by the PMA with an amount of US\$ 1 million out of a total of US\$ 2.1 million. Interest will not exceed 3% with a repayment period of 36 months.	✓			

Paraguay	Support for the commercialization of products created by women start ups. It aims to strengthen the commercialization of the products of small scale business owned by women by providing a home shipping platform for their products in the context of the emergency. Furthermore, it aims to promote this service through social media and traditional media outlets.	✓
Peru	Legislative Decree No. 1499. Various measures have been established to guarantee and supervise the protection of the social and labor rights of domestic workers during the health emergency caused by COVID-19. From this day forward, domestic workers will have a written contract, fair and equitable remuneration; and they must be at least 18 years old to carry out their duties. Any act of discrimination against domestic workers is prohibited.	✓
Romania	A working group was established in order to evaluate the possibility of extending some ongoing programs/projects also for women at risk due to COVID-19. The extension of vocational counselling and vocational training is currently available for Domestic Violence victims, and may be expanded to all risk situations.	✓
South Africa	The Minister of Tourism publicized a list of Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises who benefited from Tourism Relief Funding. R200 million relief has been given to 4,000 business negatively affected by COVID-19. The funding supports SMMEs in the hospitality and tourism sector across all nine provinces and various tourism sub-sectors in the following categories: accommodation; hospitality and related services; and travel and related services. Preference will be given to SMMEs in rural areas and townships and those owned by women, young people and people with disabilities. The grant is capped at R50,000 and the funds are used for subsidizing fixed costs, operational costs, supplies and other pressure costs items. Businesses should not exceed a turnover of R2.5million per year and must guarantee employment for a minimum number of staff for three month and prove minimum wage compliance.	✓

Tunisia	<p>In Press release published 19th May, the Ministry of Women, Family, Children and Seniors (MFFES) announced that as part of the reduction of the effects of Covid-19 for the most economically vulnerable categories, a line of credit was opened in favor of domestic workers and in partnership with the Tunisian Development Bank and the Professional Association of Microfinance Institutions. The credit at a "reduced interest rate" is capped at 1000 dt, repayable over 24 months with a 2-month grace period. The only modality specified is the deposit with the regional delegations of women and family affairs. The press statement stressed the need for employers to respect the rights of women workers. This programme would later allow the development of a legal and protection framework and the implementation of special programs for their benefit, including the accession of the Tunisian Republic to International Convention 189 on Domestic Work.</p>	✓
Turkey	<p>The Ministry of Trade announced a grant programme for women cooperatives aiming to alleviate the economic impacts of COVID-100, where each cooperative could appeal for up to 150.000 TL under the Cooperatives Support Programme of the Ministry.</p>	✓

Annex C: World Bank, AfDB, and ADB COVID-19 Projects with Economic Development Components

Donor	Country	Project name	Gender-focused indicators	Intersectional data	Targets on women's inclusion	Women's inclusion at or above 50%
World Bank	Burkina Faso	Burkina Faso COVID-19 Crisis-Response Development Policy Financing	Yes	Yes (IDPs)	Yes	Yes
World Bank	Burkina Faso	Burkina Faso COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Project	No	No	No	No
World Bank	Comoros	Comoros Emergency DPO for Covid-19 Response	No	No	No	No
World Bank	Congo, Republic of	Republic of Congo Lisungi Emergency COVID-19 Response Project	Yes	No	No	No
World Bank	Eswatini	Eswatini Economic Recovery Development Policy Financing I	No	No	No	No
World Bank	Ethiopia	Strengthen Ethiopia's Adaptive Safety Net	Yes	Yes (age)	Yes	Yes
World Bank	Ghana	Ghana: Jobs and Skills Project	Yes	Yes (disability, age, geography, COVID impact status)	No	No
World Bank	Ghana	Ghana: eTransform Ghana Project Additional Financing	Yes	No	Yes	No
World Bank	Grenada	Grenada COVID-19 Crisis Response and Fiscal Management DPC	Yes	No	Yes	No
World Bank	Guinea	Guinea COVID-19 Crisis Response Development Policy Financing	No	No	No	No
World Bank	Lao PDR	Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise Access to Finance Emergency Support and Recovery Project	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
World Bank	Madagascar	Support for Resilient Livelihoods in the South of Madagascar Project	Yes	Yes (youth)	Yes	Yes
World Bank	Madagascar	Madagascar Covid-19 Response DPO	Yes	Yes (youth)	No	No
World Bank	Malawi	Financial Inclusion and Entrepreneurship Scaling Project	Yes	Yes (youth)	Yes	No
World Bank	Nepal	Rural Enterprise and Economic Development Project	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

World Bank	Niger	Governance of Extractives for Local Development & COVID-19 Response Project	Yes	No	Yes	No
World Bank	Pakistan	Securing Human Investments to Foster Transformation	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
World Bank	Samoa	Samoa First Response, Recovery and Resilience Development Policy Operation with a Catastrophe Deferred Drawdown Option	No	No	No	No
World Bank	São Tomé and Príncipe	STP COVID-19 Human and Economic Response, Recovery and Resilience DPO	Yes	No	No	No
World Bank	Togo	Togo Emergency COVID-19 DPO 2021	Yes	No	No	No
World Bank	Tonga	Tonga: Supporting Recovery after Dual Shocks Development Policy Operation	Yes	No	Yes	No
World Bank	Ukraine	Second Additional Financing for COVID-19 Response under Social Safety Nets Modernization Project	Yes	No	Yes	No
World Bank	Ukraine	Additional Financing for Social Safety Nets Modernization Project	Yes	No	Yes	No
AfDB	Cameroon	Cameroon - COVID-19 Crisis Response Budget Support Programme (PABRC)	Yes	No	Yes	No
AfDB	Central African Republic	Central African Republic - COVID-19 Crisis Response Budget Support Programme (PABRC)	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
AfDB	Ghana	Ghana - Covid-19 Response Support Programme	Yes	No	Yes	No
AfDB	Ethiopia	COVID-19 Crisis Response Budget Support Program	Yes	Yes (age)	Yes	No
AfDB	Kenya	COVID-19 Emergency Response Support Program	No	No	No	No
AfDB	Nigeria	COVID-19 Response Support Program	No	No	No	No
AfDB	Rwanda	Rwanda - COVID-19 Crisis Response Budget Support Program (RCRBS)	Yes	No	Yes	No
AfDB	Tanzania	Tanzania - COVID-19 Crisis Response Budget Support Program (TCRBSP)	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
AfDB	Uganda	COVID-19 Crisis Response Support Program	Yes	No	Yes	No
ADB	Afghanistan	Afghanistan: COVID-19 Active Response and Expenditure Support Program	Yes	No	Yes	No

ADB	Bhutan	Bhutan: COVID-19 Active Response and Expenditure Support Program	Yes	Yes (age, disability)	Yes	No
ADB	Cambodia	Cambodia: COVID-19 Active Response and Expenditure Support Program	Yes	Yes (migration status, age)	Yes	Yes
ADB	Kyrgyz Republic	Kyrgyz Republic: COVID-19 Active Response and Expenditure Support Program	Yes	No	Yes	No
ADB	Maldives	Maldives: COVID-19 Active Response and Expenditure Support Program	Yes	Yes (age, disability)	Yes	No
ADB	Marshall Islands	Marshall Islands: Health Expenditure and Livelihoods Support Program	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
ADB	Micronesia	Micronesia, Federated States of: Health Expenditure and Livelihoods Support Program	Yes	No	Yes	No
ADB	Myanmar	Myanmar: COVID-19 Active Response and Expenditure Support	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
ADB	Nepal	Nepal: COVID-19 Active Response and Expenditure Support Program	Yes	Yes (unspecified disadvantaged groups)	Yes	Yes
ADB	Pakistan	Pakistan: COVID-19 Active Response and Expenditure Support Program	Yes	Yes (age)	Yes	No
ADB	Papua New Guinea	Papua New Guinea: COVID-19 Rapid Response Program	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
ADB	Samoa	Samoa: Health Expenditure and Livelihoods Support Program	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
ADB	Solomon Islands	Solomon Islands: COVID-19 Rapid Response Program	Yes	Yes (industry)	Yes	Yes
ADB	Tajikistan	Tajikistan: COVID-19 Active Response and Expenditure Support Program	Yes	No	Yes	No
ADB	Uzbekistan	Uzbekistan: COVID-19 Active Response and Expenditure Support Program	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
ADB	Vanuatu	Vanuatu: COVID-19 Fiscal Response Program	Yes	No	Yes	No

Appendix

**Table 1. Lower Middle-Income Earnings and Employment
Percent Change after COVID-19 by Country, Sector, and Sex**

Country	Sex	Employed Population Change	Earnings Change
<i>Agriculture</i>			
Moldova, Republic of	Female	-8.1	NA
	Male	0.4	NA
Mongolia	Female	NA	-4.8
	Male	NA	3.9
Occupied Palestinian Territory	Female	7.4	-5.5
	Male	0.5	-8.2
Viet Nam	Female	NA	-3.1
	Male	NA	-2.0
<i>Industry</i>			
Moldova, Republic of	Female	-4.3	NA
	Male	-2.5	NA
Mongolia	Female	NA	-11.3
	Male	NA	-5.0
Occupied Palestinian Territory	Female	-7.9	-16.5
	Male	-12.6	-0.6
Viet Nam	Female	NA	-8.8
	Male	NA	-7.3
<i>Services</i>			
Moldova, Republic of	Female	-6.9	NA
	Male	-4.7	NA
Mongolia	Female	NA	-14.1
	Male	NA	-3.5
Occupied Palestinian Territory	Female	-10.4	2.8
	Male	-12.1	-3.2
Viet Nam	Female	NA	-6.3
	Male	NA	-8.0
<i>Total</i>			
Moldova, Republic of	Female	-6.4	NA
	Male	-3.5	NA
Mongolia	Female	NA	-14.2
	Male	NA	-3.5
Occupied Palestinian Territory	Female	-8.4	1.3
	Male	-13.1	-2.5
Sri Lanka	Female	-5.7	NA
	Male	-0.2	NA
Ukraine	Femal	-6.3	NA
	Male	-5.7	NA
Viet Nam		NA	-7.4
		NA	-7.3

Table 2. Upper Middle-Income Earnings and Employment Percent Change after COVID-19 by Country, Sector, and Sex

Country	Sex	Employed Population Change	Earnings Change
Agriculture			
Argentina	Female	-32.8	NA
	Male	12.7	NA
Brazil	Female	NA	8.8
	Male	NA	-2.9
Bulgaria	Female	-1.6	NA
	Male	-0.6	NA
Colombia	Female	-13.5	NA
	Male	-5.5	NA
Ecuador	Female	NA	-30.0
	Male	NA	-22.8
Mexico	Female	NA	17.0
	Male	NA	0.9
Montenegro	Female	2.3	NA
	Male	6.4	NA
North Macedonia	Female	-15.4	NA
	Male	-13.8	NA
Peru	Female	-29.8	-21.1
	Male	-15.8	-29.1
Serbia	Female	NA	6.2
	Male	NA	0.0
South Africa	Female	-5.7	NA
	Male	-6.3	NA
Thailand	Female	-2.1	-3.7
	Male	0.5	-4.2
Industry			
Argentina	Female	-7.8	3.6
	Male	-27.2	2.5
Brazil	Female	NA	11.1
	Male	NA	-2.0
Bulgaria	Female	-1.7	NA
	Male	-2.3	NA
Colombia	Female	-23.4	NA
	Male	-14.7	NA

Ecuador	Female	NA	-16.4
	Male	NA	-18.6
Mexico	Female	NA	-2.0
	Male	NA	-2.5
Montenegro	Female	-20.9	NA
	Male	-14.3	NA
North Macedonia	Female	-5.1	NA
	Male	-7.6	NA
Peru	Female	-62.7	-5.9
	Male	-69.1	-14.3
Serbia	Female	NA	6.6
	Male	NA	1.3
South Africa	Female	-13.0	NA
	Male	-19.5	NA
Thailand	Female	-4.1	-2.8
	Male	-1.6	-2.5
Services			
Argentina	Female	-23.4	8.6
	Male	-18.1	8.0
Brazil	Female	NA	1.9
	Male	NA	-2.4
Bulgaria	Female	-3.1	NA
	Male	-2.8	NA
Colombia	Female	-23.6	NA
	Male	-16.5	NA
Ecuador	Female	NA	-2.2
	Male	NA	-14.7
Mexico	Female	NA	9.8
	Male	NA	0.8
Montenegro	Female	-7.0	NA
	Male	-8.8	NA
North Macedonia	Female	-5.1	NA
	Male	-5.5	NA
Peru	Female	-57.4	13.0
	Male	-48.3	12.9
Serbia	Female	NA	3.6
	Male	NA	2.9

South Africa	Female	-14.2	NA
	Male	-8.7	NA
Thailand	Female	0.3	0.8
	Male	-1.4	1.0
Total			
Argentina	Female	-22.3	8.0
	Male	-21.0	7.3
Brazil	Female	NA	2.9
	Male	NA	-2.3
Bulgaria	Female	-2.2	NA
	Male	-2.2	NA
Colombia	Female	-23.8	NA
	Male	-13.9	NA
Ecuador	Female	NA	-5.3
	Male	NA	-17.9
Jamaica	Female	-11.6	NA
	Male	-10.5	NA
Mexico	Female	NA	7.7
	Male	NA	0.2
Montenegro	Female	-7.8	NA
	Male	-9.7	NA
North Macedonia	Female	-5.9	NA
	Male	-8.1	NA
Peru	Female	-57.7	5.0
	Male	-54.1	-5.2
Russian Federation	Female	-1.2	NA
	Male	-2.2	NA
Serbia	Female	NA	4.5
	Male	NA	2.2
South Africa	Female	-13.8	NA
	Male	-12.3	NA
Thailand	Female	-1.2	-0.1
	Male	-0.9	-0.7
Turkey	Female	-7.7	NA
	Male	-6.2	NA

Table 3. High-Income Earnings and Employment Percent Change after COVID-19 by Country, Sector, and Sex

Country	Sex	Employed Population Change	Earnings Change
Agriculture			
Canada	Female	NA	-2.0
	Male	NA	-0.1
Croatia	Female	6.3	NA
	Male	13.8	NA
Cyprus	Female	-3.0	NA
	Male	9.8	NA
Latvia	Female	-2.8	NA
	Male	-0.6	NA
Lithuania	Female	-6.7	NA
	Male	-13.2	NA
Malta	Female	-40.1	NA
	Male	1.7	NA
Romania	Female	-5.5	NA
	Male	-2.1	NA
United States	Female	NA	18.5
	Male	NA	3.2
Industry			
Canada	Female	NA	5.0
	Male	NA	2.2
Croatia	Female	-1.5	NA
	Male	0.8	NA
Cyprus	Female	-5.4	NA
	Male	4.7	NA
Latvia	Female	4.4	NA
	Male	-3.2	NA
Lithuania	Female	-3.5	NA
	Male	0.6	NA
Malta	Female	6.0	NA
	Male	-0.4	NA
Romania	Female	-5.8	NA
	Male	-1.5	NA

United States	Female	NA	4.5
	Male	NA	4.1
Services			
Canada	Female	NA	7.4
	Male	NA	7.4
Croatia	Female	-1.1	NA
	Male	-0.4	NA
Cyprus	Female	-1.3	NA
	Male	-3.3	NA
Latvia	Female	-1.0	NA
	Male	1.6	NA
Lithuania	Female	-0.1	NA
	Male	3.7	NA
Malta	Female	4.3	NA
	Male	2.3	NA
Romania	Female	1.8	NA
	Male	0.5	NA
United States	Female	NA	8.0
	Male	NA	5.5
Total			
Australia	Female	-4.1	NA
	Male	-4.1	NA
Austria	Female	-1.5	NA
	Male	-2.3	NA
Belgium	Female	-0.7	NA
	Male	-0.8	NA
Canada	Female	-7.4	7.1
	Male	-5.8	5.6
Chile	Female	-21.7	NA
	Male	-16.8	NA
Croatia	Female	-0.2	NA
	Male	1.0	NA
Cyprus	Female	-1.4	NA
	Male	-0.4	NA
Czechia	Female	-1.6	NA
	Male	-0.3	NA
Denmark	Female	-1.3	NA
	Male	-1.7	NA

Estonia	Female	-3.4	NA
	Male	-3.3	NA
Finland	Female	-2.9	NA
	Male	-2.0	NA
France	Female	-1.1	NA
	Male	-1.4	NA
Greece	Female	-1.1	NA
	Male	-1.6	NA
Hong Kong, China	Female	-3.9	NA
	Male	-4.5	NA
Hungary	Female	-1.2	NA
	Male	-0.5	NA
Iceland	Female	-3.2	NA
	Male	-1.8	NA
Ireland	Female	-3.4	NA
	Male	-3.1	NA
Israel	Female	-2.0	NA
	Male	-3.4	NA
Italy	Female	-3.6	NA
	Male	-2.2	NA
Japan	Female	-1.0	NA
	Male	-0.3	NA
Korea, Republic of	Female	-1.6	NA
	Male	-0.6	NA
Latvia	Female	-0.1	NA
	Male	-0.4	NA
Lithuania	Female	-0.7	NA
	Male	0.9	NA
Luxembourg	Female	1.8	NA
	Male	-2.3	NA
Macau, China	Female	1.6	NA
	Male	4.3	NA
Malta	Female	4.0	NA
	Male	1.3	NA
Netherlands	Female	0.0	NA
	Male	-0.8	NA
New Zealand	Female	-0.4	1.0
	Male	0.9	-1.5

Norway	Female	-1.2	NA
	Male	-1.9	NA
Poland	Female	0.1	NA
	Male	0.4	NA
Portugal	Female	-2.3	NA
	Male	-3.3	NA
Romania	Female	-1.7	NA
	Male	-0.8	NA
Slovakia	Female	-1.1	NA
	Male	-1.3	NA
Slovenia	Female	-1.2	NA
	Male	-0.5	NA
Spain	Female	-5.1	NA
	Male	-4.6	NA
Sweden	Female	-2.8	NA
	Male	-0.9	NA
Switzerland	Female	-1.4	NA
	Male	-1.0	NA
United Kingdom	Female	-0.2	NA
	Male	-1.6	NA
United States	Female	-9.0	7.7
	Male	-7.9	5.0

**Table 4. Earnings and Employment Percent Change after COVID-19
by Income Group, Sector, and Sex**

Income	Broad Sector	Sex	Earnings Gap (After/Before-1)	Employment Gap (After/Before-1)	Earnings Countries Count	Employment Countries Count
Lower middle income	Agriculture	Female	-3.30	-6.40	3	2
		Male	-1.50	0.43	3	2
	Industry	Female	-9.10	-4.70	3	2
		Male	-7.00	-8.60	3	2
	Services	Female	-7.20	-7.80	3	2
		Male	-7.60	-9.20	3	2
	Total	Female	-8.20	-6.30	3	4
		Male	-6.90	-5.30	3	4
Upper middle income	Agriculture	Female	5.60	-4.80	6	8
		Male	-1.20	-2.70	6	8
	Industry	Female	3.50	-9.30	7	8
		Male	0.43	-13.00	7	8
	Services	Female	5.00	-13.00	7	8
		Male	4.10	-11.00	7	8
	Total	Female	4.90	-9.70	7	11
		Male	3.10	-9.00	7	11
High income	Agriculture	Female	8.30	-4.10	2	6
		Male	1.50	-0.48	2	6
	Industry	Female	4.80	-1.60	2	6
		Male	3.10	-0.16	2	6
	Services	Female	7.70	0.47	2	6
		Male	6.40	1.10	2	6
	Total	Female	6.70	-2.10	3	39
		Male	4.50	-1.90	3	39

Table 5. Country-level Summary Statistics for Enterprise Survey

Country	Difference in Firm Closure Rate (Women-Managed Minus All)	Difference in Receiving Government Aid (Women-Managed Minus All)	Change since Dec 2019 in proportion of permanent female FTEs
Albania	-1.3	11.7	-0.1
Bulgaria	0.0	5.4	-1.6
Chad	-6.1	13.1	0.1
Croatia	-0.1	-14.3	-0.1
Cyprus	0.0	-3.9	-1.2
Czech Republic	-0.3	1.5	-0.1
El Salvador	0.2	3.0	-1.5
Georgia	-1.2	11.6	-0.2
Greece	0.0	7.9	-0.5
Guatemala	0.0	4.3	-1.4
Guinea	-0.2	-1.5	-0.1
Honduras	7.2	-1.4	1.4
Hungary	0.0	-4.5	0.3
Italy	-0.6	4.4	NA
Jordan	1.1	9.1	-0.1
Malta	-0.5	-14.6	-0.2
Moldova	-1.8	1.1	-0.1
Mongolia	0.5	7.3	1.5
Morocco	-0.2	-0.8	0.0
Nicaragua	-0.1	0.0	-0.3
Niger	0.0	11.1	-2.8
North Macedonia	1.0	-6.7	-0.5
Poland	0.8	-5.6	0.6
Romania	5.5	-1.6	0.7
Russian Federation	1.4	0.7	NA
Slovenia	0.0	-1.8	1.1
Togo	0.0	-15.0	1.7
Zambia	8.6	9.0	1.5
Zimbabwe	0.0	-1.6	0.4
Average	0.5	1.0	-0.1

Table 6. LMIC and UMIC Employed Population Gap (Male/Female -1)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Precovid Employed Population Gap	0.966*** (0.012)	0.958*** (0.013)	0.970*** (0.012)	1.007*** (0.008)	0.964*** (0.012)	0.962*** (0.013)	1.037*** (0.025)	0.963*** (0.013)	0.967*** (0.016)
Quarter 2 2020	-0.016 (0.030)	-0.152 (0.103)	-0.101* (0.059)	-0.092*** (0.026)	-0.135* (0.068)	-0.058 (0.069)	0.033 (0.021)	0.002 (0.029)	0.007 (0.031)
Quarter 3 2020	-0.037 (0.045)	-0.081 (0.080)	-0.094 (0.066)	-0.002 (0.018)	-0.075 (0.053)	-0.013 (0.050)	0.031 (0.023)	0.019 (0.034)	0.024 (0.038)
Cases div. Population	0.032* (0.017)								
Lockdown Stringency Index		0.071 (0.045)							
Economic Measures Index			0.058* (0.030)						
Cellular Mobility Change				-0.068*** (0.011)					
Public Health Rigidity Index					0.064** (0.029)				
School Closure						0.029 (0.031)			
Fiscal Spending div. 1000							-0.011 (0.020)		
Real GDP Growth Decline Estimate								-0.001 (0.013)	
Log (Median Monthly Income (PPP))									-0.050** (0.022)
Log (GDP per capita (PPP) div. 1000)									0.031 (0.027)
Constant	0.007 (0.021)	0.073 (0.056)	0.049 (0.036)	0.035*** (0.012)	0.055 (0.035)	0.018 (0.036)	-0.008 (0.015)	-0.011 (0.020)	-0.014 (0.022)
Observations	40	34	40	37	40	39	38	40	35
R2	0.995	0.995	0.995	0.998	0.995	0.994	0.983	0.994	0.995
Adjusted R2	0.994	0.994	0.994	0.998	0.994	0.994	0.981	0.993	0.994
Residual Std. Error	0.078	0.084	0.077	0.038	0.076	0.081	0.055	0.081	0.081
F Statistic	1,602.891 ***	1,361.426 ***	1,626.325 ***	4,154.511 ***	1,668.103 ***	1,460.055 ***	476.787** *	1,465.468 ***	1,170.201 ***

Notes: ***Significant at the 1 percent level. **Significant at the 5 percent level. *Significant at the 10 percent level.

Each observation is a country-quarter. All variables are scaled at the mean and divided by the standard deviation.

Countries included: Argentina, Bulgaria, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Indonesia, Jamaica, Sri Lanka, Moldova, Mexico, North Macedonia, Myanmar (Burma), Montenegro, Mongolia, Peru, Philippines, Paraguay, Palestinian Territories, Russia, Serbia, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, Vietnam, South Africa

Table 7. HIC Employed Population Gap (Male / Female -1)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Precovid Employed Population Gap	0.988*** (0.017)	1.013*** (0.018)	0.982*** (0.017)	0.981*** (0.017)	0.976*** (0.018)	0.981*** (0.018)	0.984*** (0.017)	0.983*** (0.017)	0.970*** (0.020)
Quarter 2 2020	0.067 (0.045)	0.073 (0.083)	0.198** (0.094)	0.008 (0.063)	-0.016 (0.088)	0.059 (0.068)	0.080* (0.042)	0.080* (0.042)	0.076* (0.046)
Quarter 3 2020	-0.004 (0.048)	0.022 (0.061)	0.149 (0.102)	0.010 (0.043)	-0.039 (0.064)	0.013 (0.046)	0.020 (0.042)	0.022 (0.043)	0.012 (0.046)
Quarter 4 2020	0.069 (0.135)	0.064 (0.147)	0.232 (0.179)	0.035 (0.136)	-0.016 (0.150)	0.038 (0.153)	0.031 (0.144)	0.070 (0.136)	0.078 (0.137)
Cases div. Population	0.024 (0.020)								
Lockdown Stringency Index		0.005 (0.035)							
Economic Measures Index			-0.064 (0.046)						
Cellular Mobility Change				-0.033 (0.027)					
Public Health Rigidity Index					0.046 (0.037)				
School Closure						0.012 (0.029)			
Fiscal Spending div. 1000							0.013 (0.018)		
Real GDP Growth Decline Estimate								-0.012 (0.017)	
Log (Median Monthly Income (PPP))									0.049 (0.043)
Log (GDP per capita (PPP) div. 1000)									-0.108** (0.042)
Constant	-0.021 (0.032)	-0.021 (0.049)	-0.118* (0.067)	-0.011 (0.035)	0.018 (0.052)	-0.024 (0.038)	-0.033 (0.030)	-0.035 (0.030)	-0.041 (0.032)
Observations	113	115	118	113	118	118	118	118	101
R2	0.968	0.968	0.967	0.969	0.967	0.967	0.967	0.967	0.971
Adjusted R2	0.967	0.966	0.966	0.967	0.966	0.965	0.965	0.965	0.969
Residual Std. Error	0.185	0.174	0.185	0.184	0.186	0.187	0.186	0.186	0.186
F Statistic	648.819***	654.913* **	659.912* **	665.697* **	657.297* **	649.071* **	651.142* **	651.223* **	516.532* **

Notes: ***Significant at the 1 percent level. **Significant at the 5 percent level. *Significant at the 10 percent level. Each observation is a country-quarter. Countries included: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Switzerland, Chile, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Spain, Estonia, Finland, France, United Kingdom, Greece, Hong Kong SAR China, Croatia, Hungary, Ireland, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Latvia, Macao SAR China, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, New Zealand, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, United States