

## From Insight to Action, gender equality in the wake of COVID-19

2<sup>nd</sup> September 2020, New York

The pandemic will push **47 million more women and girls below the poverty line**, reversing decades of progress to eradicate extreme poverty.

New data were released by UN Women and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

The poverty rate for women was expected to decrease by 2.7% between 2019 and 2021, but projections now point to an **increase of 9.1%** due to the pandemic and its fallout.

While the pandemic will impact global poverty generally, women will be disproportionately affected, especially women of reproductive age. **By 2021, for every 100 men aged 25 to 34 living in extreme poverty (living in 1.90 USD a day or less) , there will be 118 women, a gap that is expected to increase to 121 women per 100 men by 2030.**

UN Women Executive Director: “Women take most of the responsibility for caring for the family; they earn less, save less and hold much less secure jobs. In fact overall, **women’s employment is 19% more at risk than men’s.** “

The data, summarized in a UN Women report **From Insights to Action; Gender Equality in the wake of COVID-19**, also shows that the pandemic **will push 96 million people into extreme poverty by 2021, 47 million of whom are women and girls. This will increase the total number of women and girls living in extreme poverty to 435 million, with projections showing that this number will not revert to pre-pandemic levels until 2030.**

The fallout of the pandemic will shift forecasts of extreme poverty across regions. **With 59% of the world’s poor women currently living in sub-Saharan Africa**, the region will continue to host the highest number of the world’s extreme poor. Yet, after making significant gains in poverty reduction in the past few years, **South Asia is projected to experience a resurgence in extreme poverty. By 2030, for every 100 men aged 25-34 living in poverty in Southern Asia there will be 129 poor women, an increase from 118 in 2021.**

While these figures are alarming, the study estimates it would take just **0.14% of global GDP (2 trillion USD) to lift the world out of extreme poverty by 2030 and 48 billion USD to close the gender poverty gap.**

Women are employed in some of the most affected sectors, like accommodation, food services, and domestic work. They have been particularly vulnerable to layoffs and loss of livelihoods. According to ILO (International Labour Organization), by June 2020, **it is estimated that 72% of domestic workers globally had lost their job as a result of COVID-19.**

Backtracking on progress is not inevitable. Recommendations to prevent women from falling behind permanently because of the pandemic range from addressing occupational segregation, gender pay gaps and inadequate access to affordable childcare to introducing economic support packages for vulnerable women to countries increasing social protection measures targeting women and girls and expanding research and data availability on the gendered impacts of Covid-19.

Based on UN Women report and UNDP data: Martine Gayon/ UN Representative in New York.