

COVID-19 and its impact on gender inequality

Social distancing measures and the closure of schools and workplaces in response to the COVID-19 pandemic have led to the loss of jobs and income and also added to the burden on women of unpaid domestic work and caregiving, forcing them to leave the paid workforce at a higher rate than men and aggravating the feminization of poverty.



The work of caring for girls, boys, older adults, people with disabilities or who are ill persons who are ill at home falls disproportionately on women, and with schools shuttered they also have to assume the role of educators.

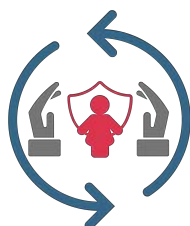
This heavier caregiving burden has been shouldered disproportionately by women in the lower-income quintiles, many of whom also have to continue working outside the home because they lack the economic means to absorb the increased caregiving burden in their own homes.



The lockdowns have often left women that had already been experiencing violence in the home confined with their aggressors and unable to turn to health centres, seek psychological assistance or go to shelters for women victims of violence.

Affirmative action

In ECLAC's view, in order to get through the pandemic and embark on a sustainable and just economic recovery once it is over, it is necessary to mount an effective response to violence against women and work toward integral care systems in which care responsibilities are redistributed and the care economy serves as an inclusive economic growth driver.



The Santiago Commitment is a useful guide for the implementation of public policies as a driving force for a sustainable reactivation in which caregiving issues are a core element.

Latin American and Caribbean countries have been implementing public policies such as:



Attention to violence against women



care economy policies



Job creation



Emergency income



Social protection actions



Women's participation in digital area

Such measures are available in ECLAC's COVID-19 Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean.

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