



PROMISING PRACTICES FOR GENDER EQUALITY

A catalogue of practical solutions learned from the COVID-19 global response



Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Republic of Korea



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FOREWORD



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Administrator, United Nations
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We are living in a time of unprecedented challenges, from a cost-of-living crisis that is tipping millions of people into poverty to the current climate emergency to violent conflicts at their highest levels since 1945. Such cascading global crises have highlighted and exacerbated existing gender inequalities and rolled back hard-won progress on women's rights. We see this in disrupted progress towards the targets of Sustainable Development Goal 5 and jeopardized achievement of the 2030 Agenda as a whole.

In this pressing context, there is a need for political leadership and a comprehensive set of policy reforms to dismantle systemic barriers to gender equality.¹ It will require all of us to challenge structural discrimination and harmful social norms whilst advancing bold new ideas to create a more equal world that responds to the rights and needs of women and girls. That is the objective behind this publication by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and UN Women. It highlights a catalogue of 37 practical and innovative gender-responsive solutions learned from the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic. That includes

measures taken by governments to pro-actively prevent and respond to violence against women, support their economic security, and reduce and redistribute unpaid care work. For example, the Pakistan Ehsaas programme combined cash transfers with a financial inclusion approach, benefitting 4.5 million women. This is amongst the promising policy measures extracted from the [UNDP-UN Women COVID-19 Global Gender Response Tracker](#), which analysed 5,000 COVID-19 measures taken in 226 countries and territories. Remarkably, of these measures analysed, only 1,605 of them were identified as gender sensitive.

This new publication is a companion to the 2022 UN Women-UNDP report, [Government responses to COVID-19: Lessons on gender equality for a world in turmoil](#), which highlighted a range of illuminating findings, including the fact that countries with robust public services and gender-responsive social protection systems were in a better position to respond to COVID-19. In sum, the evidence here presented urges governments to boost gender-responsive policy making in quieter times to ensure adequate coverage and support for all during

emergencies. It is now imperative for countries and communities to heed the lessons of this devastating pandemic to build resilience to future shocks and ensure that gender equality is at the heart of future responses to crisis and recovery efforts: everything from ensuring economic security for all to expanding care systems to securing a life

free from violence for everyone. This is a proven way for countries to be better prepared for the *next pandemic* and the *next crisis*. Gender equality remains the most powerful means to tackle the scourge of global challenges like poverty and build the foundations for a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable world.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The COVID-19 Global Gender Response Tracker online dashboard is maintained by the UNDP SDG Integration Team, under supervision of Babatunde Abidoye and Joanna Hill. The dashboard was developed by Mustafa Saifee with support and design inputs from Temilola Adeoye, Brianna Howell, Elodie Lordinot, Carolina Rivera-Vazquez and Leona Verdadero.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This catalogue provides a directory of promising and innovative measures that can support women and girls during emergency response and recovery. These measures come from the [UNDP-UN Women COVID-19 Global Response Tracker](#)² which identified 1,605 gender-sensitive measures adopted by governments in response to the pandemic between March 2020 and August 2021. These measures were comprehensively analyzed in the report [Government responses to COVID-19: Lessons on gender equality for a world in turmoil](#). The measures presented here are a selection of promising practices that go beyond the COVID-19 context. They can provide gender-sensitive policy examples for the ongoing socio-economic recovery and can support policymaking in future crises to help build more gender-equitable societies in pursuit of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

1.1 Overview

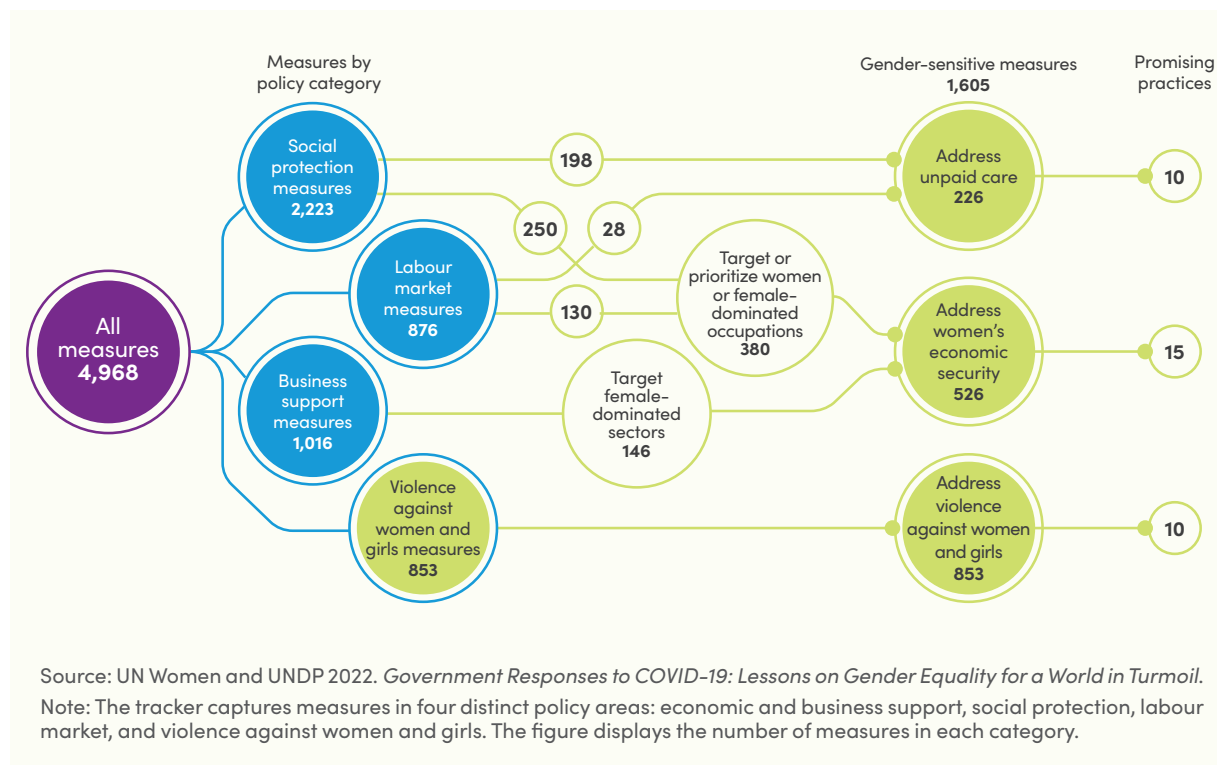
More than two years since the onset of COVID-19, the pandemic remains one of many large and overlapping global challenges. Global political volatility, the erosion of democratic norms, armed conflicts and environmental crises are all exacerbating existing inequalities and rolling back hard-won progress on gender equality. These challenges compound those made worse by COVID-19, such as increased rates of violence against women and girls, an economic recession where women lost the bulk of jobs, and the closure of schools and care services. The last resulted in intensified demands for domestic care work, which already overwhelmingly falls on women's shoulders. Further, inequalities among groups of women – based on race, disability, income, age and other characteristics – have grown.³ Policymaking must now rise to these challenges, putting women and girls at the centre and ensuring that no one is left behind.

The UNDP-UN Women COVID-19 Global Response Tracker⁴ analyzes nearly 5,000 pandemic-related measures adopted by governments across 226 countries and territories between March 2020 and August 2021. A total of just 1,605 measures in 196 countries and territories qualified as gender-sensitive.⁵ Over half (853) focused on stepping up action to address violence against women and girls. Measures to strengthen women's economic security (526) and support unpaid care work (226) were less common (Figure 1). Although largely gender blind, the COVID-19 policy response did offer important examples of policy innovation, diffusion and learning that responded to the needs of women and those left furthest behind due to intersecting vulnerabilities. Some countries made progress on long-standing priorities to achieve gender equality, such as extending social protection programmes to informal workers and enlarging care economy infrastructure.

What good practices in gender-sensitive emergency policymaking can we learn from the COVID-19 response? What measures already taken can be scaled up, adapted and implemented to promote inclusive recovery and improve future crisis preparedness?

This catalogue sheds light on answers to these questions by documenting select interventions from the COVID-19 Global Gender Response Tracker that either prioritized women or girls by design or more broadly may have had a meaningful impact on their well-being, livelihoods and empowerment.⁶ These measures aimed to provide women with stability in uncertain times or to instigate structural changes in socioeconomic systems or power relations. Highlighting them helps to promote global knowledge-sharing around innovation to support women and girls during emergency responses and recovery and, more broadly, to advance gender equality.

FIGURE 1.
Data structure and classification of measures in the COVID-19 Global Gender Response Tracker and Promising Practices Catalogue



The catalogue documents how different countries and territories took various measures to tackle particular development challenges, the partnerships that enabled them, and some obstacles that such practices might encounter. The lessons learned are not exclusive to COVID-19. Promising gender-sensitive initiatives can be part of ongoing socioeconomic recovery and policymaking to build resilience to future crises while also helping to shape more gender-equitable societies in pursuit of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. These good practices should now be used to promote further policy learning and diffusion, expand the evidence base for gender-sensitive policymaking, and create conditions for such policy innovations to stick and shape a sustainable, transformative, inclusive and gender-just future.

1.2 Methodology

The gender-sensitive practices presented in this catalogue come from a review of all 1,605 gender-sensitive measures in the COVID-19 Global Gender Response Tracker. A team of gender specialists examined the measures for their potentially transformative impact on gender equality through interventions in three areas: violence against women, women’s economic security or unpaid care work (see [Appendix 1: Methodological note](#) for more details).

It is important to note that policies were assessed based on the quality of their gender-sensitive design and potential rather than observed impact because evidence to demonstrate results is not yet available in most cases. Experience from gender programming insights and learning, however, suggests that these measures hold potential for meeting women’s practical needs as well as strategically advancing

their empowerment during recovery and altering their relationship with existing power structures in the private and public spheres.

Measures identified here were evaluated on an individual basis rather than part of broader policy response packages or existing support systems. These should not be viewed as an exhaustive list or necessarily the most significant gender-sensitive measures taken globally. They should instead be seen as examples that demonstrate the possibility for gender mainstreaming in crisis response and recovery across all regions, economic and political contexts, and key development areas.

1.3 How to use the catalogue

This catalogue is a companion to the 2022 UN Women–UNDP report, *Government responses to COVID-19: Lessons on gender equality for a world in turmoil*,⁷ which identified key lessons about the scope and enablers of a more gender-sensitive pandemic response. This catalogue offers a practical resource for gender equality policy advocates inside and outside of government, whether they are decision makers looking for policy examples, civil society organizations seeking to engage with development partners, or researchers delving into the impact of pandemic policymaking. Highlighted measures provide solutions that can be replicated and adapted to the needs of individual governments across diverse contexts. It can strengthen locally relevant dialogues and partnerships for policy change and promote gender mainstreaming and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The following sections present the context and key findings in the three areas reviewed in the COVID-19 Global Gender Response Tracker. Short introductions of each gender-sensitive policy area are followed by summaries of specific government practices, assessments of why each is a promising solution and potential challenges that might arise from their implementation. This information is proposed as a starting point for policy dialogue. We hope that policy makers will document the impacts and the challenges faced on the ground when policies are rolled out and use this to build evidence of effective policy responses. Readers are encouraged to visit [online interactive dashboard](#) for additional examples and view Appendix 2 for further reading on each of the policies highlighted here.

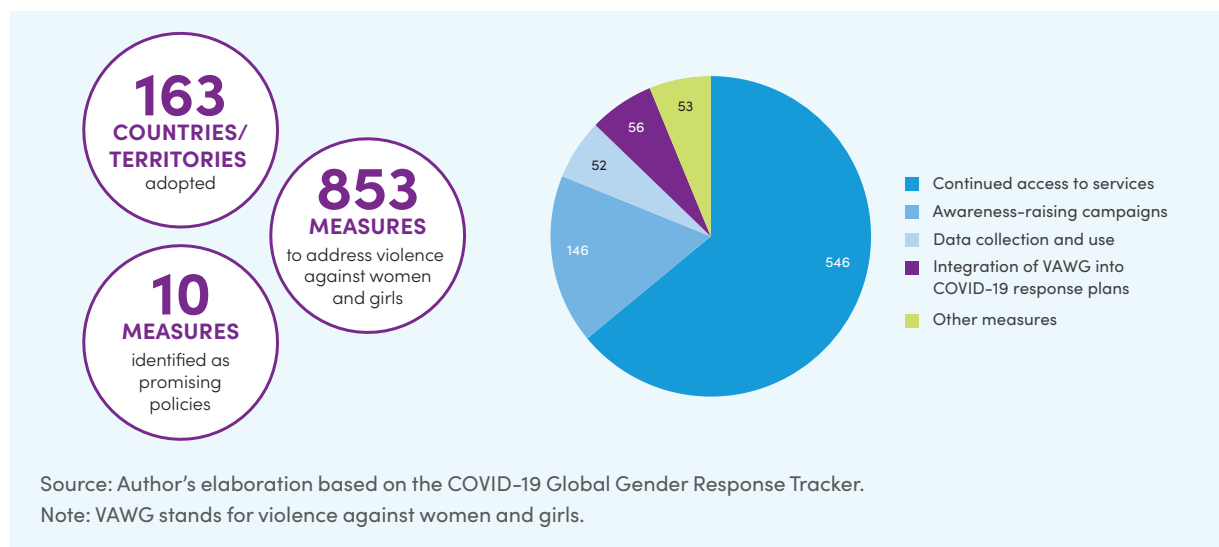
2. PROMISING PRACTICES ADDRESSING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Based on demonstrated experiences in prior conflicts and crises, women's rights organizations across the world mobilized quickly and effectively in the early days of COVID-19, drawing attention to increasing rates of violence against women and girls. Economic insecurity, growing inequalities, quarantines and lockdowns, and limited access to judicial, social, and life-saving services raised the rates of violence against women while limiting women's ability to escape and hold perpetrators to account.⁸ The COVID-19 Global Gender Response Tracker recorded 853 measures taken by 163 countries and territories to tackle violence against women and girls, an encouraging response.

All types of crises can exacerbate violence against women and girls, such as natural disasters, conflicts, and economic instability and uncertainty. Holistically addressing the issue in emergency response plans is essential to limit risks, meet new demands and ensure continued access to services and support, even during difficult circumstances. It requires the comprehensive integration of diverse measures that may incorporate legal reform, evidence-based research and data, economic empowerment programmes, and coordinated support services for survivors across the health, justice, and social service sectors. Robust prevention strategies must be in place, including work with men and boys to transform longstanding harmful gender norms that enable or excuse gender-based violence and discriminatory attitudes towards women and girls.⁹ Special efforts should be made to ensure service access for people facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.

The following section outlines some promising strategies taken during the pandemic to respond to increased violence against women and girls by addressing harmful gender social norms and expanding access to justice and services.

FIGURE 2.
Summary of measures targeting violence against women and girls in the COVID-19 Global Gender Response Tracker



2.1 Expanding and ensuring justice and service access

Gender-based Violence Emergency Response Group

Fiji



VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Addressing violence against women and girls in COVID-19 response plans

DESCRIPTION

Fiji, which has one of the highest rates of gender-based violence (GBV) in the world, embraced a comprehensive response to the prospect of increased GBV during the pandemic. Extensive and effective activism by women's organizations pre-pandemic led to legislative and institutional frameworks that enabled rapid response in early 2020. The Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation, the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre and UN Women played an important coordinating role, including by convening the GBV Emergency Response Group. This group meets regularly during normal times but scales up its efforts during emergencies, historically natural disasters and climate events. The group was activated to roll-out and adapt support services in the face of the pandemic. As a result, Fiji registered 14 pandemic-related measures to address violence against women spanning all of the critical areas of response. This included actions to strengthen hotlines for survivors, support crisis centers and shelters, ensure ongoing justice proceedings for survivors, update referral pathways for frontline service providers, and collect real-time data on GBV rates to ensure that response could meet demand.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Expanding and ensuring justice and service access

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- Swift action was enabled by activating existing emergency networks that had been previously created to address violence against women in other crises, including extreme weather events
- Emergency response group coordinated a comprehensive policy response on gender-based violence across all critical areas
- Real-time data collection on gender-based violence ensured response was adapted to pandemic demand

WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation, the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre and UN Women, coordinated through the GBV Emergency Response Group


POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Service provision and programming for gender-based violence relies heavily on donor funding which may constrain long-term sustainability
- Traditional gender social norms that enable or excuse gender-based violence require long term and sustained efforts to change

Expanding legal framework for prosecuting gender-based violence

Canada

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

 Addressing violence against women and girls in COVID-19 response plans

DESCRIPTION

The 2021 Federal Budget committed 601.3 million CAD over five years to develop a national action plan to end gender-based violence (GBV). The resulting plan features five comprehensive pillars to respond to gender based violence: 1) supporting survivors and their families; 2) prevention; 3) responsive justice system; 4) implementing Indigenous-led approaches; and 5) social infrastructure and enabling environment. Efforts to reach out to underrepresented communities are important parts of Pillars 1 and 4. For example, under Pillar 1, support is provided to enhance the capacity of organizations that provide support services for women, girls, gender non-binary, LGBT+ and two-spirit persons¹⁰ (2SLGBTQI+) experiencing violence. The plan emphasizes the importance of supporting organizations that have experience working in these communities to identify specific barriers faced and solutions needed. Under Pillar 4, the plan recognizes that Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQI+ people are more likely to experience violence, including homicide, than women who are not part of this community. Thus, the plan commits to working with Indigenous-led organizations and coordinating approaches across the Government to embrace a

coordinated approach that will improve the capacity of organizations that provide support to these populations, with a specific focus on addressing root causes of violence in these communities. An additional 539.3 million CAD was committed to continuing these efforts as part of the 2022 Federal Budget.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Ensuring and expanding access to justice and services

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- Comprehensive plan that addresses both institutional and social issues related to violence against women and girls
- Recognizes the importance of supporting organizations working within Indigenous and LGBT+ communities to identify specific barriers and solutions to gender-based violence

WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

Women and Gender Equality Canada

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Developing long-term and high-trust relationships with organizations supporting under-served populations on the ground
- Creating sustainable funding support for long-term planning efforts to tackle gender-based violence

FEMINIST MOBILIZATION WAS CRITICAL IN PROMOTING MORE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN POLICIES

 In the first year of the pandemic, women staged **2,711** PROTESTS to demand action on VAWG across **100 COUNTRIES**

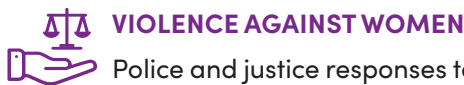
Countries with **STRONG FEMINIST MOVEMENTS** adopted on average **3 more** MEASURES ADDRESSING VAWG than those with weak feminist movements.



Source: Authors' elaboration, based on ACLED 2021; UNDP and UN Women 2021a; Forester et al. 2020.

Virtual access to justice for survivors

Guatemala



Police and justice responses to address impunity

DESCRIPTION

In April 2020, the Supreme Court ordered courts that process domestic violence to remain open during the pandemic to ensure access to the judicial system. This decision was made in recognition that decreasing reports of gender-based violence (GBV) during the first months of the pandemic were likely due to the lack of reporting mechanisms. Several additional measures were taken to improve access to justice for survivors during the pandemic in the face of widespread lockdowns, including the automatic extension of protection measures, virtual hearings on GBV cases, processing complaints via telephone without the need for physical presence and the creation of telephone hotlines to receive complaints from children.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Tackling harmful gender social norms

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- Virtual judicial processes through internet and telephone services enabled continuity in women's access to justice for gender-based violence cases and promote interconnections of specialized and localized courts
- Virtual hearings make it easier for users to attend, save time and travel costs, avoid contact between parties involved, and strengthen security measures for people in vulnerable conditions

WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

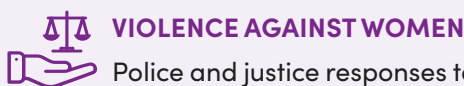
Supreme Court of Justice

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Ensuring that survivors of gender-based violence have access to telephone or internet for reporting and access to justice mechanisms
- Adapting technological systems may cause resistance or logistical difficulties amongst users within the courts and government bureaucracy

Expanding the legal framework for prosecuting gender-based violence

Liberia



Police and justice responses to address impunity

DESCRIPTION

To respond to increasing gender-based violence (GBV) cases during the early stages of the pandemic – and a large feminist social movement raising the issue – the Government took several measures to reduce the prevalence of GBV and prosecute perpetrators. As recommended from a national roadmap developed by a National Conference made of relevant stakeholders, the government declared rape a national emergency, appointed a special prosecutor, created a sex offender registry, and established a national task force to address the issue. Also included as part of a comprehensive response is commitment to end female genital mutilation, in agreement with traditional leaders. A budget of 1.7 million EUR was allocated towards these commitments.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Ensuring and expanding access to justice and services

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- Expands legal framework necessary for providing justice to survivors of gender-based violence

WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

Government of Liberia

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Legal frameworks and protections must be accompanied by advocacy campaigns to transform social norms to prevent the acceptance and prevalence of gender-based violence

The first government-led crisis center

Kyrgyzstan



VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Continued functioning and expansion of shelters

DESCRIPTION

As part of efforts to address rising cases of gender-based violence during the pandemic, Kyrgyzstan opened the first government-led crisis center for individuals experiencing gender-based violence. The center will provide temporary shelters for 60 mothers and children along with psychological, legal and medical assistance. The center also aims to work with international donors and experts from non-governmental organizations to provide livelihood support to survivors, as well as improve service access, outreach and efficiency. To supplement services provided to survivors, the Government is also prioritizing work to transform social norms that enable gender-based violence and implement correctional programmes for perpetrators. These efforts complement the comprehensive approach to addressing GBV that the Government took during the pandemic, with policies addressing all critical areas of response such as strengthening of hotlines, awareness raising campaigns and data collection.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Ensuring and expanding access to justice and services for survivors of violence against women and girls

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- Builds new government-led infrastructure to support survivors of gender-based violence
- Embraces an integrated approach incorporating psychological, medical, legal services and social norms work
- Aims to coordinate work with non-governmental crisis centers

WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

Ministry of Health and Social Development

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Ensuring effective and efficient cooperation between pre-existing service providers
- Meeting demands for service support in less central locations

Sejiwa Psychiatric Health Services

Indonesia



VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Continued provision of psychosocial support

DESCRIPTION

To ensure access to services for survivors of gender-based violence (GBV), the Ministry of Women Empowerment and Child Protection worked with partners to adjust protocols for dealing with GBV cases during the pandemic and launched a new programme to provide additional support. This new programme, Sejiwa Psychiatric Health Services, aims to provide psychosocial support to survivors of domestic violence, as well as other groups facing threats to their mental health during the pandemic – specifically women migrant workers, women with disabilities and children requiring special attention. Psychological consultations can be conducted through dialing the National COVID-19 hotline to connect with volunteer psychologists from the Indonesian Psychology Association.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Ensuring and expanding access to justice and services

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- New services for psychosocial support to survivors of domestic violence increases access to such services
- Recognizes the importance of providing mental health support during the pandemic

WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

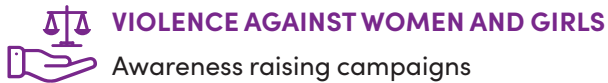
President's Office and Ministry of Women Empowerment and Child Protection, with support from the Integrated Services Center of Women and Children Empowerment (P2TP2A) and UN Population Fund

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Ensuring support services to people without telephone access
- Coupling psychosocial support with financial or in-kind support to ensure basic needs are met
- Reliance on volunteer psychologists may be unsustainable for long-term service provision

2.2 Tackling harmful gender social norms

National Football League “Men against Violence” campaign Cabo Verde



DESCRIPTION

The Cabo Verde Institute for Gender Equality and The Blue Sharks national football team launched a campaign called “Men against Violence.” The campaign started in the context of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence but was extended for a year given the increase of violence that came with the pandemic. The campaign promoted the message from the team captain stating, “We men have the responsibility today and every day to make sure that women are free from any violence, not denied the right to life. This is what the world needs: more love from all of us towards others.” This initiative intends to reinforce the promotion of gender equality and the culture of non-violence. It mobilizes and engages men and boys to be ambassadors of gender equality in Cabo Verde, helps mainstream gender into sports and spread messages that promote positive masculinities that fight against gender stereotypes.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Tackling harmful gender social norms

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- Engaged men as crucial allies to transform harmful gender norms and masculinities
- Developed as a relatively low-cost intervention with potential for a wide-spread impact

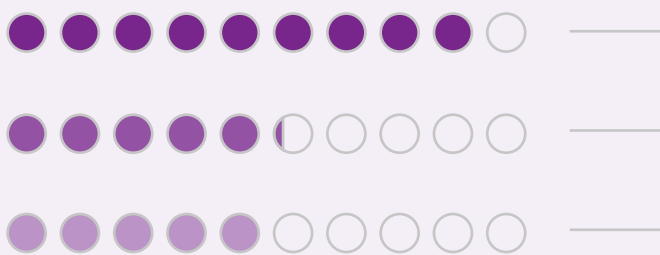
WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

Cabo Verde Institute for Gender Equality (ICIEG) and the Blue Sharks national football team, in partnership with the Government and the International Labor Organization, UNDP, UN Population Fund (UNFPA) and UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF)

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Long-term engagement of a critical mass of male athletes who are allies on gender-equality to create widespread norms change
- Impacting norms change requires long-term efforts and commitments

ACCORDING TO THE GENDER SOCIAL NORMS INDEX



Roughly **90%** of men and women show at least one clear bias against gender equality.

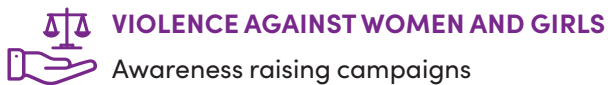
53% of men think that men make better political leaders than women

50% of men think men should have more right to a job than women

Source: UNDP 2022.

“It doesn’t stop until you do something” campaign

Netherlands



DESCRIPTION

In response to increased reporting of gender-based violence (GBV) and difficulty reporting cases due to lockdown restrictions during early days of the pandemic, the Government launched an awareness raising campaign over television, radio, and online advertising. The campaign embraced the motto “it doesn’t stop until you do something” and focused on facilitating interventions between survivors, bystanders, and authorities. The campaign has an official website titled “I Suspect Domestic Violence” which provides information to define, recognize, respond to, and report several types of domestic violence, including child abuse, elder abuse, partner abuse, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, and abandonment.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Tackling harmful gender social norms

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- Media campaign used television, radio, and online advertising to reach a wide audience to raise awareness against gender-based violence
- Official website provides guidance on different types of domestic violence, including elder abuse, child abuse, forced marriage and abandonment

WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

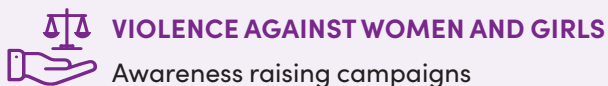
Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport and the Ministry of Justice and Security

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Providing long-term financial and psycho-social support for those experiencing violence
- Creating sustained norm changes that prevent gender-based violence from happening

“Aurora accompanies you” campaign

Peru



DESCRIPTION

The Ministry of Women and Vulnerable Populations launched the radio program: “Aurora accompanies you” in the Lambayeque region as part of efforts to prevent and address gender-based violence (GBV). The programme aired regularly on Wednesdays at 11am for 30 minutes on one of the most popular radio stations in the area. The goal was to cover a series of important topics relating to GBV and social norms, such as preventing GBV, self-esteem, economic empowerment, new masculinities, and available services for survivors. This is part of Government actions to coordinate efforts to reduce violence against women across public and private institutions and embracing mass messaging through media.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Tackling harmful gender social norms

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- Messaging was conducted through free radio programmes, providing a low-cost and high-reach outreach mechanism to prevent gender-based violence
- Created opportunities to increase local capacities for violence prevention and reduce tolerance of violence amongst target audience
- Intervention with local governments enabled more stable interventions in a crisis context

WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

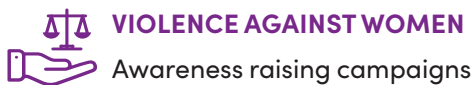
Ministry of Women and Vulnerable Populations

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Expanding the outreach campaign to more regions
- Ensuring the radio programme airs during popular times to reach wide audience, particularly men, without losing listenership

Training on gender-based violence prevention

Somalia



DESCRIPTION

As part of the European Union (EU) project “EU response to health and socio-economic impact of COVID-19 in Mogadishu,” the Benadir Regional Administration (BRA), Directorate of Health and Human Services, with UN-Habitat support and EU funding, held a training on the prevention and response to gender-based violence (GBV). Thirty participants attended the training, including health workers and community surveillance teams from the region. The training was set up in response to high levels of reported GBV cases in 2020, particularly in at risk communities, with one organization reporting that 65 percent of cases were girls who were out of school due to public health measures. The training emphasized community awareness on GBV prevention and reporting. After the training, community surveillance teams and frontline health workers created awareness messaging to influence societal norms, used referral mechanisms and public health channels to address GBV cases, and worked to provide livelihood support for at-risk women and households with internally displaced persons.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Tackling harmful gender social norms

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- Community-level training helped create local awareness of gender-based violence
- Training demonstrated how violence against women programming can be integrated into broader crisis contexts
- Targeted outreach embraced an intersectional lens through the inclusion of internally displaced persons

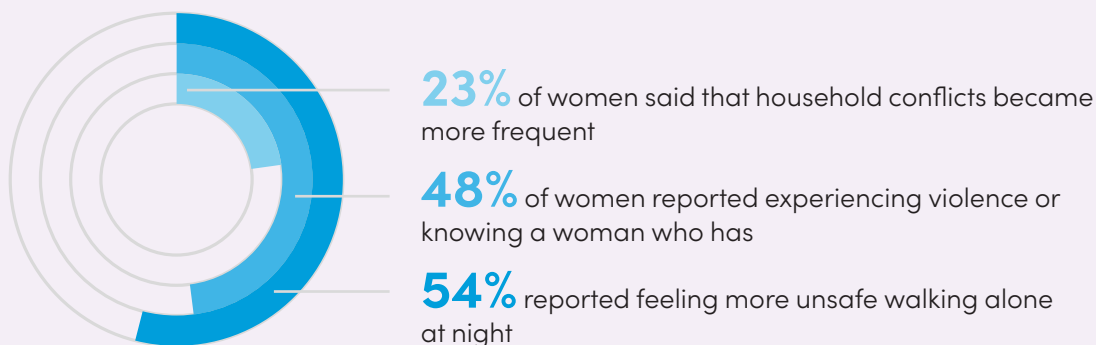
WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

Benadir Regional Administration (BRA), Directorate of Health and Human Services, with UN-Habitat and funding through the European Union

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Small scale intervention with regional impact could be scaled up to reach more people and regions
- Traditional gender norms require long-term efforts to change

DURING THE FIRST 1.5 YEARS OF THE PANDEMIC

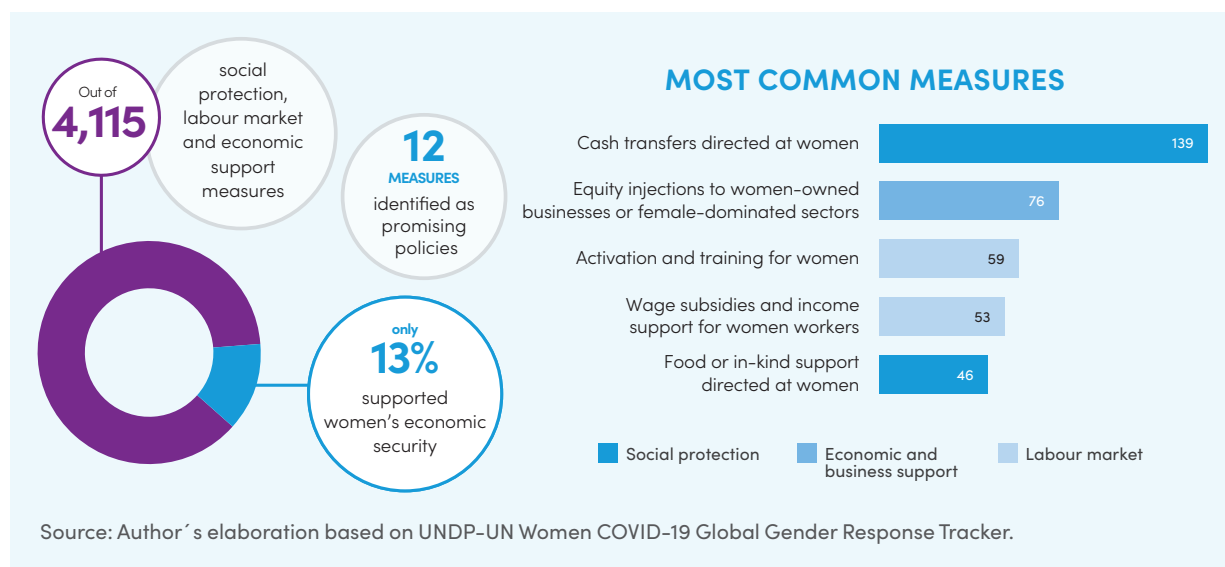


Source: UN Women 2021b.

3. PROMISING PRACTICES SUPPORTING WOMEN'S ECONOMIC SECURITY

The COVID-19 pandemic unleashed the largest economic recession since the Second World War. The global workforce suffered as non-essential workers were ordered to stay home. Employees often saw reduced wages, hours, long-term layoffs and lost jobs as businesses tried to cope with the economic uncertainty. Most affected were those who were already left furthest behind. Almost two-thirds of the global workforce pre-pandemic was in informal employment, including 740 million women.¹¹ Less than half the global population had even a single benefit provided by their national social protection systems.¹² In many countries, women faced particularly significant job losses in informal employment or heavily impacted service-based sectors of the economy, namely tourism, hospitality, and restaurant services.

FIGURE 3. Summary of measures targeting women's economic security in the COVID-19 Global Gender Response Tracker



To respond to disruptive economic conditions, national governments took 4,115 measures targeting social protection systems, the labour market, and economic and business support. Just 13 per cent of these supported women's economic security, however, with the most common options involving social protection schemes, such as cash transfers or food aid. These measures assisted those facing job losses or immediate hardships to meet basic needs. Women also benefitted from labour market and business support measures that aided women-owned businesses, helped women gain new skills or provided economic assistance to female-dominated sectors of the economy. Despite the low overall rate of gender-sensitive policymaking supporting women's economic security, promising and innovative approaches took place all over the globe.

The following section first highlights promising social protection measures to meet essential needs of women and girls. It then presents innovative labour market measures to assist women workers and entrepreneurs in gaining new skills, and finally introduces economic and business support measures that incorporate gender into business financing.

3.1 Supporting basic needs

Minimum Living Income

Spain



SOCIAL PROTECTION

Cash transfers

DESCRIPTION

In 2020 the Decree-Law 20/2020 of 29 May established the Minimum Living Income (Ingreso Mínimo Vital) at national level in Spain.

This living income gives a guaranteed benefit for the most vulnerable people on a monthly basis. All individuals between 23 and 65 years are entitled to the allowance, and includes all types of family units, and adult women who are victims of gender based violence, or human trafficking and sexual exploitation. Partners were involved in the design of the measure, especially trade unions. Whilst established in the context of COVID-19, what is particularly impactful is that the temporary measure has become a permanent measure by law, guaranteeing a minimum income to all, thus ensuring economic security and reducing poverty. It has special measures for female headed households, victims of GBV and people with dependents.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Supporting basic needs

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- Directly supports the most vulnerable, people on social benefits
- Mitigates the risk of poverty and social exclusion, whilst promoting opportunities for social and employment integration.
- Strengthens broader social protection system and has become permanent measure by law
- Supports women experiencing gender-based violence

WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

Social Security, National government of Spain

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Need to ensure broad coverage of potential beneficiaries, thus administratively challenging
- Documentation required is complex

Ehsaas emergency cash programme

Pakistan



DESCRIPTION

To provide emergency financial assistance in the early days of the pandemic, the Government of Pakistan launched the Ehsaas one-time cash transfer programme. Through the programme, roughly 12 million eligible families received PKR 12,000 which was intended to help cover basic food costs for a family for four months. The legacy of this programme, however, is increasing financial inclusion for women and strengthening overall safety nets, which were built into its design. Households that wanted to receive the benefit would apply and confirm eligibility using mobile phones and national identification numbers. Payments were then accessible through commercial banks, retail agents or ATMs with biometric verification systems. Emergency cash disbursements take place through Limited Mandate Accounts allowing the government to make cash transfers without requiring beneficiaries to own a phone. This is important because mobile phone ownership is not universal particularly among women in Pakistan. To enable rapid roll out, the Government expanded on existing social protection frameworks to reach economically disadvantaged groups who had previously received social benefits. Women recipients were directly targeted through prior registration in

the Ehsaas Kafaalat “One Woman, One Account” programme, which provided 4.5 million women with financial support and helped them gain access to financial services and increase women’s control over household resources. It is estimated that more than half of the beneficiaries were women.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Supporting basic needs

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- Large-scale social protection programme managed to reach more than half the population and laid groundwork for deeper financial inclusion in the future and reinforced the value of the banking system
- Expanded on existing social protection frameworks to enable a rapid roll out

WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

Poverty and Alleviation and Social Safety Net Division of Pakistan

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Providing access to enrollment to beneficiaries without mobile phones and national identification
- Ensuring women have equal access to mobile phone services to enable benefit access

Social Insurance

Chile



DESCRIPTION

In Chile the Employment Protection Law (Law no. 21,227) established measures to protect the stability of income and jobs for workers who cannot provide services or must adjust their working hours due to the COVID-19 virus. Workers received income through unemployment insurance, and the Solidarity Unemployment Fund. The company continued to pay workers’ pensions and health contributions, excluding contributions for work-related accidents. Informal and non-standard workers are less likely to benefit from such programmes. Chile, however, promulgated a law that led to the inclusion of domestic workers, a heavily feminized occupation, in the national unemployment insurance system.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Supporting a more inclusive labour market

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- Prevents job losses and protects vulnerable workers
- Supports the inclusion of domestic workers, a heavily feminised occupation

WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, Chile

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

Due to characteristics of domestic work, including that it is performed in a private household so it is difficult to control, there is often high job turnover rate and in-kind payments are common

Emergency Aid

Brazil



SOCIAL PROTECTION

Cash transfers

DESCRIPTION

In April 2020, the Government implemented the Emergency Aid (Auxílio Emergencial) cash transfer programme to provide additional support to people in need. It was built upon the existing Bolsa Familia cash transfer, automatically enrolling these recipients and creating new transfers aimed at informal workers. The programme reached more than 68 million individuals with average monthly benefits of USD77 or higher, making it one of the most generous cash transfer programmes in the region. The programme made special considerations for informal workers who were also single mothers. Single mothers received double the benefit amount for the first nine months of the programme and a little extra for the remaining seven months in recognition of their dual role as caregivers and income providers.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Supporting basic needs

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- Expands on existing social protection infrastructure to provide additional support informal workers, many of whom are women
- Extra benefits provided to informal workers who were single mothers

WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

Ministry of Development and Social Assistance, Family and Fight against Hunger

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Ensuring sustained benefit amount over the long term

“Overcome” Programme

Dominican Republic



SOCIAL PROTECTION

Cash transfers

DESCRIPTION

In 2021, the Government converted the social assistance programme “Eating is First” (“Comer es Primero”) to a more comprehensive support programme called “Overcome” (Supérate). With this change, the monthly cash transfer amount was doubled and was expanded to include an additional 200,000 homes. Beyond this, the programme integrated eight areas of development, including education, health and food security during emergencies, care work and economic inclusion. Within these areas, it emphasizes empowerment and opportunities for groups which have traditionally been excluded from national development systems and specifically targets women-led households. It also includes a gender-specific component called “Supérate Mujer” coordinated with the Ministry of Women that aims to promote women’s economic empowerment and support survivors of gender-based violence.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Supporting basic needs

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- Built upon existing social assistance infrastructure to expand social protection support
- Cross-cutting measure that addresses women’s economic empowerment, care work and gender-based violence

WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

Government of Dominican Republic

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Such a comprehensive framework to address cross-cutting development challenges requires long-term planning and investment

Income support for garment workers

Lao People's Democratic Republic



SOCIAL PROTECTION

Cash transfers

DESCRIPTION

In February 2020, the Government administered one-time cash transfers equivalent to two months of emergency income support for up to 17,000 garment workers in Lao PDR, 85 per cent of whom are women. The garment sector had to scale back and downsize operations during the pandemic. The programme was incorporated into the existing social protection system with improvements to reduce administrative costs and delays, including through piloting new methods of electronic payments through mobile phones. The programme was developed with support from the International Labour Organization, as well as the Association of Lao Garment Industry and the Lao Federation of Trade Unions.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Supporting basic needs

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- Directly supports workers and employers
- Strengthens broader social protection system
- Supports female-dominated sector facing hardship during the pandemic

WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

Lao Social Security Organization, with funding from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and technical support from the International Labour Organization

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Emergency funds may not be sufficient due to long-lasting economic and public health effects of the pandemic
- The use of mobile technology and electronic payments can exclude certain populations



**740 MILLION WOMEN
WORK IN THE
INFORMAL ECONOMY.**



By April 2020, informal workers had lost an estimated

**82% OF
THEIR EARNINGS**



**41
countries**

extended social protection
to different groups of
INFORMAL WORKERS

Source: ILO 2022; ILO 2018; ILO 2020; authors' elaboration, based on UNDP and UN Women 2021a.

“Household Food Basket” Initiative

Senegal



LABOUR MARKET

Activation measures and enterprise development

DESCRIPTION

The Household Food Basket initiative was implemented to provide protection for local food producers, particularly women and young people, while also providing food and nutrition security to 300,000 people at risk of falling into poverty during COVID-19. Due to public health safety measures, small-scale producers, which are essential to rural economies and local development, were prevented from selling their products in the markets. To support these producers and preserve the sustainability of local food chains while providing food assistance to at-risk populations, the Household Food Basket Initiative distributed food to around 37,500 households which were accompanied by cash transfers. Beneficiary households were selected from national and local registers and community targeting. The initiative supported at least 1,000 women farmers and improved food security for 300,000 people, mostly women, children and youth.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Promoting a more inclusive workforce

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- Cross-cutting measure that supports women farmers while reducing food insecurity
- Targets women, young people, and children, along with small-scale farmers in rural areas
- Aims to protect food supply chains which were interrupted by COVID-19 pandemic

WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Equipment, with Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), UN Women and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Reaching high risk households and farmers in rural areas
- Ensuring local, small-scale crop production levels are sustainable during intersecting crises, such as climate change

Novissi Solidarity Fund

Togo



SOCIAL PROTECTION

Cash transfers

DESCRIPTION

In April 2020, Togo launched the Novissi social safety net scheme, meaning “solidarity” in the local dialect. The scheme provides a monthly cash transfer to citizens in the informal sector who had their incomes disrupted during COVID-19. All informal workers above age 18 who had a valid voter identification card could apply for and receive benefits through their mobile phones. For the duration of the emergency period, beneficiaries received payments every two weeks into their mobile money account. Women received a higher cash transfer of FCFA 12,250 per month while men received FCFA 10,500 per month. The funds were intended to help informal workers meet basic needs such as purchasing food and water, phone time or paying utility bills. Since Togo had no social registry at the time, the February 2020 voter registry was used to identify beneficiaries because it included over 90 per cent of the country’s adults and indicated a person’s location and economic sector. To apply for the benefit, workers could use cell phones; once eligibility was verified, the transfer was automatically credited to mobile money accounts. Digital tools and simplified eligibility enabled 30,000 informal workers to receive payments after two days of the programme’s launch. The programme also partnered with development agencies to expand funding and outreach in additional waves. In total through 2021, the programme benefitted more than 815,000 people, 63 per cent of whom were women. In a second wave, the Government worked with academic researchers using artificial intelligence and big data to identify the most at-risk regions of the country using satellite imaging and surveys about mobile phone networks.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Supporting basic needs through social protection programmes

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

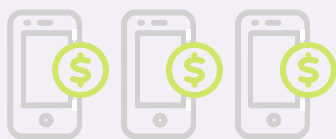
- Developed a new social protection system using mobile phone technology to make it widely accessible and adapted to the emergency context
- Use of mobile wallets enables access to those without formal banking accounts
- Targeted beneficiaries in the informal sector where women are overrepresented
- Strong cooperation between governments, academia, and development/humanitarian organizations to meet urgent needs

WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

Ministry of Digital Economy, with funding and support from the World Bank, academia, and humanitarian agencies

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Difficulties reaching potential beneficiaries without mobile access
- Large cost required to fund the development and implementation of the tool
- Multi-stakeholder initiatives can be difficult to initiate but enable high-quality and targeted outreach



Electronically paid cash transfers reached beneficiaries on average **ONE MONTH FASTER** than manual or part-electronic programmes

Source: Gentilini et al. 2022.

3.2 Promoting a more inclusive labour market

Women in STEM Cadetships and Advanced Apprenticeships

Australia



LABOUR MARKET

Activation measures and enterprise development

DESCRIPTION

The Government allocated AUD 25.1 million for new Women in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) Cadetships and Advanced Apprenticeships to create STEM career pathways for up to 600 women through industry-sponsored apprenticeship-style courses. The aim of the programme is to help women upskill in STEM careers, develop stronger pathways between education and STEM fields and to promote women in STEM jobs. Employers and universities will collaborate to provide programs that combine study and work in STEM fields. As of December 2022, there have been two rounds of applications benefitting 24 universities, with the second round creating an extra 267 university placements. Employers in STEM are able to receive AUD 5,000 per employee and are encouraged to provide flexible working arrangements and contribute to the costs of studies.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Promoting a more inclusive labour market

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- Partnership with government, academia and industry supports alignment with higher education and the STEM workforce
- Addresses barriers in both education and labour market in STEM areas

WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

Department of Education

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Ensuring programme reaches students and workers in rural areas
- Monitoring the impact of upskilling efforts to ensure women are promoted within the STEM fields

In 2020, **WOMEN**
LOST MORE THAN

46.6
Million

jobs globally, a 3.6% loss,
compared to 2.9% for men

TO PROMOTE JOB RECOVERY



30
countries

launched gender-sensitive
training and active **LABOUR**
MARKET POLICIES

Source: ILO 2022; authors' elaboration, based on UNDP and UN Women 2021a.

Employment subsidy

Chile



LABOUR MARKET

Activation measures and enterprise development

DESCRIPTION

To support the labour market, the Government created two subsidy lines. The return (“regresa”) line helped companies that wished to bring employees back to work, while the hire (“contrata”) line supported the hiring of new workers. The return subsidy line provided a benefit of CLP 160,000 per month for male workers between ages 24 and 55, and a benefit of CLP 200,000 per month for workers that were women, youth, men over age 55, and persons with disabilities. The hire line subsidy had a benefit of 50 percent of monthly gross salary for men ages 24–55 (with a maximum of CLP 250,000), and a benefit of 65 percent of monthly gross salary (with a maximum of CLP 290,000) for women, youth, men over age 55, and persons with disabilities. Both lines of the subsidy were available for companies with less than 200 workers and distributed for up to 10 months. Applications were available through

an online platform between 29 September 2020 and 31 December 2021.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Promoting a more inclusive workforce

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- Intersectional measure provides additional benefits for the hiring of persons with disabilities, women, youth and pensioners
- Flexible subsidy scheme supports companies to retain or hire new workers

WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Addressing additional barriers that may prevent women, pensioners or persons with disabilities from employment, such as accessibility or care requirements

Youth, Technology and Jobs Project

Jordan



LABOUR MARKET

Activation measures and enterprise development

DESCRIPTION

In 2020, the Ministry of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship launched the Youth, Technology and Jobs project to support development of the information and communications technology (ICT) sector. The project is a five-year, USD 200 million plan to develop a more skilled workforce, improve digitalization and make the ICT sector more competitive. It seeks to create 10,000 jobs for youth, Syrian refugees and women. It also aims to train 15,000 youth, develop digital skills curriculum in schools, develop technology hubs, support the growth of 250 start-up businesses, and support 6,000 gig-economy workers to digitalize their services. Gender is mainstreamed across these different aims, for example in promoting women’s mentorship programmes and ensuring that the technology hubs consider constraints in women’s participation, such as programme timings, safety and availability of childcare and transport services.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Promoting a more inclusive labour market

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- Specifically targets women, Syrian refugees and youth digitalization upskilling and job creation
- Broader context of women’s inequality and underrepresentation in the information, communication and technology sector was considered in project development

WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

Ministry of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship, with funding from the World Bank

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Reaching potential participants in rural areas that lack connectivity and access to technology hubs

COVID-19 Solidarity Fund

Kazakhstan



LABOUR MARKET

Activation measures and enterprise development

DESCRIPTION

To support the local labour market, the Government with the Asian Development Bank, UNDP and the World Bank launched the COVID-19 Solidarity Fund for Kazakhstan. It aims to develop skills, capacities and opportunities in the local labour market for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). One of the main initiatives under the project is to support the development and implementation of the “one village – one product” (OVOP) programme in four rural areas. The OVOP programme aims to improve capacity of local entrepreneurs through promoting learning dialogues that encourage production of local goods using available resources, as well as practical training on topics such as promotion, quality control, and product branding. In November 2021, experts from Japan and Kyrgyzstan took part in a three-day event where they shared their experiences with 45 local participants. The project also strengthens women-led SMEs through

gender-inclusive online training programs that promote practical learning and identifies new business opportunities in emerging markets.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Promoting a more inclusive labour market

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- Targets women in rural areas and local villages
- Promotes learning dialogues with experts that focus on localized skills development

WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

Ministry of National Economy and Ministry of Social Protection, in partnership with UNDP, Asian Development Bank and World Bank

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Reaching beneficiaries without access to internet-based training programmes
- Outreach to rural women is limited due to the location of Centres in big cities

ADS Coopsclub

Morocco



LABOUR MARKET

Activation measures and enterprise development

DESCRIPTION

To support women agricultural workers who were impacted by COVID-19, the Government worked to develop an online marketplace, ADS Coopsclub, to enable women’s cooperatives to continue to sell their products. The platform, which intends to include all women’s cooperatives in the country, supervises and supports cooperatives and entrepreneurs through providing practical support in terms of logistics, branding, communication, advertising, product delivery, and distribution. The platform can be used to create a virtual storefront to promote products, undertake training on essential skills of e-commerce, and access a broad network of national and international partners and clients.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Promoting a more inclusive labour market

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- Provides support and training services to women entrepreneurs for long-term empowerment
- E-commerce platform promotes upskilling and income diversification

WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

Ministry of Solidarity, Social Development, Equality and Family in partnership with the Social Development Agency and UN Women

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Ensuring members have regular access to online services to manage virtual storefronts
- Providing on-demand training for members at different knowledge and capacity levels

3.3 Gender inclusive business support

Gender quotas for COVID-19 benefits

Egypt



ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS SUPPORT

Tax cuts, exemptions, or credits

DESCRIPTION

Egypt's Financial Regulatory Authority (FRA) incorporated gender equality considerations into its financial incentives for companies wishing to receive certain COVID-19 benefits. Companies and non-banking entities were granted a 50 per cent reduction in development fees or service charges, according to the percentage of women they employ, which should not be less than 25 per cent of their workforce. Fees were also directed towards women's financing to prevent gender discrimination among clients when providing financial services. Along with this, the FRA called for the development of financial products and services that would meet the needs of women clients.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Gender inclusive business support

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- Gender quota to receive benefit encourages employment of women
- Promotes women's access to financing and the development of new fiscal tools designed for women's needs

WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

Financial Regulatory Authority of Egypt

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Using the quota system to encourage broader promotion and professional development of women workers

Sustainability Fund

State of Palestine



LABOUR MARKET

Wage subsidy and income replacement for self-employed

DESCRIPTION

The Palestine Monetary Authority launched a low-cost financing programme, "Estidama," which means "sustainability" in Arabic. The programme supports the sustainability of micro, small and medium sized enterprises (MSMEs) that had been impacted by the pandemic through increasing access to financing for banks. One pillar of the programme is dedicated to micro-enterprises, with special consideration given to those owned by women, those that provide jobs for women and youth, and those that develop women-led or gender-sensitive products or outlets. Following the roll out, the Government planned to evaluate inclusion challenges faced by women after COVID-19 and make a roadmap to improve women's access to finance. This is part of the broader women's economic empowerment programming within the Palestine Monetary Authority that

seeks to provide career development and training support to women entrepreneurs and business leaders.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Gender inclusive business support

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- Provides financing to women-led businesses or businesses that create opportunities for women
- Financing launched as part of broader training programme to support women's economic empowerment
- Includes special considerations to provide financing or jobs to youth and other underserved populations

WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

Palestine Monetary Authority

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Reaching women running informal micro-enterprises
- Ensuring that women in rural areas can benefit from the programme

Cooperatives Support Programme (KOOB-DES)

Turkey



LABOUR MARKET

Activation measures and enterprise development

DESCRIPTION

The Ministry of Trade announced a grant programme for women cooperatives aiming to alleviate the economic impacts of COVID-19. This grant, launched through the Support Program of Cooperatives, or KOOB-DES, allow cooperatives that are made up of at least 90 per cent women members to apply for up to TL 150,000 in funding. The funds are to be used for projects that will contribute to the production and employment of the cooperatives, ensure efficiency, and improve their digital and technological capacities. Within this scope, the Ministry encouraged funds to be used to improve the operations and promotions of clubs, childcare centers and kindergartens to strengthen their operations. Additionally, cooperatives were encouraged to produce local, natural and environmentally sensitive goods to create sustainable projects and promote rural development. The grant provided support to 139 women's cooperatives in 2020 across 41 provinces and was extended into 2021.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Gender inclusive business support

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- Directly targets women's cooperatives with additional funding
- Promotes women's economic empowerment in rural areas
- Strengthens capacities of women's cooperatives to digitalize operations

WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

Ministry of Trade

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Providing adequate financial support for various projects undertaken by cooperatives

Debt Relief Finance Scheme

South Africa



ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS SUPPORT

Equity injections: public sector subsidies to businesses

DESCRIPTION

The Debt Relief Finance Scheme was developed to provide relief on existing debts and repayments for small, micro-, and medium sized enterprises (SMMEs) who were impacted by COVID-19. For SMMEs to be eligible for assistance under the scheme, the applicant must have demonstrated a direct or indirect impact or potential impact of COVID-19 on the business operations, must be owned by South African citizens and have 70 percent of employees be South Africans. Priority was given to businesses owned by women, youth, and disabled persons ensuring that businesses owned by these historically excluded groups had access to financial support.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Gender inclusive business support

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- Helped South African businesses impacted by COVID-19 with six months of support
- Prioritized businesses owned by women, youth, and people with disabilities

WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

Department of Small Business Development

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

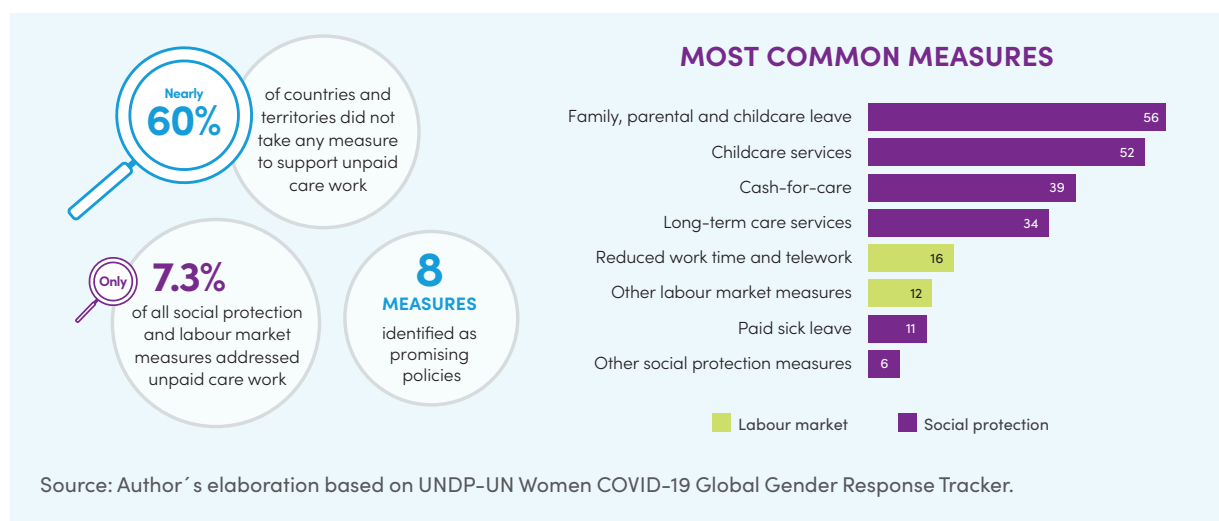
- Ensuring that the scheme translates to larger scale impact instead of just temporary relief

4. PROMISING PRACTICES ADDRESSING UNPAID CARE WORK

More than many previous crises, the COVID-19 pandemic revealed the centrality of the care economy in the day-to-day lives of people everywhere. Policies on formal and informal caregiving and parental support were scarce in most parts of the globe even before the pandemic. The closure of schools and day care centres exacerbated the shortfall.¹³ Women absorbed the resulting increase in care work, often at the cost of their own position in the formal labour market.

Mothers of small children, who were less likely to be in the formal labour force before the pandemic, reduced their participation by 1.8 percentage points in 2020 compared to 2019, nearly twice the decline experienced by fathers.¹⁴ Demands for long-term care services grew as countries implemented public health restrictions to prevent elderly persons and persons with disabilities from contracting the virus.

FIGURE 4. Summary of measures targeting unpaid care work in the COVID-19 Global Gender Response Tracker



Overwhelmingly, governments did not step up to burgeoning care requirements. Almost 60 per cent of 226 countries and territories covered by the COVID-19 Global Gender Response Tracker did not register a single measure related to unpaid care work. Measures that extended parental or family leave or promoted flexible working conditions were most common but remained insufficient. Among care measures that were taken, policies often offered limited coverage, duration and benefit size. As feminist movements and women's

rights organizations have advocated, improving care infrastructure and transforming gender social norms around care work remain priority issues around the world in terms of achieving gender equality and sustainable development.¹⁵

The following section highlights policy innovations to support long-term and parental care work, both paid and unpaid. These encompassed expanding access to unpaid leave policies and strengthening care services.

4.1 Expanding access to unpaid leave

Expanding protections for informal caregivers

Belgium



SOCIAL PROTECTION

Family, parental or childcare leave

DESCRIPTION

Leave benefits for informal caregivers were expanded in Belgium during the pandemic. From September 2020, workers in the private sector and contract staff in the public sector who serve in informal caregiving roles were able to request Caregiver Leave from their employer and the National Employment Office (ONEM). Informal caregivers include private and public workers with a work contract and state and regional staff. Eligible beneficiaries include anyone who provides support to someone who is at-risk due to age or is in a state of ill health or disability, including non-family or household members. The leave can be taken in the form of reduction in work by 50 per cent, 80 per cent or full interruption and provides access to a corresponding fixed interruption allowance for those eligible. The maximum leave period allowed is between three and six months conditional on the form of work reduction taken. The

measure also provides legal protection against dismissal for caregivers taking leave and adjudication procedures, if necessary.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Expanding leave policies

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- Promoted income stability for those taking time off work for care duties
- Programme was designed to benefit the primary caregiver, regardless of their gender

WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

National Employment Office

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Creation of systems to verify informal caregivers, particularly among non-familial persons
- Allowing for flexibility in benefits based on care needs

Salary guarantee for employed caregivers

Cuba



SOCIAL PROTECTION

Family, parental or childcare leave

DESCRIPTION

The Government of Cuba provided a salary guarantee for working parents or relatives who have caregiving responsibilities for minors whose school was suspended. The benefit covered 100 per cent of wages in the first month and 60 per cent for the remaining time of school closures. These benefits were extended through the duration of the school suspensions. Additionally, unpaid leave was extended for working mothers on maternity leave and unable to return to work due to COVID-19 measures.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Expanding leave policies

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- Promotes income stability for those taking time off work for care duties
- Benefits primary caregiver regardless of their gender

WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

Ministry of Labour and Social Security

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Caregivers outside of the formal labour market, such as informal or domestic care workers, may be overlooked as potential beneficiaries
- Identifying if reduced wage amount is enough to sustain family's livelihood in the long term

Compensation for employees with caregiving responsibilities

Lithuania



SOCIAL PROTECTION

Family, parental or childcare leave

DESCRIPTION

Lithuania issued electronic certificates of incapacity to work for those unable to work during the pandemic because of closed schools or nurseries during the emergency quarantine period. The electronic certificate ensures the National Social Insurance Fund will pay 66 per cent of the recipients' wage from the first day they are unable to work, up to 60 days. Eligible beneficiaries of the benefit are parents, foster parents, grandparents, caretakers, or custodians with children up to primary school age or children with disabilities under the age of 21. The benefit was implemented in February 2020 and expired with the end of the emergency period in May 2022. It is estimated that 50,000 people benefitted from this measure.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Expanding leave policies

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- Eligible beneficiaries of the policy include a wide range of potential caregivers, such as parents, foster-parents, grandparents, caretakers, or custodians
- Streamlines procedures for caregivers to acquire benefits

WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

Minister for Health and the Minister for Social Security and Labour

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Improving administrative infrastructure to enable policy implementation, such as systems to authorize and issue electronic certificates
- Transferring benefit between caregivers may create logistical challenges

Pandemic leave policy

Trinidad and Tobago



SOCIAL PROTECTION

Family, parental or childcare leave

DESCRIPTION

The Ministry of Labour introduced a "pandemic leave" as a new classification of paid leave for public officers, including those not typically eligible for sick leave. People who have fallen ill and exhausted their sick leave were able to proceed on extended sick leave, followed by pandemic leave. Pandemic leave also applied to those workers who were not eligible for sick leave. Additionally, the measure supported working parents without access to a support system to care for their children during the closure of schools. In households with two working parents, one parent was encouraged to stay at home while the other reports to work. Employers were encouraged to promote remote work and in cases where alternative work arrangements cannot be made, the employee was allowed to stay at home with their dependents without being penalized by either disciplinary action or by non-payment of salary.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Expanding leave policies

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- Expanded number and type of employees eligible to receive leave benefits
- Ensured that parents with caregiving responsibilities are granted leave
- Protected workers from loss of income or job loss in case of extended illness

WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

Ministry of Labour

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Ensuring that employers have adequate staffing and support in light of flexibility considerations
- Improving administrative infrastructure to enable policy implementation

4.2 Developing care infrastructure and services

National Campaign for Equal Care

Argentina



SOCIAL PROTECTION

Childcare services, including for essential workers

DESCRIPTION

As part of the “Campaña Nacional Cuidar en Igualdad: Necesidad, Derecho y Trabajo (National Campaign for Equal Care: Necessity, Rights and Work),” the Ministry of Women, Gender, and Diversity highlighted care burdens during COVID-19 to design comprehensive public care policies that transform the landscape of care work in the country through engagement with the state, markets, communities, and homes. The approach aims to promote gender equality in the distribution of care work and expand care infrastructure nationally with respect to regional diversity and needs. A main initiative under the Campaign focuses on “Territorial Parliaments for Care” which bring together stakeholders for the purpose of knowledge exchange, including on related topics such as local care strategies, collective vision-making, surveying local needs and proposing joint forms of action. To lead the work and monitor progress, the Interministerial Board of Care Policies was created bringing together 15 government agencies to drive forward and monitor the progress of the care agenda.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Developing care infrastructure and services

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- Promoting stakeholder engagement through knowledge exchange forums
- Builds care infrastructure through new Interministerial Board of Care Policies which can promote a national cross-sectoral agenda on care
- Emphasis on understanding care in localized context

WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

Multistakeholder group coordinated by the Ministry of Women, Gender, and Diversity, including members from other ministries and national public bodies

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Developing effective monitoring and evaluation of care policies for knowledge sharing

Before the pandemic,

**WOMEN SPENT
MORE THAN**

3 times



as many hours as men on unpaid care and domestic work

Building on the 2017 National Care Plan

Cabo Verde



UNPAID CARE WORK

Long-term care for older persons and care for persons with disabilities

DESCRIPTION

The Government launched a programme targeting older persons living alone who attend day centres that provide care, meals and opportunities for socializing. As the pandemic movement restrictions were implemented, the Government shifted these centres towards supporting home-based care by recruiting social workers, caregivers and volunteers. Individuals could receive assistance in performing daily tasks, such as cleaning, food preparation, accessing prescribed medications and personal hygiene. The programme aimed to reach over 700 elderly people and was implemented in coordination with municipalities, civil society and non-governmental organizations. This built on the 2017 National Care Plan for the implementation of a National Care System (Resolution N^o 143/2017). The Ministry of Family and Social Inclusion portfolio had a key role in the Plan, in partnership with UN Women Cabo Verde and

the Network of Cape Verdean Women Parliamentarians. It comprises actions on childcare and long-term care, including professional training for caregivers of people living in poverty, the creation of a national care service network and the promotion of policies to redistribute unpaid care work.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Developing care infrastructure and services

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- Provides support and services to older persons living alone with care needs
- Strengthens pre-existing care policy and adapts to COVID-19 demands

WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

Government of Cabo Verde

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Reaching people who require long-term care who lack access to long-term care facilities

Childcare Assistance Programme

Guyana



SOCIAL PROTECTION

Cash for care

DESCRIPTION

The Government expanded the Childcare Assistance Programme to provide free childcare to frontline workers who are providing key public or essential services during the COVID-19 pandemic. The programme made direct payment for services to childcare facilities. It was piloted to benefit frontline workers, including health care professionals, police and security officers, domestic workers, and supermarket employees with children under age seven. Additionally, funds were provided to childcare facilities to safely reopen and operate and were provided training by the Ministry of Health. As of December 2020, 124 licensed childcare facilities were each given GYD 50,000 to promote safe operations.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Developing care infrastructure and services

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- Supported families with childcare responsibilities, as well as childcare service providers
- Provides funding to improve condition and capacity of childcare facilities
- Recognized broad categories of essential workers, including domestic workers and supermarket employees

WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

Ministry of Human Services and Social Security

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Care workers outside of the formal labour market, such as informal or domestic care workers, may be overlooked as potential beneficiaries

Childcare support in the Short-term Economic Recovery Plan (PENJANA)

Malaysia



SOCIAL PROTECTION

Childcare services, including for essential workers

DESCRIPTION

As part of the Short-term Economic Recovery Plan (PENJANA), the Government introduced measures to support parents and childcare service providers. To ease the transition to working-from-home, the Government supported households with working parents with a MYR 800 e-voucher for childcare and increased the income tax benefit. At the same time, the Government invested in expanding and supporting childcare infrastructure. Registered childcare service institutions were eligible for a one-off MYR 5,000 grant, while registered homebased care providers could access MYR 1,500. Additionally, the Government provided an incentive of MYR 900 to participants of early childcare and education courses to promote certification of unregistered service providers and accelerated the mostly online certification process. In total, the care provisions under the package aimed to support

5,000 households, 8,000 childcare centers, and 10,000 new early education practitioners.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Developing care infrastructure and services

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- Comprehensive support package provides support to parents and care service providers, and invests in increasing number of caregivers
- Integrated care as essential part of economic recovery

WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Providing childcare support parents without access to e-vouchers
- Enabling informal caregivers to participate in the care certification process

“For our heroes” benefits for caregivers

Serbia



SOCIAL PROTECTION

Childcare services, including for essential workers

DESCRIPTION

The Government of Serbia took several measures to provide financial recognition to healthcare workers due to the increased demand for their labour during COVID-19. In December 2020, the Government created a temporary “For our heroes” Convenience Card to provide additional benefits to employees, workers and volunteers who supported the COVID-19 response. Card holders were entitled to discounts for goods, privileged access to public services, pre-school childcare, and day care for children. The Government encouraged the widespread acceptance of the card across local public and private institutions through cooperative partnerships. Additionally, in April 2020, the Ministry of Finance announced a 10 per cent salary increase for care workers in recognition of their performance during the pandemic. Additional cash transfers were also made available to caregivers and health providers throughout 2020.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Developing care infrastructure and services

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- Promoted compensation and recognition for care workers in light of increased demand for services
- Engaged partners in public and private institutions in providing benefits
- Provided various types of benefit, many of which were not restricted to one-off use

WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

Government of Serbia

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Ensuring eligibility of cardholder enrollment in the benefit programme to prevent corruption
- Finding partners across public and private sectors that will partake in the scheme and provide adequate benefits

Red Amachay Network

Peru



SOCIAL PROTECTION

Long-term care for older persons and care for persons with disabilities

DESCRIPTION

To improve and expand care infrastructure which placed increase demands on womens' labour during the pandemic, the Government of Peru implemented the Support Network for the Elderly at High Risk and Persons with Severe Disabilities, also known as the Amachay Network, to coordinate intersectoral and cross-governmental response to COVID-19. Working across 152 municipalities, the Amachay Network coordinates local, regional, and national response to provide multi-faceted support to at-risk populations. It includes direct outreach through phone calls and home visits to promote access to counselling and public health services, including vaccination. It also responds to health and social protection alerts on topics such as abandonment, food need, or violence. The network arose out of necessity during the pandemic but aims to serve as a foundation for longer-term care infrastructure. By October 2020, the Government reported that 380,000 people had benefited from the Network and was predicted to expand to more than 400,000 beneficiaries. The creation of the Amachay Network contributed to the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion winning the 2020 Good Practices in Public Management Award.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Developing care infrastructure and services

WHY IS IT A PROMISING SOLUTION?

- Comprehensive approach to developing long-term care infrastructure and support for persons with disabilities
- Measure includes cross-cutting dimensions, addressing domestic violence, food insecurity and public health care
- Prioritized intersectional and localized approach to reach at-risk people across regions, focusing on protection of the elderly population

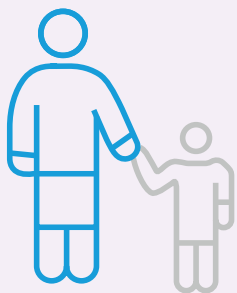
WHO IS IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY?

Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion, in coordination with national ministries and agencies, and regional and local governments

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Developing comprehensive network multi-sectoral government coordination, monitoring and budgeting
- Building strong response mechanisms and adequate staffing required to provide efficient and urgent care

Globally,
MORE THAN



2
MILLION
MOTHERS
left the labour
force in 2020

Source: ILO 2022; OECD 2021.

During the pandemic,



62% OF
MOTHERS



compared to
22% OF FATHERS

in OECD countries said they took on most or all of the additional childcare work

5. CONCLUSIONS: WHAT ARE THESE PRACTICES TELLING US?

Learning from the COVID-19 policy response and the most promising practices contributing to gender equality highlighted in this publication shows that:

WE CAN DESIGN POLICIES THAT DRIVE TRUE CHANGE: IT IS A MATTER OF CHOICE.

- Every country can design gender-sensitive policies. Even when facing a crisis and in low-income countries, we found positive examples of measures that identify and address gender issues and women's economic security and recovery.

WHEN CRISES COME, COUNTRIES WITH GENDER EQUALITY CAPACITIES ARE BETTER PREPARED TO RESPOND.

- All these good practices started with a genuine concern around women's needs. This concern was accompanied with the capacities to conduct the necessary assessments and ask relevant questions: Who are those that will not be reached by regular social protection? How are existing gender inequalities, like those in the uneven distribution of care, affecting women and men differently? How can digital technologies help respond to gender-based violence? Only with the capacities to ask and address the right questions can we reach a well-informed response.

A STRONG NETWORK OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS FACILITATES AN EFFECTIVE RESPONSE TO CRISIS, AS WELL AS AN EFFECTIVE DELIVERY.

- Half of the promising practices relied on existing civil society networks to implement measures, so governments that were already in contact with such networks were ready to implement straight away. In the overall global response, we see that countries with strong civil society participation developed gender-sensitive measures 5.4 more times than those with weak civic spaces. Adequate support and funding for civil society organisations is needed, however, as too much reliance on civil society may lead to overburdening women's organizations.

INCREMENTAL INNOVATION CAN LEAD TO SHIFTING SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STRUCTURES THAT GENERATE INEQUALITIES.

- Moments of crisis make governments take measures on-the-run, whether these are tested or not. This blossoming of innovative solutions demonstrated that we can only get different results if we start applying different solutions. For example, Peru piloted in-home elderly care that enabled non-institutionalized services to be tested, and led to the consolidation of care systems more responsive to people's needs.

FOR ANY POLICY: THINK FUTURE, THINK DIGITAL.

- Many of the measures included digitalization, and some of the most promising solutions aimed to accelerate the green and digital transition for all, moving towards a better future. For example,

countries like Morocco, Turkey and Argentina included the digitalization of their businesses and markets, and prioritizing the green transition, as part of women's economic security and recovery measures. When cash transfers or payments moved to digital, people relied on phones. Women are less likely to have a phone, and even when they did, they often did not have control of the money. For this transition to be inclusive of women, we need to close persistent gender access gaps and eliminate the digital gender divide.

CARE AT THE CENTER, AS A HUMAN NEED.

- New forms of providing care were tested and proved to be viable. The unpaid care structure that sustains societies and economies became visible to billions of people. Millions of women had to leave their employment to carry out care responsibilities. This demonstrated that we cannot take the unpaid work of women for granted anymore. Some good practices arose: for example, economic support to unpaid care providers; flexible working arrangements; or massive social norms interventions to redistribute care within households.

TARGET INDIVIDUALS RATHER THAN HOUSEHOLDS.

- If those benefits are provided at household level, there is no guarantee that women and girls will benefit. When transfers are provided to households, the income is often controlled by men. When governments aimed at ensuring economic livelihoods for their citizens, many of them explicitly prioritized women as individuals, identified the bottlenecks for women to effectively access and use these funds, and took action to address them.

LINK MEASURES FOR A COORDINATED POLICY RESPONSE.

- Because many of the measures were developed in an emergency situation, they were at first disconnected from the rest of the activities that other ministries were undertaking. This ran the risk of being ineffective. For example, launching support to survivors of violence without having the social protection infrastructure such as centers and personnel to deliver these services, or when cash transfer programs are not coupled with financial and digital inclusion initiatives, women may not have access to them. After the first months of the pandemic, some countries developed national action plans for a more coordinated response, and integrated care, gender-based violence and women's empowerment at the center of the economic recovery.

ACCURATE ADMINISTRATIVE DATA IS PARAMOUNT TO WOMEN'S ECONOMIC SECURITY IN TIMES OF ECONOMIC CRISIS.

- **Social registries and other administrative databases** proved to be essential to women's economic security. Public registries were used to determine the list of beneficiaries of cash transfers, where women are less likely to be included. Sometimes citizens had to register online to receive the benefits, making it more difficult for women and excluded groups. Countries with sex disaggregated data on who has access to what, and institutionalized social registries were in a better position to expand their reach.

While the measures contained in this volume show that much can be done to respond to an emergency, it is critical that these are now sustained over time. They underline the importance of combating discriminatory social norms, fostering political commitment, and strengthening institutional mechanisms for gender equality in 'normal times' to ensure adequate representation during emergency response and recovery.

APPENDIX 1:

METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

Measures were selected based on their potential to provide women with access to protective services or offer relief from deprivation, prevent women from falling into economically or socially vulnerable situations, promote the equal participation of women and girls in all aspects of public life, and transform unequal power structures as part of COVID-19 recovery.¹⁶

Each measure was evaluated with a score of one to five, with five representing the most promising considering the above criteria as well as overall transformative potential, innovation and scalability. Once the scoring was completed and peer reviewed, policies with scores of four or five became candidates for inclusion. This range of criteria ensured that selected policies had the potential to be adapted to various purposes in social policy formulation, with an eye to individual and collective benefits.¹⁷ This group of measures was further reviewed with intersectionality and regional lenses to ensure representation, leading to the inclusion of some measures originally assigned a score of three. This resulted in highlighting measures supporting people facing particularly strong barriers to service access and intersecting forms of discrimination. All measures included in the final set of promising practices were thoroughly reviewed and evaluated based on in-depth desk research.

APPENDIX 2: FURTHER READING ON PROMISING POLICIES

Violence against women

ENSURING AND EXPANDING ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND SERVICES

COUNTRY OR TERRITORY	POLICY TITLE	REFERENCES
Fiji	Gender-based violence emergency response group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cowley, A. 2020. “Fiji Gender, Disability and Inclusion Analysis COVID-19 and TC Harold: June 2020 [Version 1].” CARE. June. UN Women Asia and the Pacific. 2018. “Fiji National Service Delivery Protocol for Responding to Cases of Gender Based Violence: Standard Operating Procedures for Interagency Response among Social Services, Police, Health and Legal/Justice Providers.” February. Singh, R., S. Lal, M. Khan, A. Patel, R. Chand and D.K. Jain. 2021. “The COVID-19 Experience in the Fiji Islands: Some Lessons for Crisis Management for Small Island Developing States of the Pacific Region and Beyond.” New Zealand Economic Papers 56 (1), pp. 67–72.
Canada	National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government of Canada. 2021. Budget 2021: Archived – Part 3, A Resilient and Inclusive Recovery. Government of Canada. 2022. “National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence Backgrounder.” 9 November. Government of Canada. 2022. National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence. 9 November.
Guatemala	Virtual access to justice for survivors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> República. 2020. “CSJ Order to Enable Courts to Deal with Domestic Violence.” 16 April. UN Office on Drugs and Crime. 2021. The Impact of COVID-19 on Criminal Justice System Responses to Gender-Based Violence against Women: A Global Review of Emerging Evidence. April.
Liberia	Expanding legal framework for prosecuting gender-based violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presidency of the Republic of Liberia. 2020. Statement by His Excellency Dr. George Manneh Weah President of the Republic of Liberia during the General Debate of the 75th Regular Session of the United Nations General Assembly. 23 September. RFI. 2020. “Liberia President Weah Declares Rape a National Emergency after Protests.” 13 September.

COUNTRY OR TERRITORY	POLICY TITLE	REFERENCES
Kyrgyzstan	The first government-led crisis center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Angitta, K. 2020. “A Total of 7,500 people Contacted Sejiwa Psychology in 12 Days.” Medcom.id. 14 May. • City Hall of Bishkek. 2021. “The First Municipal Crisis Center Was Opened in the Capital.” • Kabar. 2021. “The First Municipal Crisis Center “Ayalzat” Opened in Bishkek.” 24 February.
Indonesia	Sejiwa Psychiatric Health Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Jakarta Post. 2020. “Psychological Consultation Hotline Launched in Virus-Stricken Indonesia.” 29 April. • UNFPA. 2020. “Reaching Domestic Violence Survivors Amid the Pandemic.” 10 June.

TACKLING HARMFUL GENDER SOCIAL NORMS

COUNTRY OR TERRITORY	POLICY TITLE	REFERENCES
Cabo Verde	National Football League “Men against Violence” campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN Cabo Verde. 2020. “16 Days of Activism.” 25 November. • UN Sustainable Development Group. 2020. “In Cabo Verde, a ‘New Masculinity’ to Help Stop Gender-Based Violence.” 31 December.
Netherlands	“It doesn’t stop until you do something” campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government of the Netherlands. Undated. “I suspect domestic violence.” • Netherlands Times. 2020. “Campaign Against Domestic Abused Launched with ‘Tensions Rising’ at Home.” 25 April.
Peru	“Aurora accompanies you” campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government of Peru. 2021. “MIMP Launched the Radio Program ‘Aurora Accompanies You’ to Prevent Gender Violence.” 16 July.
Somalia	Training on gender-based violence prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN-Habitat. 2021. “UN-Habitat, Local Government and the EU Join Forces to Combat Gender-Based Violence in Mogadishu through COVID-19 Awareness Forums.” June.

Women's economic security

SUPPORTING BASIC NEEDS

COUNTRY OR TERRITORY	POLICY TITLE	REFERENCES
Spain	Minimum basic income: Eurofound (2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>New minimum living income introduced, measure ES-2020-23/878 (measures in Spain)</i>, EU PolicyWatch, Dublin, "https://static.eurofound.europa.eu/covid19db/cases/ES-2020-23_878.html"; https://www.healthplanspain.com/blog/expat-tips/1726-minimum-vital-income-spain.html#:~:text=The%20amount%20of%20the%20Minimum,an%20individual%20beneficiary%3A%20EUR%20565.37 • Arriba González de Durana, A. and Rodríguez-Cabrero, G. (2021). <i>New developments in the national guaranteed minimum income scheme in Spain</i>, ESPN Flash Report 2021/15, European Social Policy Network (ESPN), Brussels: European Commission.
Chile	Social Insurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gentilini, U et al. (2022) <i>Social Protection and Jobs Responses to COVID-19: A Real-Time Review of Country Measures</i>. Washington, DC: World Bank. https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/entities/publication/fa7a2f3c-efbd-5950-bfac-4b2b4bfc8cad • <i>Un impulso al regreso y contratación de trabajadoras y trabajadores en el contexto de la pandemia del Covid-19, Subsidio al Empleo</i>, https://www.subsidioempleo.cl/empresas/index.html • https://sence.gob.cl/personas/noticias/presidente-sebastian-pinera-lanzo-nuevo-subsidio-al-empleo-con-foco-en-mujeres-jovenes-y-personas-con-discapacidad#:~:text=Para%20los%20j%C3%B3venes%20entre%2018,mayor%2C%20de%20%24270%20mil%20pesos
Pakistan	Ehsaas emergency cash programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Center for Global Development. 2020. "Women's Access to Cash Transfers in Light of COVID-19: The Case of Pakistan." 30 June. • The Express Tribune. 2021. "'Ehsaas Cash Emergency' Ranked Among World's Top 4 Social Protection Initiatives." 15 May. • World Economic Forum. 2020. "COVID-19: Using Cash Payments to Protect the Poor in Pakistan." 5 May. • World Economic Forum. 2020. "COVID-19 and the pursuit of financial inclusion in Pakistan." 3 June. https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/06/covid-19-pursuit-financial-inclusion-pakistan/

COUNTRY OR TERRITORY	POLICY TITLE	REFERENCES
Brazil	Emergency Aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blofield, M., C. Giamb Bruno and J. Pribble. 2021. “Breadth and Sufficiency of Cash Transfer Responses in Ten Latin American Countries During the First 12 Months of the Covid-19 Pandemic.” CEQ Working Paper 114. September. New Orleans: Commitment to Equity, Tulane University. Lara De Arruda, P., M. Lazarotto de Andrade, T. Falcão, D. Teixeira Barbosa and M. Morgandi. 2022. “Challenges and Potentialities for Implementing Social Protection Responses to Emergency through Decentralized Administration: Lessons from Brazil’s Auxílio Emergencial.” Technical Note No. 3. Washington, DC: World Bank. Ministry of Development and Social Assistance, Family and Fight against Hunger. 2022. “Emergency Aid.” Government of Brazil.
Dominican Republic	“Overcome” Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presidency of the Dominican Republic. Undated. “Supérate.” Presidency of the Dominican Republic. 2021. “Government Launches New Social Program ‘Supérate’; Guarantee Food Security and Decent Jobs.” 4 January. Presidency of the Dominican Republic. 2022. “Government Delivers ‘Social Digital Basket’ to 2,000 Women Beneficiaries of the SUPERATE Program.” 6 April.
Lao People’s Democratic Republic	Income support for garment workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ILO. 2021. “Income Support to Help 17,000 Garment Workers in Lao PDR Hit by COVID-19.” 23 February.
Senegal	“Household Food Basket” Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. 2020. “Senegal: The ‘Household Food Basket’ Initiative has been Launched to Respond to COVID-19.” 24 April.
Togo	Novissi Solidarity Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Debenedetti, Luciana. 2021. “Togo’s Novissi Cash Transfer: Designing and Implementing a Fully Digital Social Assistance Program during COVID-19.” Innovations for Policy Action. July. Government of Togo. Undated. “Novissi.” INCLUDE. 2020. “Novissi Solidarity Fund: Exemplary Cash Transfers During COVID-19.” Simonite, T. 2020. “A Clever Strategy to Distribute COVID Aid – with Satellite Data.” Wired. 17 December. World Bank. 2021. “Prioritizing the Poorest and Most Vulnerable in West Africa: Togo’s Novissi Platform for Social Protection Uses Machine Learning, Geospatial Analytics, and Mobile Phone Metadata for the Pandemic Response.” 13 April.

SUPPORTING A MORE INCLUSIVE LABOUR MARKET

COUNTRY OR TERRITORY	POLICY TITLE	REFERENCES
Australia	Women in STEM Cadetships and Advanced Apprenticeships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Education. Undated. "Women in STEM Cadetships and Apprenticeships." Government of Australia. Department of Education. 2022. "Outcomes of the Women in STEM Cadetships and Advanced Apprenticeships Program Round 2 Announced." Government of Australia. 1 December.
Chile	Employment subsidy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government of Chile. Undated. "Employment Subsidy: A Boost to the Return and Hiring of Workers in the Context of the COVID-19 Pandemic." National Training and Employment Service. Undated. "President Sebastián Piñera Launched a New Employment Subsidy Focused on Women, Youth and People with Disabilities." Government of Chile.
Jordan	Youth, Technology and Jobs Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship. Undated. "Youth, Technology & Jobs Project." Government of Jordan. World Bank. 2023. "Jordan Youth, Technology, and Jobs Project." 20 January.
Kazakhstan	COVID-19 Solidarity Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Atameken: The National Chamber of Entrepreneurs. Undated. "Entrepreneurs Have Started Training on the Project 'One Village – One Product' for the Development of Small and Medium Business in Rural Areas." UNDP. Undated. COVID-19 Solidarity Fund for Kazakhstan. Project document.
Morocco	ADS Coopsclub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ADS Coopsclub. Undated. "Coopsclub: The Power of Social Marketing." UN Women. 2020. "The COVID-19 Crisis in Morocco Disrupts Value Chains for Women's Cooperatives." 22 July.

GENDER INCLUSIVE BUSINESS SUPPORT

COUNTRY OR TERRITORY	POLICY TITLE	REFERENCES
Egypt	Gender quotas for COVID-19 benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daily News Egypt. 2020. "Egypt Offers Incentives for Non-Banking Financial Activities Aimed at Supporting Women." 29 December.
State of Palestine	Sustainability Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alliance for Financial Inclusion. 2022. "Palestine." Policy Catalogue: Women-Led MSME Access to Financing. 24 August. Palestine Monetary Authority. Undated. "Sustainability Fund." Palestine Monetary Authority. 2022. "The Palestine Monetary Authority Holds a Workshop for Female Entrepreneurs About the Sources of Project Finance." 22 June.
Turkey	Cooperatives Support Programme (KOOP-DES)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anadolu Ajansi. 2021. "Minister Pekcan: Within the Scope of KOOP-DES, Grant Support of up to 150 thousand Liras to our Women's Cooperatives Will Continue in 2021." 25 January. Ministry of Trade. Undated. "KOOP-DES Support Program of Cooperatives (KOOP-DES)." Government of Turkey. TRT Haber. 2020. "Grant Support up to 150 thousand Liras to Women's Cooperatives." 10 July.
South Africa	Debt Relief Finance Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Small Business Development. Undated. "Debt Relief Finance Scheme." Government of South Africa. Government of South Africa. Undated. "COVID-19 Support to Business."

Unpaid care work

EXPANDING ACCESS TO LEAVE POLICIES

COUNTRY OR TERRITORY	POLICY TITLE	REFERENCES
Belgium	Expanding protections for informal caregivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of National Employment. 2021. "Infosheet T164 Leave for Informal Caregivers." 20 August. Government of Belgium.
Cuba	Salary guarantee for employed caregivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Justice. 2020. "Official Gazette No. 39 Ordinance of 16 June 2020. Resolution 19/20 (GOC2020-419-O39)." 16 June. Government of Cuba.

COUNTRY OR TERRITORY	POLICY TITLE	REFERENCES
Lithuania	Compensation for employees with caregiving responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eurofound. 2020. "Compensation for Employees Looking after Children or Disabled Persons while in Quarantine." EU PolicyWatch. 6 April.
Trinidad and Tobago	Pandemic leave policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development. 2020. "Opening Remarks by Senator the Honourable Jennifer Baptiste Primus, Minister of Labour and Small Enterprise Development." 15 March. Government of Trinidad and Tobago. Loop News. 2020. "Pandemic Leave Being Considered for Eligible Workers due to COVID-19." 15 March.

DEVELOPING CARE INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

COUNTRY OR TERRITORY	POLICY TITLE	REFERENCES
Argentina	National Campaign for Equal Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government of Argentina. Undated. "Interministerial Board of Care Policies." Ministry of Women, Gender and Diversity. Undated. "National Campaign for Equal Care." Government of Argentina. Ministry of Women, Gender and Diversity. 2022. "More Support for Equal Care: State Agencies Highlighted the Bill." 12 July. Government of Argentina.
Cabo Verde	Building on the 2017 National Care Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UN Women. 2021. "Putting Gender Equality at the Centre of Social Protection Strategies in Sub-Saharan Africa: How Far Have We Come?" Policy Brief No. 24. New York: UN Women. UN Women and UNDP. 2022. "Chapter 4 – Unpaid care: Fragile Arrangements, Meagre Response." Government responses to COVID-19: Lessons on Gender equality for a World in Turmoil. New York: UN Women and UNDP.
Guyana	Childcare Assistance Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Public Information. 2020. "Licensed Childcare Facilities to Benefit from Childcare Subsidy Programme." 14 December. Government of Guyana.
Malaysia	Childcare support in the Short-term Economic Recovery Plan (PENJANA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Straits Times. 2020. "Penjana: 7,000 Childcare Operators Nationwide to Receive Grants." 27 June. The Star. 2020. "RM5,000 Allocation to Help Nurseries Carry Out New Healthcare SOP." 6 June. TRP. 2020. "Penjana: Childcare Aid for Working Parents." 5 June.

COUNTRY OR TERRITORY	POLICY TITLE	REFERENCES
Serbia	"For our heroes" benefits for caregivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government of Serbia. Undated. "Support Program: For our Heroes." Government of the Republic of Serbia. 2020. Conclusion on the Establishment of a Temporary Project – Benefit Card 'For our Heroes': 146/2020-32. 4 December. Kurir. 2020. "This is When the Payment of 750 Euros to Employees Begins: Healthcare Workers Will Receive an Increased Salary Today." 5 May.
Peru	Red Amachay Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government of Peru. 2020. "Midis Won with the Amachay Network the Good Practices Award in Public Management in the Category of Older Adults in the Social Inclusion Category." 26 November. Government of Peru. 2020. "Midis Launches the Portal 'Join the Amachay Network' to Include More Vulnerable People Who Urgently Need Health Care against COVID-19." 25 October. Government of Peru. 2023. "Support Network for the Elderly at High Risk and Persons with Severe Disabilities." 29 January.

ENDNOTES AND REFERENCES

Endnotes

- 1 UN General Assembly. 2023.
- 2 UNDP and UN Women. 2021a.
- 3 UN Women. 2020a.
- 4 UN Women and UNDP. 2022.
- 5 UNDP and UN Women. 2021b.
- 6 Measures are evaluated as promising based on the features of their design rather than measured impact. Such impact studies remain a vital area of ongoing research.
- 7 UN Women and UNDP. 2022.
- 8 UN Women. 2020b.
- 9 Just 13 countries registered such a comprehensive response: **Albania, Belgium, Greece, Norway, Portugal; Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Colombia, Ecuador, Panama, Paraguay; Cambodia, Fiji, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu; Kyrgyzstan, Nepal; Côte d'Ivoire, Uganda.** Non-UN Member States were excluded from this analysis. See page 39 of UN Women and UNDP 2022 for more information about the framework used to define a comprehensive response.
- 10 Two-spirit is an English term used to broadly capture a concept used by some Indigenous cultures to indicate a person whose sexual orientation or gender or spiritual identity comprises both male and female spirits. See Government of Canada 2022 for more details.
- 11 ILO. 2018.
- 12 ILO. 2021.
- 13 OECD. 2021.
- 14 ILO. 2022.
- 15 UN Women. 2021.
- 16 Adapted from Devereux, S. and R. Sabates-Wheeler, 2004.
- 17 These guidelines for assessment are based on insights from the 2015 independent evaluation of UNDP's contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment as well as the 2016 guidance on the use of the UNDP Gender Marker for tracking investments and expenditures. These policy interventions hold potential to build forward better, with greater resilience and gender justice, and towards equality.

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