

Whats New, Webby?



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Covering COVID-19

While there is little doubt that the COVID pandemic will eventually be conquered, it has left the world to cope with long lasting damage. The damage has not been uniform. Rather, pre-existing inequalities have determined who will be hit the hardest. As a new report puts it, “Women and girls are disproportionately affected by the crisis simply because of their sex.”

The report ‘Gender inequality and the COVID-19 crisis: A Human Development perspective’, a collaborative publication of the Human Development Report Office and the Gender Team, examines the gender differentiated impacts of the COVID-19 crisis through sex-disaggregated data, and presents the evidence in the form of data dashboards.

The first part analyses countries with respect to two indicators on capabilities at risk – health and economic. These are the major contributors since women are on the frontline on both these fronts constituting at least 70 per cent. On the economic front women are similarly vulnerable, often found in the informal sector, unprotected by labour rights.

The second part of this report depicts a series of measures of safe space at the household, unequal food distribution and chores, unpaid labour hours. The analysis goes beyond the household and tried to examine the degree of agency that women actually experience, on the premise that agency gives women the ability and freedom to make their own decisions and constitutes a powerful tool for resilience and overcoming new barriers.

The report represents a laudable effort to use sex-segregated data in order to derive relatively fine-grained insights into the gender implications of human crises. The success of any policy reforms based on this report’s findings will be reflected in how effectively such reforms help to reduce gender based vulnerability and increase the resilience of women and girls.

The report may be accessed here:

http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/covid-19_and_human_development_-_gender_dashboards_final.pdf 📄