

New report sheds light on the impact of COVID-19 on gender and sustainability

July 9 2020, by Paul Jordan



Credit: Pixabay/CC0 Public Domain

Professor Sophie Harman from Queen Mary's School of Politics and International Relations was one of the lead authors on a major new report from U.N. Women, the United Nations organization dedicated to

gender equality and the empowerment of women.

COVID-19 has been declared a public health emergency of international concern which, according to the U.N. Women report, can exacerbate [gender inequality](#) and threatens to derail hard-won progress on equality.

Sustainable Development Goals

The report, published as part of a series, Spotlight, on the U.N.'s Sustainable Development Goals, focuses on the socioeconomic and political implications of COVID-19 on women and gender across five key areas. Specific parts of the U.N.'s SDGs covered in the report include poverty, quality education and gender equality.

The paper also presents the latest evidence on the gendered impact of the pandemic and reflects on the long-term impact of the crisis on the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The ambitious agenda seeks to end poverty by 2030 and promote shared economic prosperity, social development and environmental protection for all countries.

To date, more men than women have died from COVID-19 but as the report highlights, a lack of data on testing and infection rates by sex leaves many questions unanswered, including risks and exposure among different groups of women and men.

Recommendations for the future

Public health emergencies often exacerbate long-standing systemic health and social inequalities. The response to the pandemic moving forward, according to the report, must include support for vulnerable groups, including women and girls who were already at risk due to pre-

existing inequalities. The findings also show that this group is also likely to be disproportionately affected as the pandemic further heightened gender and other forms of inequality in society.

Universal access to sexual and [reproductive health](#) and reproductive rights is another key recommendation of the report. Attention should also be given to sanitation, particularly with regard to girls and women and those in vulnerable situations.

Professor Sophie Harman, Professor of International Politics at Queen Mary said: "This Spotlight is a critical resource for [world leaders](#), [policy-makers](#), and activists in the response to COVID-19. The pandemic is a critical threat to the advancement of gender equality. We need real action now before we see a reversal in the hard-won gains in women's wellbeing and livelihoods around the world."

More information: Spotlight on gender, COVID-19 and the SDGs: Will the pandemic derail hard-won progress on gender equality?
www.unwomen.org/en/digital-lib ... ovid-19-and-the-sdgs

Provided by Queen Mary, University of London

Citation: New report sheds light on the impact of COVID-19 on gender and sustainability (2020, July 9) retrieved 19 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2020-07-impact-covid-gender-sustainability.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.