ALBANIA
The impact of COVID-19 on women’s and men’s lives and livelihoods

WHY A RAPID GENDER ASSESSMENT?

The Government of Albania introduced various restrictive measures to stop the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, including a lockdown period between 10 March and 31 May. In response to the pandemic and the relatively limited data available, UN Women Albania, with support from the government of Sweden and Joint SDG Fund, conducted a nationwide survey to assess the social and economic impact of COVID-19 on women’s and men’s lives and livelihoods. The data collection, which covered 1,300 respondents (18+ years), was conducted through telephone interviews between 13 March and 26 April 2020.

The coronavirus outbreak will have major consequences for the wealth of women, including the depletion of their spending power. The biggest losses in income for women and men were those generated from remittances, family businesses and farming.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Income</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Remittances</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>72%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Income from family businesses</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>86%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Income from farming</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>67%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Income from paid work</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>50%</td>
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Women faced more limitations than men when trying to access food (46% vs. 43%) due to market closures and the reduced opening hours of stores.

Women and men were not equally hit by job losses and reductions in paid working hours:

- 17% of men lost their jobs compared to 12% of women.
- 33% of the population faced a decrease in paid work hours, but they were still employed during the outbreak period.

More women than men anticipate difficulties paying essential outgoings if restrictive measures continue.

Self-employed women and men were the most affected by lockdown measures.

- 25% of men as employees
- 29% of women as employees
- 50% of men as self-employed
- 56% of women as self-employed

The proportion of workers who reduced their working hours.
Every second person experienced some challenges in accessing medical supplies for personal protection.

Women faced greater difficulties in accessing hygiene products and medical supplies for personal protection. Women (51%) experienced some challenges in accessing medical supplies for personal protection, whereas 25% of men faced difficulties. Women's psychological and mental health was more affected. Women experienced more challenges seeking health services. As a result of school and day-care closures, women and men spent more time playing with and teaching children. Gender discrepancies became more evident as the number of reported unpaid domestic activities increased:

- 27% of women reported increased time spent on at least three unpaid domestic activities
- 20% of men reported increased time spent on at least three unpaid domestic activities

Respondents faced greater difficulties in accessing health services and personal protective equipment, which may negatively affect women's and men's future health. As women's economic security was shaken, their share of unpaid care and domestic work increased. More women than men switched to home-based working: 51% of women vs. 27% of men worked from home instead of their usual place of work during the outbreak.