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

WHY A RAPID GENDER ASSESSMENT?

The Government of Turkey introduced various restrictive measures to stop the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, including a lockdown period between 21 March and 31 May. In response to the pandemic and the relatively limited data available, UN Women Turkey, with support from the government of Sweden, 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 1,508 respondents (15+years), was conducted through computer-assisted telephone interviews between 19 and 25 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.

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

- 19% of women lost their jobs compared to 14% of men.
- 53% of the population faced a decrease in paid work hours, but they were still employed during the outbreak period.

Women faced more limitations than men when trying to access food (31% vs. 27%) due to market closures and the reduced opening hours of stores.

Women and men anticipate difficulties paying essential outgoings if restrictive measures continue.

The proportion of workers who reduced their working hours:

- Men as employees: 48%
- Women as employees: 43%
- Men as self-employed: 72%
- Women as self-employed: 59%

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

Women and men anticipate difficulties paying essential outgoings if restrictive measures continue.

Women faced more limitations than men when trying to access food (31% vs. 27%) 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:

- 19% of women lost their jobs compared to 14% of men.
- 53% of the population faced a decrease in paid work hours, but they were still employed during the outbreak period.
More women (18%) than men (14%) worked from home instead of their usual place of work during the outbreak.

As women's economic security was shaken, their share of unpaid care and domestic work increased:
- 52% of women reported increased time spent on unpaid care work
- 51% of men reported increased time spent on unpaid care work
- 89% of women reported increased time spent on unpaid domestic work
- 69% of men reported increased time spent on unpaid domestic work

Gender discrepancies became more evident as the number of reported unpaid domestic activities increased:
- 43% of women reported increased time spent on at least three unpaid domestic activities
- 28% 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.

Women's psychological and mental health was more affected.
- 54% of women experienced more challenges seeking health services.
- 51% of men experienced more challenges seeking health services.

Respondents faced greater difficulties in accessing hygiene products and medical supplies for personal protection.
- 39% of women and 36% of men faced difficulties in accessing hygiene and sanitary products.
- 70% of women and 67% of men faced difficulties in accessing medical supplies for personal protection (masks, gloves, etc.).

69% of the population experienced some challenges in accessing medical supplies for personal protection.