

Women at the forefront of COVID-19: Voices of Gender Equality Mechanisms in the Europe and Central Asia Region

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Key COVID-19 consultations and data collection

- April 2020: **Sub-regional CSOs consultations** with 128 women`s organizations
- April – May 2020: **Rapid Gender Assessment** in 16 countries/territories measuring impact on women and men
- May 2020: **Consultations with Gender Equality Mechanisms** from 14 countries/territories

Frame of Reference

- Pre-existing conditions
- New focus and competing priorities
- Reduced resources
- Inequalities and marginalization exacerbated
- Threat to progress
- New public attention





Priorities for Ending Violence against Women

- A well-coordinated, integrated response to violence against women and girls following a **survivor-centred and human rights-based** approach
- **Transformative change in mindsets** of general public and service-providers
- Investment in primary **prevention and early intervention**

Priorities for Women` Economic Empowerment

- Targeted financial support packages for **women entrepreneurs**, including temporary measures to abolish/freeze tax sanctions and penalties
- Invest in universal **gender-responsive social protection and care infrastructure** to ensure protection for all employment (including temporary/part-time employment, flexible working arrangements where women are overrepresented)

Priorities for informed decision-making

- Improve women's **access** to information and available services
- **Close digital gender divide:** applying new information and communications technology solutions
- Putting women and girls at the forefront of pandemic response and recovery: **equal access to decision-making**
- **Risk and preparedness assessments** to inform policies, strategies and action plans

Cross-cutting

- Policies and public campaigns to **counter gender stereotypes**
- Gender Responsive **Planning and Budgeting**
- Critical to have **disaggregated data**

CSO perspectives on GEMs



Establish standing consultative mechanisms with women's organizations

Ensure that international human rights standards are upheld

Provide targeted assistance to vulnerable groups

Closing

Women's and girls' fundamental human rights must be recognized, prioritized and funded

