



**PLACING WOMEN AND GIRLS  
AT THE CENTRE**

## Emphasizing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls

To strengthen the efforts of ECOSOC and the HLPF to support gender equality as a cross-cutting issue for the achievement of the SDGs, UN DESA commissioned an analytical paper, in late 2021, to examine how well gender considerations are integrated into the work of the Council and the HLPF and to identify opportunities for expanding those efforts. This work resulted in a useful analysis of the gender dimensions of the SDGs under review in 2022. It also provided many practical recommendations to help UN DESA expand and deepen gender analysis and the mainstreaming of gender perspectives in its work in order to better support ECOSOC and the HLPF in advancing gender equality as a cross cutting issue.

To turn the recommendations into concrete actions, UN DESA developed a practical and easy-to-use Gender Checklist to help mainstream gender considerations and perspectives in the work of ECOSOC and the HLPF. The Checklist provides guidance to staff on applying gender analysis and highlighting gender dimensions in the substantive documentation, programme and deliberations of ECOSOC and the HLPF.

## Drawing attention to the issue of early adolescent fertility

In 2022, for the first time, UN DESA included estimates of birth rates for adolescents aged 10-14 years in its annual update for



© UNDP Angola/Cynthia R Matonhodze

SDG Indicator 3.7.2. Reducing adolescent fertility and addressing the multiple factors underlying it are essential for improving sexual and reproductive health and the social and economic well-being of adolescents, but data on fertility among younger adolescents were previously very limited. UN DESA undertook methodological and analytical studies to report reliable estimates for this younger age group. The data show that early adolescent childbearing is much more common in sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean than in other parts of the world. Most countries with measurable levels of early fertility recorded a reduction in early adolescent fertility since 2000. The closure of schools during the COVID-19 pandemic raised concerns that adolescent girls could be at increased risk of early marriage or childbearing. Data to assess the impact of COVID-19 on adolescent fertility are not yet available.

## Highlighting the intersecting discriminations experienced by older women

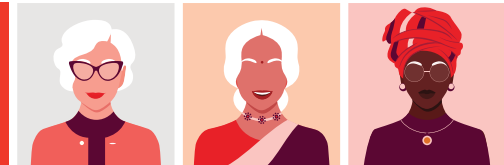
UN DESA worked with partners, in the past year, to increase the attention given to the compounded and intersectional discrimination faced by older women, particularly in situations of crisis. An [advocacy brief](#) by UN DESA, UN Women and the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons, with support from AARP<sup>1</sup>, highlighted how the intersecting discriminations that women experience in their lifetimes have a cumulative impact in old age that makes their situation more vulnerable in a crisis, including in the COVID-19 pandemic. The brief is accompanied by infographics and features new data on older women. The brief was launched at a side event during 66th session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

At the 2022 HLPF, a related side-event, co-hosted by the Stakeholder Group on Ageing, UN DESA, UN Women and the Special Procedures Office of the Independent Expert on the rights of older persons, addressed the theme "Older Women in Crises:

<sup>1</sup>AARP is a United States-based nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that empowers people to choose how they live as they age

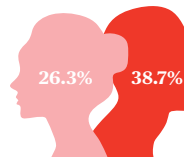
# Older Women: Inequality at the Intersection of Age and Gender

Supporting the well-being of all older women across the world demands more and better data.



Many women are confronted with economic insecurity in old age.

26.3% of working-age women worldwide are covered under a pension scheme, compared to 38.7% of men.<sup>1</sup>



In lower-middle income countries, only 8.1% of working-age women are covered under a pension scheme, compared to 20.8% of men.<sup>1</sup>

As women age, their social roles also evolve.

Women do an average of **2.5 times the amount** of unpaid care and domestic work as men do globally.<sup>3</sup>



More than half of older women aged 60 and over reported **increased time spent on unpaid care and domestic work** during the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>4</sup>

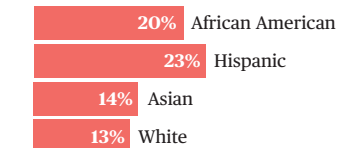


The intersecting discriminations that women experience in their lifetimes have a cumulative impact in old age that make their situation more vulnerable in a crisis.

**41% of women in the US aged 40-65** have lost job-based income since the beginning of 2020.<sup>2</sup>



**14% of women in the US aged 40-65** have lost their jobs.<sup>2</sup>



The pandemic adversely impacted older women's income and ability to work.

**61% of women aged 60-plus** reported having lost income as a result of the pandemic.<sup>4</sup>

**54% of older women aged 60-plus reported a reduction in paid working hours**, compared to 38% of men.<sup>4</sup>

The invisibility of abuse and violence against older women makes their situation more vulnerable.

**34% of women 60-plus** reported experiencing violence or knowing someone who has since the beginning of the pandemic.<sup>5</sup>

**63% of women 60-plus** think that **domestic violence** has increased, while **55%** think that **sexual harassment** has worsened.<sup>5</sup>



<sup>1</sup>International Labour Organization (2021) "https://www.ilo.org/global/publications/books/WCMS\_817572/lang-en/index.htm" World Social Protection Report 2020-2022.

<sup>2</sup>AARP survey "Women, Work, and the Road to Resilience: Working Women at Mid-Life and Beyond".

<sup>3</sup>UN DESA (2021) "https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2021/goal-05" Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

<sup>4</sup>UN Women (2021) "https://data.unwomen.org/publications/women-and-girls-left-behind-glaring-gaps-pandemic-responses" Women and Girls left behind: Glaring gaps in pandemic responses.

<sup>5</sup>UN Women (2021) "https://data.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/documents/Publications/Measuring-shadow-pandemic.pdf" Measuring the shadow pandemic: violence against women during COVID-19.



United Nations  
Department of Economic and Social Affairs



Invisible Among the Most Vulnerable.” The event sought to explore the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination faced by older women in emergencies and put forward ideas on how to address such challenges and ensure that their needs are met, adding the often overlooked perspective and consideration of older women’s well-being to the HLPF discussions.

### 8th Global Forum on Gender Statistics

Reliable statistics on the situation of women and girls relative to men and boys are vital to monitoring progress toward gender equality. Following the successful launch of the *World’s Women 2020* publication, UN DESA convened the 8th Global Forum on Gender Statistics, which was held on 30 September and 1 October 2021, with support from the Swiss Government. The Forum brought together approximately 300 experts on gender equality and gender statistics from national, regional,

and international statistical offices, other government agencies, international organizations, academia, civil society, media, the private sector, and the donor community. Compared to previous forums, the virtual format allowed for greater participation from all regions. The Forum included a keynote address by Tomas Gunnarsson, a gender photojournalist, and contributions from 39 speakers, who discussed the current and future state of gender statistics over six separate sessions. [More information on the Forum and its outcomes](#) is available.



UNITED NATIONS  
8<sup>TH</sup> GLOBAL FORUM  
ON GENDER STATISTICS  
30 SEPTEMBER / 1 OCTOBER 2021



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra  
Swiss Confederation

**30 SEP - 1 OCT 2021**  
**8th United Nations Global Forum on Gender Statistics (8GFGS)**  
Building forward fairer with gender data at the centre.



UNITED NATIONS  
8<sup>TH</sup> GLOBAL FORUM  
ON GENDER STATISTICS  
30 SEPTEMBER / 1 OCTOBER 2021