



THE WORLD POLICY FORUM

Social Realignment

Women's Economic Empowerment and the SDG: COVID-19 and Beyond – Building Back Better

Women's Economic Imperative

Speakers:

Keynote:

- **Rebeca Grynspan**, Secretary-General, Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB)

Panelists:

- **Marieme Esther Dissanou**, Manager, Affirmative Finance Action for Women in Africa, African Development Bank
- **Renana Jhabvala**, National Coordinator, Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA)
- **Simona Scarpaleggia**, Global CEO, Edge Strategy
- **Luis Guillermo Solis**, Interim Director, Kimberly Green Latin American Caribbean Center, Florida International University; Former President of the Republic of Costa Rica

Moderator:

- **Margo Thomas**, Founder & CEO, Women's Economic Imperative

Session description:

The United Nations Secretary General's High-Level Panel (UNHLP) on Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) was established by then-UNSDG Ban Ki-moon in 2016 "to address the specific economic issues that affect women and to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its promise to leave no one behind." His successor, António Guterres has affirmed and expanded this commitment recognizing that "Women's economic empowerment is at the heart of the 2030 Agenda. We will not achieve the Sustainable Development Goals if there is no accelerated action to empower women economically. We know that women's participation in all spheres of life, including in the economy, is essential to sustainable and durable peace and to the realization of human rights".

Despite progress achieved in the last years, the COVID-19 pandemic poses a threat for gender equality, as it has deepened pre-existing inequalities and structural barriers that limits equal access and distribution of opportunities in the marketplace (unemployment, low wages, vulnerable jobs), as well as at home (burden of unpaid care work, violence against women). Additionally, certain groups of women (women of color, migrants, youth) are being disproportionately affected by these limitations.



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The economic contributions of women are critical for sustainable economic growth and stability. Gender equality is a moral imperative and good economics, as it increases productivity, sinks poverty and allows societies to thrive. Estimates show that gender equality would add between US\$ 12-28 trillion to global economy in 2025. Globally, women spend more than twice as much time on unpaid care and domestic work than men on average. A recent UN WOMEN Report suggests that, as a consequence of the pandemic, 96 million people will be pushed into extreme poverty, increasing the number of women living in this condition to 435 million.

In this final decade of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, it is of a paramount importance to identify and implement policy solutions to address gender inequities and improve social, health, and political outcomes for T20 countries and globally. For this purpose, the panel aims at promoting discussions and influencing stakeholders to remove constraints and unleash women's potential in the economy and development of their societies.

Objectives:

- Highlight the intersectionalities and importance of gender economic equity across the SDGs.
- Review progress and remaining challenges for women's economic empowerment.
- Identify solutions, lessons learned and partnerships to address the gendered impacts of the Covid-19

Literature:

Policy briefs:

- Gender Economic Equity: An Imperative for the G20 - <https://t20argentina.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Gender-Economic-Equity-WEB-1.pdf>
- Gender Mainstreaming: A Strategic Approach - https://www.g20-insights.org/policy_briefs/gender-mainstreaming-a-strategic-approach/
- Economic Empowerment of Rural Women - https://www.g20-insights.org/policy_briefs/economic-empowerment-of-rural-women/
- Women in Global Care Chains: the need to tackle intersecting inequalities in G20 countries - https://www.g20-insights.org/policy_briefs/women-in-global-care-chains-the-need-to-tackle-intersecting-inequalities-in-g20-countries/

Further readings:

- First HLP-WEE report: A call to action for gender equality and women's economic empowerment (2016): <https://www2.unwomen.org/-/media/hlp%20wee/attachments/reports-toolkits/hlp-wee-report-2016-09-call-to-action-en.pdf?la=en&vs=1028>



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- Second HLP-WEE report: Taking action for transformational change on women's economic empowerment (2017): <https://www2.unwomen.org/-/media/hlp%20wee/attachments/reports-toolkits/hlp-wee-report-2017-03-taking-action-en.pdf?la=en&vs=5226>
- UN Policy Brief (2020). The impact of COVID-19 on Women: <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2020/policy-brief-the-impact-of-covid-19-on-women-en.pdf?la=en&vs=1406>
- Scott, Linda (2021). Double X Economy: The epic potential of women's empowerment. <https://us.macmillan.com/books/9780374142629>