

Social and Economic Impacts

- The right to education needs to be protected in the case of school closures; for example, and where possible, through online accessible and adapted learning, and specialised TV and radio broadcasts. Girls may be disproportionately affected, as many already face significant obstacles to go to school, and may now be expected to take on increased care work at home. Limited educational opportunities for those without access to the internet and other remote learning tools risks deepening inequalities and poverty. Girls and boys may also lose access to nutritious food and other services schools often provide, such as mental health and sexual and reproductive health education.
- Social protection schemes should pay particular attention to children due to the heightened vulnerabilities they face based on their early stage of physical, intellectual and emotional development. Best practices include cash transfers directed at families with children, which have been effective in the protection of children's rights.
- Good practices by governments, the public and private sector, international and national organisations to alleviate both the negative socio-economic effects of this crisis should be shared.
- The occupational health and safety of those working during this crisis, particularly health workers and support staff, the majority of who are women, should be assessed and addressed. Health workers and others working in at-risk environments should be provided with quality personal protective equipment as needed. No one should feel forced to work in conditions that unnecessarily endanger their health because they fear losing a job or a paycheck.
- Fiscal stimulus and social protection packages aimed directly at those least able to cope with the crisis are essential to mitigating the devastating consequences of the pandemic. Immediate economic relief measures such as guaranteed paid sick leave, extended unemployment benefits, food distribution, child care, and universal basic income can help safeguard against the acute effects of the crisis.