

ASSESSING THE GENDERED IMPACTS OF COVID-19 IN UZBEKISTAN: WHAT DATA ARE AVAILABLE?

Summary

This brief summarizes the key findings of the assessment of the availability of data that could contribute to an understanding of the gendered impacts of COVID-19 and would be the basis for gender-responsive, evidence-based policy making in Uzbekistan. The assessment was conducted in December 2020 with the support of the UN Women Europe and Central Asia Regional Office in partnership with UNDP Uzbekistan. The focus of the assessment was on data and statistics compiled and disseminated by the State Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Statistics (SSC) and on recent assessments and studies related to the impact of COVID-19 that have been conducted by different United Nations (UN) organizations and development partners.

The assessment identified indicators for which data has been collected for several years and determined whether the data is disaggregated by sex. It then pinpointed key gaps for which critical data and information about gender equality before and during the COVID-19 pandemic is absent. These are the gaps that must be addressed in order to analyze progress made toward the national strategic framework on gender equality and implementation of international commitments (e.g. under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Beijing Platform for Action and the Sustainable Development Goals).

Background

The government of the Republic of Uzbekistan established counter-pandemic policies as soon as the Director-General of the World Health Organization declared the outbreak of a new coronavirus (COVID-19) to be a public health concern. After the first case of COVID-19 was recorded in Uzbekistan, key services were suspended in a phased approach, first educational services, then other public services and eventually non-essential businesses. The authorities introduced national lockdown and self-isolation measures in April 2020 for all non-essential work and travel. Restrictions were relaxed in May and June but reinstated in July 2020 to address a surge in infection rates.

The impacts of such restrictions have been profound, as the global pandemic has moved beyond a health crisis to become a human, economic and social crisis.ⁱ From the outset, the UN Secretary-General expressed concern that the COVID-19 pandemic would undo the progress made towards achieving gender equality and women's empowerment.ⁱⁱ

More than a year after the outbreak, various attempts are being made to measure the impacts of COVID-19 and, in particular, to examine how pre-existing inequalities and vulnerabilities have intensified. A challenge for many countries, including Uzbekistan, is assessing the specific gendered impacts of the pandemic and to quantify how

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much ground has been lost. In Uzbekistan, establishing a national framework of gender-sensitive indicators to monitor progress on gender equality and women's empowerment was identified as a strategic priority before the pandemic. Now, there is an even more urgent need to develop "qualitative and quantitative indicators for gender statistics that are in line with international standards to capture the specific realities in the lives of men and women in Uzbekistan over time."ⁱⁱⁱ

Methodology

In order to assess the impacts of COVID-19 on gender equality and women's empowerment, the effects of the pandemic can be categorized as primary and secondary. **Primary effects** refer to monitoring the direct health impacts of the pandemic (e.g. infection and death rates by sex and age, which could be further disaggregated for female and male healthcare workers specifically). **Secondary effects** refer to the ways in which containment measures have impacted on individuals' health, educational, social and economic status and opportunities. Measuring both primary and secondary impacts require specific indicators and sex-disaggregated data. This brief reviews existing data and highlights gaps that are relevant to measuring the *secondary effects* of COVID-19 on women and men, girls and boys in Uzbekistan.

The starting point for any gender assessment would be to establish the status of gender equality and women's empowerment before the pandemic - through **baseline data**. Such baseline data would then be the basis for comparison with any data generated from the same indicators at points after measures to address the pandemic were introduced and, eventually, lifted (ideally in the short-, medium- and long-term).

The key sources of **baseline data** that were identified in Uzbekistan are: (i) gender statistics generated by the SSC from regular surveys and censuses^{iv}; (ii) administrative data maintained by line ministries and State agencies; (iii) data gathered by NGOs and CSOs that provide services to the population (e.g. records of contacts to centers that assist women in crisis); and (iv) data from socio-economic surveys conducted by international organizations, usually with the SSC, at the household or individual level, using standard methodologies.

The assessment began with a mapping of official national data sources relevant to gender equality and women's empowerment. The methodology focused on open source data and statistics, such as those that are regularly compiled and disseminated by the SSC and are accessible via online platforms. Other *potential* sources of baseline data were considered but were not the subject of a detailed review; these include data from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or civil society organizations (CSOs) and from surveys of international development organizations.

A second source of data about the gendered impacts of the pandemic are **dedicated surveys** on the experiences of women and men, girls and boys, that examine the effects of the pandemic through a gender lens (e.g. changes in time spent on unpaid domestic and care work during lockdowns). The assessment included a review of three **surveys that contain data and information on the impacts of COVID-19** on particular groups. The surveys were carried out by international organizations in Uzbekistan in 2020 in order to inform response and recovery planning, as well as programming. Table 1 summarizes the key data sources.

TABLE 1.
Overview of key data sources in Uzbekistan

| Sources of baseline data (pre-pandemic): |
|--|
| (i) Datasets of the State Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Statistics (e.g. generated from population census; household surveys; labor force surveys, etc.) |
| (ii) Administrative data/records collected by State institutions (e.g. from Ministry of Finance; Ministry of Employment and Labor Relations; Ministry of Internal Affairs; Ministry for Mahalla and Family Support; Chamber of Commerce, etc.) |
| (iii) Data and/or records generated by NGOs/CSOs (service providers) |
| (iv) Socio-economic surveys conducted by international organizations in cooperation with national partners in Uzbekistan (e.g. Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey [UNICEF]; Food Insecurity Experience Survey Module [FAO]) |

Dedicated surveys (that address pandemic issues):

(i) Socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19 in Uzbekistan: Perspectives of Mahalla Representatives^v (UNDP, survey conducted in May-June 2020 with 3 670 mahalla leaders in all 12 regions of Uzbekistan, the Republic of Karakalpakstan and Tashkent city, 25% of the respondents were women).^{vi}

(ii) Assessment of the Impact of COVID-19 on the Socio-Economic Situation in Uzbekistan^{vii} (ILO, flash surveys conducted among 562 micro and small-sized enterprises and 406 individual entrepreneurs in urban and rural areas in April-May 2020).

(iii) Listening to the Citizens of Uzbekistan^{viii} (World Bank, a national monthly household and individual survey on social and economic well-being that was pre-existing in the field; baseline was established in 2018 and survey was conducted again in June 2020).

The question of whether any of the above-mentioned sources can generate the data needed to assess the gendered impacts of COVID-19 depends on two methodological considerations: whether the data has **been disaggregated by sex** (or could be so disaggregated) and whether **gender-sensitive questions** were part of the questionnaire or, in fact, whether **gender-specific surveys** have been conducted (e.g. a population-based survey to establish prevalence of violence against women or a survey of women entrepreneurs).

Concerning the availability of **sex-disaggregated data**, the State Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Statistics publishes gender statistics in separate collections: (i) a dataset of eight “main indicators” (demographics; healthcare; education; crime; social protection; labour; tourism; and physical education and sport); (2) an additional 49 qualitative indicators in five categories (participation in economic activities and access to resources; education; health; social life and participation in decision-making and the rights of women and girls) that correspond to the Minimum Set of Gender Indicators recommended by the United Nations Statistics Division;^{ix} and (3) a database for six national indicators for Goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Each set of indicators includes data covering different timeframes, but generally some sex-disaggregated data is available starting from 2000, and all indicators cover the years immediately before the pandemic began.

With the exception of the above-mentioned compilations of gender statistics, virtually none of the open data of the SSC is disaggregated by sex. Furthermore, neither gender statistics, nor other datasets, are disaggregated by both sex and other characteristics (e.g. age, rural/urban location, education level, disability status, etc.). This greatly complicates the process of understanding vulnerabilities and the impacts of COVID-19 from an intersectional perspective.

Regarding the existence of national surveys dedicated to **gender-specific topics**, no statistical publications by the SSC have an explicit gender theme, among those that are available online (the exception being the publication *Women and Men in Uzbekistan 2016-2019* which is a compilation of gender statistics from the collections listed above). A number of quarterly reports of the SSC on the socio-economic situation in the Republic of Uzbekistan, that are available online were reviewed for this assessment. Quarterly reports on private enterprise, small business and monthly wages, for example, do not contain gender-specific information or sex-disaggregated data.

TO SUMMARIZE, THE MAIN NATIONAL SOURCES OF GENDER STATISTICS IN UZBEKISTAN ARE:

- An online database of gender statistics in Uzbekistan;^x
- An online database on the SDGs,^{xi} especially Goal 5;
- Potentially, open data and publications of the SSC (or from State institutions), if the data is disaggregated by sex.^{xii}

The assessment process was complicated by a general lack of accessible data. It should be kept in mind that this assessment is based on a review of data published online. It is possible that some data sources were not available to the assessment’s authors. Furthermore, the researchers did not have access to micro or primary data. This means that gender statistics that are not currently available online, or which have not been analysed in a report, could potentially be generated from existing microdata.

What gender data are available and what are the gaps?

The following sections summarize the main findings on data availability in several key areas (employment and economic well-being; unpaid domestic and care work; social protection and safety nets; violence against women and girls; and access to information and communications

technology). These topics do not represent the totality of secondary effects of COVID-19, but they correspond to areas in which women have been disparately impacted most immediately and acutely. Each section summarizes available data and data gaps (referring to both baseline and COVID-related data). The key findings concerning data relevant to gender for each topic are summarized in tables following the analysis.

Box 1. KEY TO READING THE TABLES OF INDICATORS

The tables illustrate available data for key existing indicators that are currently measured in Uzbekistan or which correspond closely to those that are in use, noting whether the identified data is disaggregated by sex and the data source. Additional suggested indicators, that are not currently being measured and for which no data has been produced, are also included in each table (the list is not exhaustive).

Legend:

| | | | |
|------------------------------|--|--------------------|---|
| yes | sex-disaggregated data exists | n/a | data for this indicator is not available (meaning data was not found when conducting this assessment or its availability could not be verified from open sources) |
| not sex-disaggregated | data exists, but it is not sex-disaggregated | potentially | a very limited number of surveys that are planned in the up-coming years are mentioned as potential sources of relevant gender statistics |

Abbreviations for sources used in the tables of indicators:

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| ILO socio-economic survey | Assessment of the Impact of COVID-19 on the Socio-Economic Situation in Uzbekistan; conducted by the International Labor Organization in 2020 |
| LCU survey | Listening to the Citizens of Uzbekistan surveys (baseline and June 2020) |
| Mahalla survey | COVID-19 in Uzbekistan: Perspectives of Mahalla Representatives; conducted in May-June 2020. The 2 nd survey conducted in April-January 2021 |
| MELR sociological survey | Survey conducted by the Republican Scientific Centre for Employment and Labour Protection of the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations (MELR) in 2020 |
| SSC Gender stat | State Statistics Committee online database of gender statistics |
| SDG indicator [] | State Statistics Committee online database on the Sustainable Development Goals |



Employment and economic well-being

KEY FINDINGS:

- In general, data is available in Uzbekistan to establish a general picture of patterns of employment and unemployment of women and men that could form the pre-pandemic baseline.
- Data has also been collected for several key indicators that would measure changes to employment patterns during the pandemic. However, this data is neither disaggregated by sex, nor has it been submitted to gender analysis.

Some of the most vivid examples of the secondary impacts of the pandemic, and measures taken to contain the coronavirus, are the economic downturns unfolding in across the globe. To assess how women and men have been affected, a wide range of indicators are needed that cover such issues as access to decent employment, wage levels, entrepreneurial activities and labour migration.

Employment and decent work. Gender statistics published by the SSC, and corresponding to several SDG targets, provide information about the number and proportion of women and men in the **economically active population** as well as the **sectors of the economy** in which women and men have been typically employed. The latter data could theoretically be cross-referenced against information about the non-essential services and businesses that were closed during lockdown periods. Gender analysis would then be helpful to estimate impacts on women who were more likely to be working in sectors that experienced closures, such as accommodation and food services, retail trade and personal services. Official estimates of trends in **informal employment** for women and men by region (compiled by the SSC from data collected by the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations) are an important indicator, because informal workers do not benefit from labor protections and may have been disproportionately impacted during the pandemic if they were not eligible for relief programs. Sex-disaggregated baseline data is available about **self-employed people** (both formally and informally), that could suggest another group of employees who may have been disproportionally impacted by lockdown measures. However, there is no baseline data on either the sectors of informal employment or on women's and men's engagement in part-time employment- both of which are necessary to broaden the picture of how employment status was impacted by the pandemic.

Data exists to establish the previous trends in **unemployment** for women and men. Notably, in 2020 the Republican Scientific Centre for Employment and Labor Protection of the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations (MELR) conducted a sociological survey (among mahalla representatives, households and individuals) that produced data that was then compared to the official unemployment rates for youth (aged 16-30) from previous years, allowing for a comparison of the impacts of the coronavirus on young women's and men's employment status. Existing sex-disaggregated data on both economically active and unemployed youth (ages 16-25) could also be helpful to establish the prior context concerning young people's access to work. However, there are no indicators that would produce gender statistics on the number of people who would have been categorized as **not in education, employment, or training (NEET)** prior to the pandemic. This type of data would be necessary to provide a fuller picture of how young women and men were impacted by the simultaneous closure of educational institutions and workplaces in Uzbekistan.

The Listening to the Citizens of Uzbekistan (LCU) survey, which was conducted in both 2018 (the baseline) and again in June 2020, included limited sex-desegregated data on wage employment; self-employment; lost jobs or stopped work and temporary work disruptions. Such data could suggest a number of gender-based effects of the quarantine measures. However, it appears that only limited gender analysis has been applied to the results of the Listening to the Citizens of Uzbekistan survey. Of note, very few of the indicators mentioned above (on employment, sectors of employment, unemployment, informal employment, etc.) were included in the specific surveys that were conducted to assess the impacts of the pandemic. However, if such indicators are part of regular surveys (e.g. a labour force survey), data that could shed light on how employment patterns for women and men were affected by COVID-19 should become available.

There are a number of gaps in terms of the lack of sex-disaggregated data about **changes to employment status** (e.g. changes in working hours, ability to work remotely, changes in work productivity, access to job protection/wage subsidies, requirement to take a leave of absence or job loss) that occurred as a direct result of the quarantine measures. While the International Labour Organization (ILO) conducted a socio-economic survey in 2020 that aimed to assess some impacts on employment status, the respondents were limited to self-employed persons/individual entrepreneurs and, furthermore, none of the data appears to have been disaggregated by sex. Baseline data for these indicators, which appears not to exist, would also be important to understand whether quarantine measures were more

impactful than other factors that can also cause people to change their working patterns.

Income insecurity. Baseline data about **income** levels of women and men is very limited, with gender statistics only covering the gender wage gap (the percentage difference between the average monthly wage of male and female employees) over time. Data does not appear to be available on the value of the average monthly wages of women and men from before the pandemic (in Uzbekistan Som). Such data would be needed to estimate how wages changed during lockdowns and to understand if the wage gap widened, narrowed or was unchanged. Ideally, if the primary data source contained the variable of sex, it would also be disaggregated by sector of the economy. In addition to information about levels of income, indicators are needed to measure the extent to which women and men experienced financial difficulties (e.g. managing basic expenses) as a result of the pandemic, ideally also compared to the coping mechanisms employed in the past.

Entrepreneurship and self-employment. Women **entrepreneurs** (especially the self-employed and owners of micro- and small- businesses) have been identified as one of the most vulnerable groups during the COVID-19 pandemic.^{xiii} In order to assess how women entrepreneurs in Uzbekistan have been impacted, it is necessary to develop a complete profile of women engaged in business (e.g. size of their enterprises, sectors in which they operate, average turnover, average number of employees, etc). Such baseline data is limited to administrative data on the share of women-owned firms, further disaggregated by region. Although the LCU surveys (before and after the pandemic) included a series of questions about

individuals' experiences in founding and expanding a business, the data is not disaggregated by sex. Likewise, the ILO socio-economic survey that was dedicated to assessing the impacts of COVID-19 on enterprises and individual entrepreneurs (of which 57 percent of respondents were men and 43 percent were women) produced no sex-disaggregated data or gender analysis.

Labour migration. For a considerable portion of the population of Uzbekistan, **labour migration** is their main source of livelihoods and a means to support the larger household. Border closures, travel restrictions and the temporary suspension of work in key sectors of the economies in migrant receiving countries, such as the Russian Federation, had a significant impact on labour migrants. No sex-disaggregated data appears to be available on the number of women and men working in labour migration before the pandemic. There is also no data on migrants who returned to Uzbekistan in 2020 due to measures taken to contain the pandemic, nor about their employment status once they returned or the number of women and men who benefited from job schemes aimed at returned migrants. While the LCU surveys included several questions about household members working abroad and remittance income sent back to Uzbekistan, it does not appear that the resulting data was disaggregated by sex (of the sender or recipient). Additionally, the LCU survey that was conducted in June 2020 was not modified to include questions about any changes to migration patterns as a result of COVID-19.

Table 2 summarizes existing baseline and COVID-relevant data and suggests additional indicators that would help to further clarify gender-based differences in employment and economic well-being.

TABLE 2.
Employment and economic well-being

| Indicators | Available data: | | Source / potential source |
|---|-----------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| | Baseline data | Data on COVID-19 impacts | |
| Employment | | | |
| Existing indicators | | | |
| 1. Economically active population, by sex | yes | n/a | SSC Gender stat |
| 2. Share of persons aged 16-25 years in the total number of economically active population, by sex | yes | n/a | SSC Gender stat |
| 3. Number of employed persons by sectors of economy, by sex and region | yes | n/a | SSC Gender stat |
| 4. Number of employed persons by sex and economic activity | yes | n/a | SSC Gender stat |
| 5. Number of persons engaged in wage employment [engagement in any work for pay in last 7 days], by sex | yes | yes | LCU survey |
| 6. Number of self-employed persons, by sex | yes | yes | LCU survey |

| | | | |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|
| 7. Share of employed persons in the informal sector (excluding agriculture) as percent of total employment, by sex and region | yes | n/a | SSC Gender stat SDG indicator 8.3.1.1 |
| 8. Share of self-employed persons (working in the informal sector) in the total number of employees, by sex and region | yes | n/a | SSC Gender stat |
| Suggested indicators | | | |
| Share of part-time employees (less than full time/seasonal work), by sex and age | | | Household survey such as Labour Force Survey, Household Budget Survey, etc. |
| Unemployment | | | |
| Existing indicators | | | |
| 1. Unemployment rate, by sex and age group | yes | yes | SSC Gender stat SDG indicator 8.5.2 MELR sociological survey |
| 2. Number of persons temporarily absent from paid work in last 7 days, by sex | yes | yes | LCU survey |
| 3. Number of persons looking for any kind of paid job or starting a business in last 30 days, by sex | yes | yes | LCU survey |
| 4. Main reasons for not looking for work in last 30 days, by sex | not sex-disaggregated | not sex-disaggregated | LCU survey |
| 5. Length of time without work and trying to find a paid job or start a business, by sex | not sex-disaggregated | not sex-disaggregated | LCU survey |
| 6. For self-employed individuals, changes to employment and paid work hours, by sex | n/a | not sex-disaggregated | ILO socio-economic survey |
| 7. For self-employed individuals, required to take a leave by type of leave (paid or unpaid), by sex | n/a | not sex-disaggregated | ILO socio-economic survey |
| 8. For self-employed individuals, changes to place of work due, (work outside, work from home), by sex | n/a | not sex-disaggregated | ILO socio-economic survey |
| Suggested indicators | | | |
| Youth (aged 16-25) not in not in education, employment, or training (NEET), by sex | | | Household survey such as Labour Force Survey, Household Budget Survey, etc. |
| Income | | | |
| Existing indicators | | | |
| 1. Difference between the average monthly wage of male and female employees (i.e. gender wage gap) | yes | n/a | SSC Gender stat SDG indicator 8.5.1. |
| 2. Proportion of persons who reported changes to main income/earning sources (paid job, pension/other social payments; farming; own business, family business or freelance; properties, investments and savings), by sex | n/a | not sex-disaggregated | ILO socio-economic survey; Mahalla survey |
| 3. Proportion of persons who reported financial difficulties (difficulties keeping up with basic expenses, paying rent and/or utilities, seeking health services/assistance), by sex | not sex-disaggregated | not sex-disaggregated | Mahalla survey; ILO socio-economic survey; LCU survey |
| Suggested indicators | | | |
| Average monthly wage for female and male employees | | | Household survey or enterprise survey |
| Difference between the average monthly wage of male and female employees, by sectors of the economy | | | Household survey or enterprise survey |
| Proportion of persons who faced difficulties in keeping up basic expenses, by sex and age | | | Household survey |
| Proportion of persons who faced difficulties in paying rent and/or utilities, by sex and age | | | Household survey |
| Proportion of persons who faced difficulties in seeking health services or other forms of social assistance, by sex and age | | | Household survey |

| Entrepreneurship | | | |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Existing indicators | | | |
| 1. Share of women-owned firms, by region | yes | n/a | SSC Gender stat |
| 2. Sex of the head of the company or organization, by region | yes | n/a | SSC Gender stat |
| 3. Distribution of the number of workers employed in enterprises and organizations, by sex and age [Note: small businesses are excluded] | yes | n/a | SSC Gender stat |
| 4. Number of persons engaged in entrepreneurship in last 12 months, by sex | not sex-disaggregated | not sex-disaggregated | LCU survey |
| 5. Sphere in which business operates, by sex | not sex-disaggregated | not sex-disaggregated | LCU survey |
| 6. Profile of business (start dates, where business operates), by sex of owner | not sex-disaggregated | not sex-disaggregated | LCU survey |
| 7. Share of persons who attempted to expand business in last 12 months, by sex of owner | not sex-disaggregated | not sex-disaggregated | LCU survey |
| 8. Constraints to doing business, by sex of owner | not sex-disaggregated | not sex-disaggregated | LCU survey |
| 9. Percent of businesses that temporarily suspended activities during quarantine periods, by sex of owner | n/a | yes | MELR sociological survey |
| Suggested indicators | | | |
| Percent of businesses that permanently closed since the COVID-19 pandemic, by sex of owner | | | Enterprise survey |
| Percent of firms that filed for bankruptcy or insolvency since the COVID-19 pandemic, by sex of owner | | | Enterprise survey |
| Percent of firms that introduced a new product/service in response to the COVID-19 outbreak, by sex of owner | | | Enterprise survey |
| Percent of firms that discontinued a product/service in response to the COVID-19 outbreak, by sex of owner | | | Enterprise survey |
| Percent of firms that started or increased online activity in response to the COVID-19 outbreak, by sex of owner | | | Enterprise survey |
| Labour migration | | | |
| Existing indicators | | | |
| 1. Percentage of labour migrants among total employed working abroad, by sex | not sex-disaggregated | n/a | SDG indicator 10.7.2 |
| 2. Number of household members currently not residing in household because they are living and/or working abroad, by sex | not sex-disaggregated | not sex-disaggregated | LCU survey |
| 3. Money remitted by the household member to the household at any point during the last 3 months, by sex | not sex-disaggregated | not sex-disaggregated | LCU survey |
| 4. Value of all remittances in cash that household member sent during the last 3 months | not sex-disaggregated | not sex-disaggregated | LCU survey |
| Suggested indicators | | | |
| Number of labour migrants from Uzbekistan working abroad, by sex and age | | | Household survey, administrative data |
| Number of labour migrants returned to Uzbekistan, by sex and age | | | Household survey, administrative data |
| Number of labour migrants returned to Uzbekistan assisted by employment schemes, by sex and age | | | Household survey, administrative data |
| Number of members of household considering migration, by sex and age | | | Household survey, administrative data |



Unpaid domestic and care work

KEY FINDINGS:

- Basic data is available in Uzbekistan about the amount of time (in hours) that women and men devote to unpaid work.
- Several attempts were also made to assess whether the time burden had been impacted during the pandemic, but the results were very limited and not gender-specific.
- Important data gaps exist on the proportion of time women and men, as well as girls and boys, devote to specific unpaid activities- domestic chores as well as unpaid work (e.g. in family enterprises, on farms, etc.), as well as how the COVID-19 pandemic may have impacted patterns of time use.

When quarantine measures were put in place, childcare and educational institutions were closed and those who could began to work remotely. Many more people found themselves at home, and as a consequence unpaid domestic chores and caring activities, for out-of-school children but also for family members who were ill, multiplied. Before the coronavirus pandemic, data about how much time women and men usually spent on unpaid care and domestic work was scarce, but it is known that globally women shoulder a higher burden of such unpaid work. It has been estimated that women were spending around three times as many hours on unpaid domestic and care work as men before the pandemic.^{xiv}

Estimating the increased demands on women's time during periods of lockdown and continuing into the recovery period requires specialized surveys and tracking. Preliminary data, based on rapid assessments conducted by UN Women in a number of countries, suggest that the intensity of unpaid domestic and care work for women and girls has increased.^{xv} It is vital to understand the potential long-term impacts on women who have left the workforce, or girls who are out of school, due to the increased workloads.

According to the SSC, a household sample survey was conducted in Uzbekistan in 2018 that produced baseline data on the **distribution of unpaid domestic and care work between women and men**, calculated as average hours per day.^{xvi}

Further disaggregation of baseline data would be useful, such as by age and also for urban and rural locations (where there are fewer time-saving amenities, and household members may engage in farming in addition to domestic chores). In accordance with international standards, such data is calculated every five years and so it is planned that a survey will be conducted in 2023. It would be especially valuable to revise the previous time use survey, and also to make use of a dedicated survey, to assess how household chores are distributed among family members, by sex and age, as well as any changes in these patterns.

The three surveys conducted by international organizations during the COVID-19 pandemic are potential sources of data about changes to the time that women and men spent on unpaid domestic and care work (both increasing and decreasing time). However, each one has significant shortcomings. The survey conducted among mahalla leaders in 2020 is the only one of the three surveys to include a question about the burden of unpaid domestic and care work on women. Because the survey respondents represent mahalla leadership, the resulting data captures their perceptions of changes to the time that women in the community were devoting to unpaid work when the survey was conducted (assessed on a scale from "significantly increased" to "significantly decreased" with an option for "it is difficult to say"). The survey did not ask respondents to assess changes to their own time burdens, nor was an analogous question included about perceived changes to the time that men spent on unpaid domestic and care work during lockdown.

The Listening to the Citizens of Uzbekistan survey includes a question about whether any household members engaged in **unpaid work**, which could be used to establish both a baseline and any changes to the situation occurring in 2020. However, it does not appear that the data has been disaggregated by sex, nor is the nature of the unpaid work specified. Likewise, a survey carried out by the MELR Republican Scientific Centre for Employment in 2020 included a question about the number of household members working informally in a family business. This indicator could be a proxy for unpaid work, but, again, the data appears not to be disaggregated by sex.

Table 3 summarizes existing data and suggests several proposed indicators.

TABLE 3.
Unpaid domestic and care work

| Indicators | Available data: | | Source / potential source |
|---|-----------------------|--------------------------|--|
| | Baseline data | Data on COVID-19 impacts | |
| Existing indicators | | | |
| 1. Proportion of time spent on unpaid care and domestic work, disaggregated by sex, age and place of residence (population aged 16 years old and older) | not sex-disaggregated | not sex-disaggregated | SDG indicator 5.4.1; Mahalla survey |
| 2. Average hours spent in unpaid domestic work, by sex | yes | potentially | SSC Gender stat [Time use study in 2023] |
| 3. Average hours spent jointly in paid and unpaid domestic work, by sex | yes | n/a | SSC Gender stat |
| 4. Any unpaid work in a business owned by a household member in the last 7 days | not sex-disaggregated | not sex-disaggregated | LCU survey |
| 5. People employed without registration (informally) in family enterprises and entrepreneurs, by sex | n/a | not sex-disaggregated | MELR sociological survey |
| Suggested indicators | | | |
| Distribution of household chores, by activity and sex and age of household member | | | Household survey |
| Increase/decrease in the number of hours devoted to household chores, by activity and sex of household member | | | Household survey |
| Changes in roles and responsibilities within the household for specific activities, by sex and age | | | Household survey |



Social protection and safety nets

KEY FINDINGS:

- There are several critical gaps in national data on poverty rates and access to specific social benefits (as well as the value of benefits received) in that very little of the data is disaggregated by sex. Thus, the picture of women's and men's vulnerabilities before the pandemic are unclear, and the effectiveness of social protection measures to mitigate the negative impacts of the pandemic cannot be assessed through a gender lens.
- Dedicated surveys, conducted in 2020 as well as records maintained by mahalla committees are a potential source of such valuable information, but only if they measure for the variable of sex.

The secondary economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic implicate not only loss of employment and income, indicators for which are covered in section 1, but also include increased risks for poverty. Thus, social protection and other mitigation measures have become

especially vital for the population but more so for groups that were already in situations of vulnerability, such as pensioners, people with disabilities or caring for people with disabilities, single parents and the working poor. In order to monitor the extent to which women and men have benefited from mitigation measures, it is necessary to also determine how they were represented among groups in need of social protection and those who were accessing social benefits before the pandemic.

Poverty. In Uzbekistan, there are critical gaps in sex-disaggregated data related to **national poverty and extreme poverty rates**. In fact, the only available baseline data on the population living in poverty appears to be estimates produced by the World Bank and reproduced by other organizations (the Asian Development Bank, for instance); the data is not disaggregated by sex or any other factor (such as settlement type). One of the indicators for the national targets for SDG 10 on reducing inequalities measures the proportion of the population with incomes less than half of the median income for the country, by age and sex. However, the available data (for 2000-2019) is not, in fact, disaggregated by sex, but presented for the population as a whole. It is vital that sex-disaggregated poverty data be compiled regularly in order to assess women's overall economic status and possible vulnerabilities.

Access to social protections. The SSC collects and publishes sex-disaggregated data on the number and proportion of recipients of various types of **pensions and social benefits** (mainly retirement pensions and disability benefits), which can be used to establish a baseline. Similarly, national indicators for SDG 1 on the elimination of poverty collect longitudinal data for recipients of a wider range of social benefits, but none of the data appears to have been disaggregated by sex. SSC baseline data on the average amount of pension or benefits payments is also not disaggregated by sex of the recipient. In parallel with gender statistics on poverty, more detailed sex-disaggregated data on recipients of social benefits, by type of benefit and amount, would provide crucial information about the effectiveness of social protection policies, both before and in the post-pandemic period.

The three surveys carried out by international organizations in 2020, when loss of jobs and other sources of income may have been the most acute, each included some questions pertaining to **mitigation measures and coping strategies**. The surveys covered access to social services and benefits, including applications to social assistance centres and the receipt of financial or in-kind support from the government, from NGOs and from friends and family. While the socio-economic survey conducted by ILO pertains only to the self-employed or individual entrepreneurs, other data collections, such as that generated from the Listening to the Citizens of Uzbekistan survey, pertain to individual citizens. Without sex-disaggregation,

however, the data provides no information about potential gender inequalities in access to social safety nets, nor can it be compared to baseline data that could have given an indication of whether pre-existing social benefits had been sufficient during the pandemic or had to be supplemented. A lack of gender analysis also compromised the usefulness of these surveys.

Only the UNDP-supported survey, conducted among mahalla leaders, included specific questions about the types of assistance needed by residents and the number of requests and grants of assistance from the mahalla. The question on requests for and grants of social assistance pertained only to two groups of applicants and beneficiaries- women and pensioners (but this group was treated as a whole- not sex-disaggregated). Thus, it is possible to assess the proportion of applicants/recipients who were women (although not who are women and pensioners). Still, in the absence of clear pre-pandemic data about mahalla assistance, the data on its own is not conclusive about the impacts of the pandemic. It is possible that administrative records of social assistance distributed directly by mahallas exists, either with each mahalla committee or compiled centrally by the Ministry for Mahalla and Family Support, but this data source could not be confirmed for this assessment.

Table 4 summarizes existing data and also suggests potential sources of information that may become available if the relevant surveys are sufficiently gender-sensitive.

TABLE 4.
Social protection and safety nets

| Indicators | Available data: | | Source / potential source |
|---|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| | Baseline data | Data on COVID-19 impacts | |
| Existing indicators | | | |
| 1. Population living below the national poverty line, by sex | not sex-disaggregated | n/a | World Bank produced estimates |
| 2. Proportion of people with income below 50% of median income, by age and sex | not sex-disaggregated | n/a | SDG indicator 10.2.1 |
| 3. Proportion of the population receiving pensions (retirement pension, disability pension, loss of breadwinner pension) and/or social benefits, by sex | partially sex-disaggregated | not sex-disaggregated | SSC Gender stat SDG indicator 1.3.1.1 SDG indicator 1.3.1.2 ILO socio-economic survey |
| 4. Average size of pension and social benefit, by type of pension/ benefit and sex of recipient | not sex-disaggregated | n/a | SSC Gender stat |
| 5. Number of applications to Centres of Assistance in Employment and Social Protection, by sex of applicant | n/a | yes | MELR sociological survey |
| 6. Persons who received unemployment benefits and/or financial support from the government or local municipalities, by sex | n/a | not sex-disaggregated | MELR sociological survey; ILO socio-economic survey; LCU survey |

| | | | |
|--|-----|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 7. Persons who received in-kind support from the government and/or local municipalities, by sex | n/a | not sex-disaggregated | ILO socio-economic survey; LCU survey |
| 8. Persons who requested and/or received assistance directly from mahalla, by sex | n/a | partially sex-disaggregated | Mahalla survey |
| 9. Persons who received in-kind support from NGOs/CSOs or other non-profit organizations, by sex | n/a | not sex-disaggregated | ILO socio-economic survey |
| 10. Persons who sought help from family and/or friends as a result of COVID-19 crisis, by sex | n/a | not sex-disaggregated | ILO socio-economic survey |
| 11. Persons who took a loan as a result of COVID-19 crisis, by sex | n/a | not sex-disaggregated | ILO socio-economic survey |
| Suggested indicators | | | |
| Difficulties accessing social services/assistance for self and/or family members, by sex and age | | | Household survey |



Violence against women and girls

KEY FINDINGS:

- In Uzbekistan, very important improvements have been made to the collection of administrative data on VAWG that allow for a comparison of a baseline situation with the number of incidents occurring during lockdown periods (specifically, concerning registered cases of VAWG).
- At the same time, the overall prevalence of VAWG has not been established because a nation-wide survey has not been conducted that would cover all forms of VAWG.

Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, violence against women and girls (VAWG) has intensified, particularly, but not limited to, domestic violence. It is for this reason that UN Women has characterised VAWG as a “shadow pandemic.”^{xvii} Violence against women and girls has been exacerbated by the very measures put in place to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus, such as lockdowns, social distancing and other forms of restrictions on movement. Emerging global data has shown an increase in calls to VAWG helplines and to police, including in the Europe and Central Asia region.^{xviii}

Stay-at-home measures compounded perpetrators’ use of mechanisms of power and control to isolate victims of VAWG at the same time that unemployment, economic instability and stress may have lead abusers to feel a loss of power, which in turn may exacerbate the frequency and severity of their abusive behaviour. During the pandemic, avenues to essential life-saving services, such as counselling services; law enforcement response, justice resources and legal advice; sexual health and other crucial medical assistance; and the

provision of protection and shelter became restricted for many women and girls.

Many countries, including Uzbekistan, initiated new online and remote services for victims of gender-based violence during the pandemic. Still, the long-term impacts of victims being isolated from assistance and social support networks, the difficulties in reporting violence as well as the impunity that may have arose when incidents of violence went unaddressed, must be assessed in order to develop new strategies around preventing VAWG.

In Uzbekistan, very important legal changes predated the COVID-19 pandemic. Most notably, a law on the protection of women from violence that established a new protection order mechanism (in addition to planned measures targeting perpetrators of violence) was adopted in September 2019. On one hand, this means that administrative records on this specific form of violence, as well as the police response, improved from 2019. On the other hand, little time had passed in implementing the law before the COVID-19 outbreak. It is to be expected that until the population became familiar with the new legal mechanisms, reliance on the law would be limited. For this reason, the pre-pandemic baseline data may be less robust than data for other indicators. It is also notable that Uzbekistan does not have a national target, under SDG 5, on the elimination of all forms of violence against all women and girls.

Data about the **prevalence of VAWG** is limited in Uzbekistan. In 2015, UNFPA supported a sociological study of factors contributing to the foundations of a strong family and reproductive health in Uzbekistan. Only 2 020 households were surveyed, but the survey included questions on women’s experiences of intimate partner violence (physical, sexual and psychological violence), as well as some forms of controlling behaviors by husbands/partners. Due to its small-scale, this survey cannot be considered an accurate assessment of the prevalence of VAWG in Uzbekistan. There have been

no population-based prevalence surveys conducted in the country.

Administrative data, namely records of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, on women and girls (aged 15-49) who have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by a current or former partner, or non-partner, are published by the SSC for 2014-2019, and further disaggregated by region. Such administrative data does not provide information about overall prevalence rates as it is limited to incidents of violence that are officially registered with law enforcement. In every country of the world, registered cases represent only the “tip of the iceberg” in terms of the actual scale of VAWG. Still, law enforcement records can serve as important baseline data to assess whether the number of reported incidents changed during the pandemic period.

In a similar way, administrative records maintained by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, General Prosecutors Office, Supreme Court and for social services (governmental and non-governmental) provide baseline data. For example, a nation-wide telephone hotline was established in 2018 to provide assistance to women and girls, and because it was operated by the former Women’s Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan, records of calls to the number were included among official data.^{xix} Similarly, data on the number of women receiving assistance based on records of regional centres that offer support to survivors of violence has also been published (although not disaggregated by type of assistance received). Such data, while useful, is scattered in various reports and not compiled into a single publication on the situation of VAWG in Uzbekistan. Thus, it is very difficult to compare annual data on, for example, the number of women who use temporary shelters, as compared to those who make complaints to the police, apply for and are granted protection orders, etc.

Administrative records have been used to offer comparative data from before the outbreak of COVID-19, during quarantine periods and up to the present time. Some of this data has been published in various reports (e.g. on an

increase in complaints made to the police about domestic violence in summer 2020;^{xx} on the number of protection orders issued by the police;^{xxi} and on an increase in calls to a national hotline established for victims of VAWG during the quarantine period^{xxii}), suggesting that further gender statistics could be produced and analysed. Again, it would be useful if all available data on VAWG were compiled in one thematic publication.

There have been no nation-wide surveys that would measure women’s **access to various forms of protection and support services**, either before or after the pandemic. Only the survey of mahalla leaders, conducted in 2020, included several questions about changes in the number of incidents of domestic violence in the community; measures taken in the mahalla to address domestic violence; and measures needed to support women who had experienced domestic violence during the pandemic. Several methodological shortcomings mean that the data generated from this survey is not credible. For example, the majority of mahalla leaders perceived that domestic violence incidents had “stayed the same in the past 30 days,” with no clear reference to any baseline data or administrative records. Data about the types of support most and least needed by survivors of violence during the COVID-19 outbreak is somewhat useful as it provides information on the views of local leadership on the services needed in their communities (based on how they ranked a list of six types of services). However, international good practices suggest that protection services should be developed based on mapping of existing services compared to population size and in consultation with key stakeholders (service-providers/experts and survivors of VAWG). Thus, going forward, there is a need to broaden the scope of data collection and dedicated research on VAWG in Uzbekistan, not only to measure any impacts of COVID-19 but as the basis for determining priorities in the recovery period.

Table 5 summarises available data and also provides several broad categories of indicators that should be part of a national monitoring system.

TABLE 5.
Violence against women and girls

| Indicators | Available data: | | Source / potential source |
|---|-----------------|--------------------------|--|
| | Baseline data | Data on COVID-19 impacts | |
| Existing indicators | | | |
| 1. Number of ever-partnered women (aged 15–49 years) who have been physically and/or sexually abused by a current or previous partner in the last 12 months | yes | n/a | World Bank produced estimates SSC Gender stat (data compiled by the Ministry of Internal Affairs) |
| 2. Number of women (aged 15–49 years) who have been subjected to sexual abuse, since the age of 15, by persons who were not close partners | yes | n/a | SSC Gender stat (data compiled by the Ministry of Internal Affairs) |

| | | | |
|--|-----|-----|---|
| 3. Number of VAWG incidents registered by authorities and service providers, by type of service | yes | yes | Administrative data from the Ministry of Internal Affairs; General Prosecutors Office; Supreme Court; service providers (governmental and non-governmental) |
| 4. Support services needed by women survivors of domestic violence, by type of support | n/a | yes | Mahalla survey |
| Suggested indicators | | | |
| Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current/former intimate partner in previous 12 months, by form of violence and age | | | Household survey |
| Number of survivors of VAWG who experience difficulties accessing support services, including helplines, crisis services, temporary shelter and/or police support, by type of service and location | | | Household survey |
| Data on protection orders (e.g. number of applications, issued/granted orders, violations; number of orders per capita, etc.) | | | Administrative data |
| Number of survivors of VAWG who call hotlines; are served by crisis centers; accommodated in shelters; receive referrals, etc. | | | Administrative data |
| Number of perpetrators of VAWG who attend programs (mandated and voluntary, by type of program) and data on recidivism | | | Administrative data, facilities survey |



Access to information and communications technology

KEY FINDINGS:

- Data compiled by the SSC provides some information about gender differences in access to ICTs. Further disaggregation by age and settlement type (rural and urban) would help to better understand where there may be a digital gender divide.
- Only limited data exists about the use of various ICTs during the coronavirus outbreak, and none of it appears to have been disaggregated by sex (of the users of the particular technology). Because the questionnaires administered in 2020 were assessing household access to ICTs, it may not be possible to disaggregate the data for the variable of sex.

Social distancing and lockdown measures that required work and education to be done remotely clearly demonstrated the importance of digital economies. People from different backgrounds are relying on information and communication technologies (ICTs) to a greater degree than ever before. Pre-dating the COVID-19 outbreak, the digital gender divide meant that access to and use of ICTs differs for women and men, as well as by age group.

Relatively little research has been conducted into the digital gender divide that would help to quantify the number of women and men users of ICTs in order to understand whether women and men, and girls and boys, were able to benefit equally from online services (such as education and assistance in cases of violence), could work remotely or could transfer their business operations to online systems.

In Uzbekistan, data exists for indicators on mobile phone and Internet users that could be used to estimate the digital gender divide. It is disaggregated by sex and also by region. This data is compiled by the SSC for 2017-2019. A specific indicator for SDG 4 on quality education covers the proportion of “young people and adults” who have specific ICT skills by type of skill (e.g. copying files, sending emails, using spreadsheets, downloading software, programming etc.). The data covers 2017-2019, but none of it is disaggregated by sex or by age.

Of the three reviewed surveys that were conducted during 2020 on the impacts of the coronavirus outbreak, two had limited questions about access to and use of ICTs. The survey conducted among mahalla leadership asked for an assessment of the provision of Internet services (a measure of improvement, deterioration or no change). The data was not disaggregated by the sex of the respondent, nor was it cross-referenced for types of households that may have experienced disruptions (e.g. female-headed households; households with school-age children). The resulting report on the mahalla survey notes that Internet functioning was worst during

periods of self-isolation when surges in usage occurred and points out that further assessment is needed of how this situation impacted schooling and remote working, especially for rural households.^{xiii} The questionnaire used for the Listening to Citizens of Uzbekistan survey in 2020 included a series of questions related to children's education that asked about access to specific technologies in the household (television, smart phones, PCs or laptops, home Internet) and about the primary mode by which children were accessing education at this time (via television on learning apps). The data has not been disaggregated by type of household (e.g. female- or male-headed household) nor does it appear that questions were used to determine whether intra-household access to ICTs differed for women or men, girls or boys.

Determining how the digital gender divide may have been exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic would

require dedicated survey questions about differential access to and use of (or barriers to the use of) ICTs during particular time periods for different household members. In order to determine whether there were any particular setbacks in terms of girls' education, survey data on remote learning would ideally be disaggregated not only by the sex of the user of such technologies, but also by age. It would be especially useful for future policy-making to track how individual entrepreneurs and small-business owners, with separate information for women and men, have made use of or do not have access to ICTs to run to develop their enterprises.

Table 6 summarizes available data and also suggests several indicators that could be part of a dedicated survey on how particular groups of women and men, girls and boys, accessed ICTs during and after the pandemic.

TABLE 6.
Information and communications technology (ICT)

| Indicators | Available data: | | Source / potential source |
|---|-----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| | Baseline data | Data on COVID-19 impacts | |
| Existing indicators | | | |
| 1. Proportion of people with a mobile phone, by sex | yes | n/a | SDG indicator 5.b.1 |
| 2. Share of individuals over age 10 using a mobile cellular telephone, by sex and by region | yes | not sex-disaggregated | SSC gender stats; LCU survey |
| 3. Share of individuals using a PC or laptop, by sex and by region | not sex-disaggregated | not sex-disaggregated | LCU survey |
| 4. Share of individuals using the Internet, by sex and by region | yes | not sex-disaggregated | SSC gender stats; LCU survey |
| 5. Individuals with ICT skills, by sex, age and by type of skill | not sex-disaggregated | n/a | SDG indicator 4.4.1 |
| 6. Changes to the provision of Internet services | n/a | not sex-disaggregated | Mahalla survey |
| 7. Persons accessing educational television programmes (self and/or family members), by sex and age | n/a | not sex-disaggregated | LCU survey |
| 8. Persons accessing mobile learning apps (self and/or family members), by sex and age | n/a | not sex-disaggregated | LCU survey |
| 9. Persons satisfied with remote educational activities (self and/or family members), by sex | n/a | not sex-disaggregated | LCU survey |
| Suggested indicators | | | |
| Proportion of individuals using a mobile phone, by sex, age and type of activity | | | Household survey |
| Proportion of individuals using the Internet, by sex, age and settlement type (urban/rural) | | | Household survey |
| Proportion of individuals using the Internet, by sex, age and type of activity | | | Household survey |
| Proportion of individuals not using the Internet, by sex, age and type of barriers | | | Household survey |
| Percent of firms that started or increased online activity in response to the COVID outbreak, by sex of owner | | | Household survey |

Conclusions

The assessment of data availability demonstrates that there is insufficient data, particularly sex-disaggregated data, that can be used to inform the understanding of the gendered implications of the pandemic in Uzbekistan and to guide development of a gender-informed approach that is needed for effective mitigation and recovery efforts. This review of data availability identifies specific data gaps for key indicators. These findings should contribute to a national dialogue on data, gender and COVID-19 and stimulate efforts to find solutions to addressing gaps in gender statistics, relevant to the pandemic but also for future efforts to promote gender equality and women's empowerment.

The availability of gender statistics and sex-disaggregated data differs by thematic area. There is greater data availability relevant to employment and economic well-being, but this is also a complex topic that requires precise indicators. Still, the SSC generates gender statistics for several key indicators that serves as baseline data. The relatively greater availability of employment and economic well-being indicators related to the impacts of COVID-19 on the socio-economic situation in Uzbekistan can also be attributed to the ILO and World Bank surveys. However, while data was available for many of these indicators, in many cases, it was not disaggregated by sex. There is limited data on women's and men's engagement in unpaid care work and access to social protections, from before the pandemic. A critical gap is the lack of clear the baseline data on the female poverty rate (which is also not disaggregated by other factors). Given that the pandemic had immediate consequences for both the burden of domestic duties and on the need for social assistance and reliance on social safety nets, it is also vital to improve data collection for changes to indicators on these themes. Concerning VAWG, administrative data for a number of indicators for both before, during and after the pandemic is available. However, such data has not been compiled or analyzed to build up a picture of patterns and trends in VAWG in Uzbekistan. Furthermore, because no national prevalence studies have been conducted, the true extent of VAWG is not known. Lastly, while indicators have been developed to measure access to ICTs, both as a baseline and during quarantine periods, the data is largely not disaggregated by sex nor has it been analyzed through a gender lens.

Uzbekistan's capacities to track the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on vulnerable populations, including women, and assist these populations with mitigation and recovery measures depends largely on accurate reporting and monitoring systems, including the collection and dissemination of sex disaggregated data. This information is required to effectively reach vulnerable populations with cash transfers and other social assistance programs.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are overarching and concern steps that can be taken to fill gender data gaps and to better inform COVID-19 responses:

- Conduct mapping and assessments of existing national data sources (including survey data and administrative data) in order to generate gender statistics and report on gender-specific indicators. Such data should be made accessible to the public online.
- Assess capacity gaps within the SSC in order to improve the regular production of gender statistics. A first step could be a review of regular surveys to increase their gender-sensitivity as well as designing and implementing selected surveys with gender-specific themes.
- The SSC to engage with relevant ministries to expand the list of gender-specific indicators that are regularly reported on and are relevant to documenting and monitoring the gendered impacts of COVID-19.
- Conduct gender analyses of existing survey data from assessments carried out by international organizations during the COVID-19 pandemic. A first step would be to review the microdata to assess whether sex-disaggregation is possible. Moreover, gender analysis should be applied to the data to develop thematic reports. Additional gender-sensitive surveys related to the impacts of the pandemic may be needed.

The next set of recommendations concern the most significant gender data gaps that require immediate attention, organized by theme.

Employment and economic well-being

- Conduct gender analysis of national employment and unemployment in order to develop profiles of how women are engaged in the economy, with attention to specific groups of women (e.g. elderly/young women, women living in rural locations, women with disabilities, single mothers, etc.). The analysis could then be used to establish the pre-existing context, against which surveys conducted during the recovery period could be compared.
- Conduct dedicated surveys or revise already existing household, population-based surveys to improve understanding of how women and men in potentially vulnerable employment, such as informal work, part-time/seasonal work, low-income work and self-employment were impacted by quarantine measures and their potential to recover in the post-pandemic period.
- As a follow up to the ILO survey, conduct a survey to assess the experiences of women and men business owners, business managers and individual entrepreneurs and the challenges they face to expanding their

businesses; a special section could be included with gender-specific questions related to the impacts of COVID-19 on their businesses.

- Collect accurate and timely data on the number of men and women who are working abroad, as well as their socio-economic profiles (e.g. age; region of origin; educational/professional background; marital status). In addition, dedicated surveys or improving existing ones are needed to assess the experiences of men and women who returned from working abroad as a result of COVID-19 in terms of their employment status.

Unpaid domestic and care work

- Conduct a dedicated time-use survey or revise existing household, population-based surveys to capture more detailed information about how unpaid domestic and care work is distributed within households, by sex, age and type of unpaid work. Additional questions could be included to capture information about the time spent on unpaid work in family enterprises or on family farms, for women and men, as well as girls and boys.
- Conduct special surveys to assess changes in the time that household members are dedicating to unpaid work, ideally more frequently than every five years, in order to assess whether the COVID pandemic has had an impact on gender-based roles and responsibilities.

Social protection and safety nets

- Surveys conducted in 2020 to assess the impacts of COVID-19 in terms of the effectiveness of social safety nets should be reviewed to determine whether sex-disaggregation of the microdata is possible and whether gender analysis can be applied to the data overall. If neither is possible, special surveys should be developed and conducted to assess whether there are gender gaps in access to social protections.

Violence against women and girls

- Conduct a national prevalence survey on VAWG in Uzbekistan, following the UN Minimum Set of Gender Indicators and with the aim of setting national targets for the achievement of SDG 5, and specifically Target 5.2.: Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.
- Compile and analyze existing administrative data on VAWG into a single thematic publication.
- Improve administrative data through the use of more specific indicators and variables, especially for law enforcement (e.g. disaggregated by form of violence, including information on the perpetrator and victim, data on recidivism etc.). To this end, law enforcement and justice agencies, and service providers, should be engaged to strengthen VAWG administrative data collection, and to analyze existing administrative data for the period of 2019 to 2021 to better understand the impact of COVID-19 on VAWG survivors' access to essential services.
- Map existing support services for women and girls who have experienced violence, and conduct dedicated surveys and research (among key stakeholders) on the protection needs of survivors of VAWG, especially as changes may have occurred in the post-pandemic period.

Access to information and communications technology

- Conduct a dedicated survey or revise existing household, population-based surveys to assess the digital gender divide, with gender analysis as well as analysis based on other factors, such as area (rural and urban locations), age, education level, socio-economic group, etc.
- Conduct rapid assessments among women and men entrepreneurs (individuals and representing enterprises of various sizes) of their ICT needs and capacities as well as any changes in the use of ICTs as a result of the pandemic.

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- iv. The last census was conducted in 1989. <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/dnss/docViewer.aspx?docID=681#start>
- v. UNDP and Center for Economic Research and Reforms (CERR). [Socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19 in Uzbekistan: Perspectives of Mahalla Representatives. Findings and policy recommendations from a survey conducted in May-June 2020](#).
- vi. The second phase of the survey covering the period of December 2020-March 2021 was conducted in Jan-Apr 2021, with 2330 mahalla leaders out of which 53.3% were women. The assessment of data availability was finalized in December 2020, therefore the second phase of the Mahalla survey was not reviewed for the purposes of this brief.
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- xviii. Ibid.
- xix. For example, data on the annual number of calls was included in government’s submission on Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action Uzbekistan (Beijing +25) in 2019.
- xx. Data from the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan, 16 July 2020.
- xxi. Oparina, D., [Uzbekistan: Domestic Abuse during Coronavirus Continues](#).
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