

Media Update

17 September 2020

United Nations

SECRETARY-GENERAL MESSAGE

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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VIDEO MESSAGE FOR EVENT

**“BUILDING BACK A BETTER FUTURE OF WORK BY ENSURING PAY
EQUITY: A GLOBAL CALL TO ACTION”**

18 Sept 2020

Around the world, despite decades of activism, and dozens of laws on equal pay, women still earn less than 80 cents for every dollar men do. For women with children, women of colour, women refugees and migrants, and women with disabilities, that figure is even lower.

If you had told me this forty years ago, I would have been shocked. But according to the World Economic Forum, it will take 257 years to close this gap.

The early signs are that the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic will make the gender pay gap even wider – partly because so many women work in service industries, hospitality and the informal sector which have been hardest hit.

Women’s unequal status at work feeds inequality in other areas of their lives. Women’s jobs are less likely to come with benefits like health insurance and paid time off. Even when women are entitled to a pension, lower salaries mean lower payments in their old age.

Equal pay laws have failed to put this right. We need to go deeper and work harder to find solutions.

Raising the profile of the gender pay gap is an important step. So I welcome this first International Equal Pay Day, and I congratulate everyone who has made it happen.

We need to ask why women are relegated to lower-paid work; why professions that are female-dominated have lower salaries – including jobs in the care sector; why so many women work part-time; why women see their wages decrease with motherhood while men with children often enjoy a salary boost; and why women hit a ceiling in higher-earning professions. Some of the solutions lie in ending harmful gender stereotypes; removing institutional barriers; and sharing family responsibilities equally. We need to recognize, redistribute, and value the unpaid care work that is disproportionately done by women.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exploited and exposed inequalities of all kinds, including gender inequality. As we invest in recovery, we must take the opportunity to end pay discrimination against women. Equal pay is essential not only for women, but to build a world of dignity and justice for all.

Video link:

<https://s3.amazonaws.com/downloads2.unmultimedia.org/public/video/evergreen/MSG+SG+Intl+Equal+Pay+9+Sep+20/MSG+SG+Intl+Equal+Pay+9+Sep+20+CLEAN.mp4>

ILO

Press release on UNRC's visit to brick kiln at Lahore

Promotion of Decent Work Opportunities in Brick Kiln Sector of Pakistan

Lahore. 15 September 2020: Mr. Julien Harneis, United Nations Resident Coordinator (UNRC), Islamic Republic of Pakistan visited the first brick kiln adopted zigzag technology in Pakistan. This technology is environment

friendly, reduce emissions from brick kilns and cut pollution. Mr. Tayab Ikram, owner of the brick kiln explained the transformation of brick kilns from conventional to modern technology, in detail. Since August 2020, Punjab government has offered interest-free loans to convert brick kilns on Zigzag Technology, he shared.

Mr. Abdul Haq, General Secretary, Brick Kiln Owners' Association of Pakistan (BKOAP) welcomed the UNRC and briefed him on collaboration between the International Labour Organization (ILO) and Association on promoting Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (FPRW).

While interacting with the UNRC, Mr. Ali Shair, Representative of the said brick kiln workers, explains how the Zigzag Technology improves working conditions, in general, and health related issues of the workers, in particular. Mr. Harneis, while applauding Punjab government's offer of interest-free loans, appreciated the initiative taken by brick kiln owner on transformation of brick kilns to modern technology, as back as in 2016. He visited different sections of the brick kiln to comprehend the major changes made under Zigzag and its impact on productivity as well as workers. The collaboration between the ILO and BKOAP on promotion of Decent Work in brick sector is commendable, he added.

Earlier, the National Project Coordinator, ILO, explained that in collaboration with government, employers and workers, the ILO is implementing a project titled "Promotion of Decent Work Opportunities for the Economic Empowerment of Vulnerable Segments of Society". The Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation funds this project. Under one of the major components, it supports implementation of FPRW in the brick kiln sector and aims, partially, from a business development perspective. The project interventions focus on performance improvement and establishing self-monitoring mechanism; provision of 'functional literacy' and rights education to prevent exploitative labour practices and access the existing Social Security services. In addition, it encourages environmentally friendly and cost-effective brick kilns through energy efficient technology.

Mr. Harneis planted a tree on the brick kiln as a token to promote green jobs.

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ILO

MEDIA ADVISORY

ILO to release new analysis of effects of COVID-19 on labour income and markets

GENEVA (ILO News) –The International Labour Organization (ILO) will publish the 6th edition of its report that tracks the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on workers and businesses worldwide.

The *ILO Monitor sixth edition: COVID-19 and the world of work*, and accompanying press release, will be published on Wednesday 23 September.

The latest Monitor looks at labour income losses and the effectiveness of fiscal stimulus packages introduced to lessen the impact of the pandemic on labour markets. It also includes revised estimates on the extent of disruption to labour markets in 2020, and the implications for policies in the remainder of the year.

The report and all associated materials will be under STRICT EMBARGO until Wednesday 23 September, 11:00 GMT (13:00 CET).

For UNOG-accredited correspondents an **embargoed virtual press briefing** will take place on Wednesday 23 September from 09:00 to 10:00

GMT (11:00 to 12:00 Geneva time). Login details will be sent to journalists ahead of the briefing.

Guy Ryder, ILO Director-General, and Sangheon Lee, Director, ILO Employment Policy Department and leader of the team compiling the ILO Monitor, will present the findings at the press briefing.

Embargoed copies of the Monitor and the press release can be made available to recognized media on request.

Audio of the briefing will be available to the Palais press corps and registered journalists after the press conference.

*For further information and to arrange **media interviews**, please contact the ILO Department of Communication: newsroom@ilo.org.*

*For **broadcast coverage and interviews**, please contact: multimedia@ilo.org.*

Joint Press Release

150 million additional children plunged into poverty due to COVID-19, UNICEF, Save the Children say

New analysis reveals the number of children living in multidimensional poverty – without access to education, health, housing, nutrition, sanitation, or water – has increased by 15 per cent since the start of the pandemic

NEW YORK/LONDON, 17 September 2020 – The number of children living in multidimensional poverty has soared to approximately 1.2 billion due to the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a new UNICEF and Save the Children [analysis](#) published today. This is a 15 per cent increase in the number of children living in deprivation in low- and middle-income countries, or an additional 150 million children since the pandemic hit earlier this year.

The multidimensional poverty analysis uses data on access to education, healthcare, housing, nutrition, sanitation and water from more than 70 countries. It highlights that around 45 per cent of children were severely deprived of at least one of these critical needs in the countries analyzed before the pandemic.

Although the analysis paints a dire picture already, UNICEF warns the situation will likely worsen in the months to come. Save the Children and UNICEF are committed to continue to monitor this evolving situation and work with governments and civil society to confront it.

“COVID-19 and the lockdown measures imposed to prevent its spread have pushed millions of children deeper into poverty,” said Henrietta Fore, UNICEF Executive Director. “Families on the cusp of escaping poverty have been pulled back in, while others are experiencing levels of deprivation they have never seen before. Most concerning, we are closer to the beginning of this crisis than its end.”

The report notes that child poverty is much more than a monetary value. Although measures of monetary poverty such as household income are important, they provide only a partial view of the plight of children living in poverty. To understand the full extent of child poverty, all potential deprivations must be analysed directly. This also points to the need to implement multi-sectoral policies addressing health, education, nutrition, water and sanitation and housing deprivations to end multidimensional poverty.

Social protection, inclusive fiscal policies, investments in social services, and employment and labor market interventions to support families are critical to lifting children out of poverty and preventing further devastation. This includes expanding access to quality health care and providing the tools and technology needed for children to continue their education remotely; and investing in family-friendly policies such as paid leave and child care.

“This pandemic has already caused the biggest global education emergency in history, and the increase in poverty will make it very hard for the most vulnerable children and their families to make up for the loss”, said Inger Ashing, CEO of Save the Children. “Children who lose out on education are more likely to be forced into child labour or early marriage and be trapped in a cycle of poverty for years to come. We cannot afford to let a whole generation

of children become victims of this pandemic. National governments and the international community must step up to soften the blow.”

There are not only more children experiencing poverty than before, the poorest children are getting poorer as well, the report notes. Some children may suffer one or more deprivations and others experience none at all, therefore the average number of deprivations suffered per child can be used to assess how poor children are. Before the pandemic, the average number of severe deprivations per child was around 0.7. It is now estimated to have increased by 15 per cent to around 0.85.

“We must act now to prevent additional children from being deprived in basic life needs like school, medicine, food, water and shelter,” said Fore.

“Governments must prioritize the most marginalized children and their families through rapid expansion of social protection systems including cash transfers and child benefits, remote learning opportunities, healthcare services and school feeding. Making these critical investments now can help countries to prepare for future shocks.”

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Notes to editors:

To reach the number of deprivations children are experiencing before the pandemic and today, UNICEF and Save the Children looked at how many children were deprived of each indicator of multidimensional poverty and compared it with the child population in the countries analyzed.

About Save the Children

Save the Children believes in a world in which all children survive, have the chance to learn, and are protected from abuse, neglect and exploitation. Through our work in around 117 countries, we reach the most deprived and marginalised children, helping them survive, learn and be protected.

For more information on Covid-19, visit:

www.savethechildren.net/coronavirusresponse

About UNICEF

UNICEF works in some of the world's toughest places, to reach the world's most disadvantaged children. Across more than 190 countries and territories, we work for every child, everywhere, to build a better world for everyone.

Follow UNICEF on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

[For more information about COVID-19 and guidance on how to protect children and families, visit: www.unicef.org/coronavirus](#)

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