

女性經濟賦權：國際趨勢與對臺灣之政策啟示

Women's Economic Empowerment: Recent Development and Implications

2020 Conference on Global Trends in Gender Equality

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Outlines

- I. COVID-19 pandemic and gender issues**
- II. Women economic empowerment and trade issues**
- III. Implications for Taiwan**



COVID-19 isolation could create 'fertile ground for domestic violence



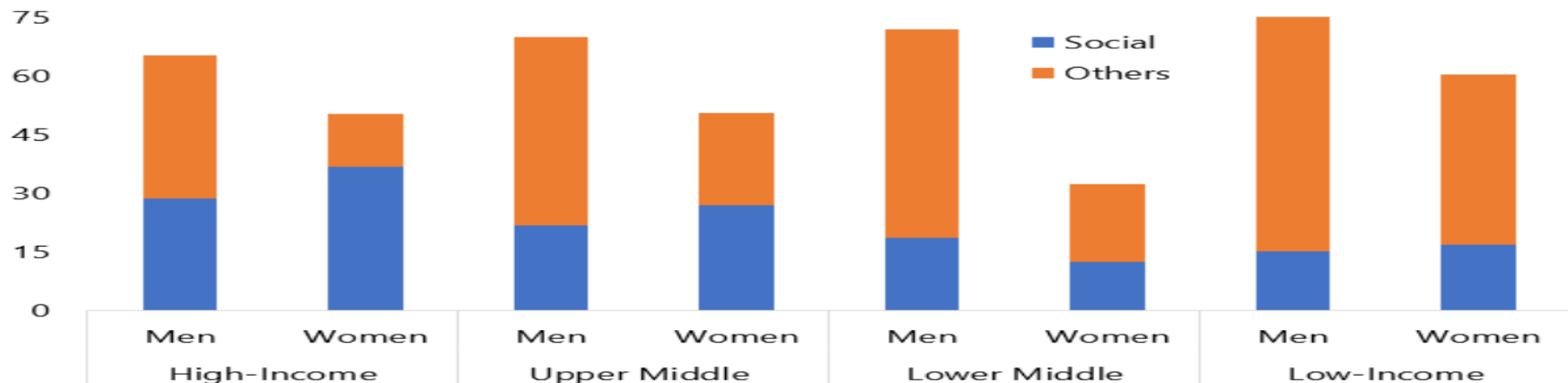
The COVID-19 Gender Gap

- According to IMF & ILO, the pandemic has disproportionate effects on women & their economic status. It requires well-designed policy to mitigate negative effects and prevent setbacks for gender equality.
- ✓ Social sectors are hit hardest by lockdown, social distancing and mitigation measures and have higher unemployment rate.

Women dominate social sectors

In most countries, women are more likely than men to be employed in social sectors jobs.

Total employment (percent)



Sources: ILO and authors' calculation.

Note: Social sectors are defined as the sum of the following sectors: wholesale and retail trade, accommodation and food service activities, real estate, business and administrative activities, education, human health and social work activities, and other services.

Inclusive post-COVID 19 Recovery

- Gender sensitive policies, such as extending income support to the vulnerable, gender-responsive fiscal policies, such as investing in education and vocational training for women & girls.
- Digitalization or digital solutions have been the rescue to lockdowns and other movement restrictions during and post the pandemic. Effective measures are needed to improve women's digital skills in order to prevent further digital gender divide, especially in less developed and poorer countries.
- The WTO releases a report in August pointing out the emerging issues of disruption of global supply chains taking place in many parts in the world. Women are likely to be impacted as they make the main work force in manufacturing industries in many developing countries.
- ✓ For example, garment sector in Bangladesh lost half of its business in the first half of 2020 due to the pandemic. 80 percent of the workers are women and suffer more than men from the economic crisis.

Women's Economic Empowerment – Beijing Platform of Action

- This year marks the 25th anniversary of the development of the **Beijing Platform of Action** adopted in 1995 during the 4th World Conference on Women held in Beijing.
- 189 participating countries committed to taking action in 12 key areas: poverty, education and training, health, violence, armed conflict, economy, power and decision-making, institutional mechanisms, human rights, media, environment, and the girl. Even 25 years later, it remains a powerful source of guidance and inspiration for all countries.
- **Women and Economic Empowerment has 6 Strategic objectives:**
 1. Promote women's economic rights and independence, including access to employment, appropriate working conditions and control over economic resources.
 2. Facilitate women's equal access to resources, employment, markets and trade.

Women's Economic Empowerment – Beijing Platform of Action (cont.)

3. Provide business services, training and access to markets, information and technology, particularly to low-income women.
 4. Strengthen women's economic capacity and commercial networks.
 5. Eliminate occupational segregation and all forms of employment discrimination.
 6. Promote harmonization of work and family responsibilities for women and men.
- These strategic objectives are more relative in the post COVID-19 pandemic era when all governments seek effective measures to recover their economy and adapt to the New Normal.

The WTO and Gender Issues

- The WTO launched the Doha Development Round in 2001, its first multilateral trade negotiations since its establishment in 1995. The multilateral trading system has increasingly adopted gender perspectives into its trade agenda.
- For example, WTO incorporates women's economic empowerment issues into its Aid for Trade programs. In 2017, the *Joint Declaration on Trade and Women's Economic Empowerment* was adopted at the WTO Ministerial Conference.
- For the first time in its history, it will have a woman Director General.

Yoo Myung-hee
Ministry of Trade,
South Korea



Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala
Former Finance Minister,
Nigeria

FTAs and Gender Issues

- **Trade negotiations**
- ✓ Liberalization of agricultural industries – women in agricultural and fishing sectors
- ✓ Liberalization of services trade – health and medical care, retail, education, tourism, cultural sectors.
- ✓ Government Procurement - SMEs and micro business
- **Next Generation Free Trade Agreements** – 21st Century FTAs usually have comprehensive scope, including services, movement of natural persons, human rights, climate change and environment, labour, public health, SMEs, etc.
- ✓ USMCA, CPTPP have gender components, but how to effectively enforce and monitor the implementation?
- Economic Impact Analysis often fails to reflect and address the disproportionate impacts on women and men.
- Challenges – gender issues in digital/green transformation

Women's Economic Empowerment in Taiwan

- The Executive Yuan adopted the Gender Mainstreaming Master Plan in 2006, authorizing all ministries to establish implementation plans to reflect gender perspectives and concerns in policies, laws and regulations. Since 2009, all ministries have implemented gender impact analysis into major work programs.
- Time to review/assess economic and trade policies in the new context of world economy and globalized trade. Whether women 's participation in trade and new economy is improved? Whether women's business networks equally access policy makers?
- **Women and Digital Transformation by MOEA**
- ✓ SME Bureau's training programs of women SMEs in digital trade.
- **Gender Equality Programs 2019-2022 by Financial Supervisory Commission**
- Encourages listed companies to address wage gap between men and women; to improve gender representation of corporate boards of directors by preserving 1/3 of board seats for women.

Challenges for Taiwan

- Most countries will face economic slowdown and restructuring in the post pandemic era and need to review economic and social development plans. Enhancing women's participation in all economic activities will be crucial to inclusive growth and economic and social resilience.
- Taiwan will also need to review its fiscal and economic policy to better improve women's economic empowerment and address their concerns. This includes a review of the implementation of the decade-old Gender Mainstreaming Master Plans and related work programs.
- For example, the Gender Impact Analysis should be effectively implemented into the government's recovery plans for economic/financial/health crisis in the future and its FTA policy.
- ✓ Joining the CPTPP
- ✓ Trade and food safety issues

Thank you for your attention!

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