



Quality Assurance in COVID-19 Crisis Response: Poverty reduction – Leave no one behind

What are the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis for poor, marginalised and vulnerable people?

While all people are faced by movement restrictions, individuals and households who are already most vulnerable will be at least able to access health support or to endure the economic constraints of lockdowns. This will be particularly acute for vulnerable groups such as food insecure households, small-scale farmers,¹ unemployed/temporary workers in the informal sector, indigenous people, minorities or socially marginalised groups, migrants, refugees and displaced people, people with disabilities as well as HIV/AIDS victims. Moreover, women and children, especially elder widows, households lacking external support, headed by a woman or an infant, as well as street children are affected.

Economic consequences: The COVID-19 crisis will have a disproportionate impact on the poor and vulnerable through job loss, loss of remittances, rising prices and social distancing. According to ILO 2.7 billion workers are believed to be affected by lockdown measures (81% of the world's workforce) and millions of businesses are facing dramatic loss jeopardizing the survival of their enterprises and putting at risk millions of workers to lose their jobs and possibly all their income sources.

Lack of access to basic services: Many population groups and individuals are negatively affected with their ability to access essential services, like education and health care and to sustain their livelihoods; often determined by socio-economic status, gender, ethnicity and geography. This concerns amongst others, older people and persons with disabilities facing physical and financial barriers to essential services. Children are not only deprived from education but also from associated services such as school feeding.

Increasing discrimination and violence: With families' loss of livelihoods and potential prolonged family separation due to mobility restrictions, negative coping mechanisms may be adopted, leaving children without care and facing increased exposure to abuse, violence and exploitation, including violence at home, child marriage and child labour. Also, older people and persons with disabilities also face risks of stigmatization.

¹ I.e. subsistence farmers, landless people, fishermen and forest dwellers being particularly vulnerable to disruptions of input supplies, movement restrictions and lack of access to basic services, and nomadic pastoralists who can be highly affected by movement restrictions to access grazing lands.

What measures can we take to ensure adequate consideration of poverty, inequality and vulnerability into response efforts?

- Promote vulnerability / social impact analyses in order to identify specific risks and negative impacts of social exclusion and inequality, as well as potentials to strengthen resilience of poor, marginalised and vulnerable groups.
- Raise poverty, inequality and vulnerability issues in donor coordination groups and in dialogues with partners.
- Ensure that partners employ non-discriminatory approaches, i.e. in terms of equal access to resources and services, and advocate against discriminatory practices and violence.
- Promote the participation of local communities – especially poor, marginalised and vulnerable groups – in decision-making processes about COVID-19 to better understand their specific risks, and to provide the best possible solutions and responses.
- Develop targeted economic empowerment strategies and promote social protection (e.g. social assistance, cash transfers, vouchers etc.) to help poor, marginalised and vulnerable people to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 crisis, and to recover and to build resilience against future shocks.

Some key resources:

[Shared responsibility, global solidarity: Responding to the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19, United Nations 2020](#)

[Social protection and COVID-19 response in rural areas, FAO 2020](#)

[Global humanitarian response plan COVID-19; United Nations coordinated appeal April – December 2020](#)

[COVID-19 will hit the poor hardest. Here's what we can do about it, April 23, 2020](#)

[The ILO's policy framework to respond to the COVID-19 crisis, ILO 2020](#)