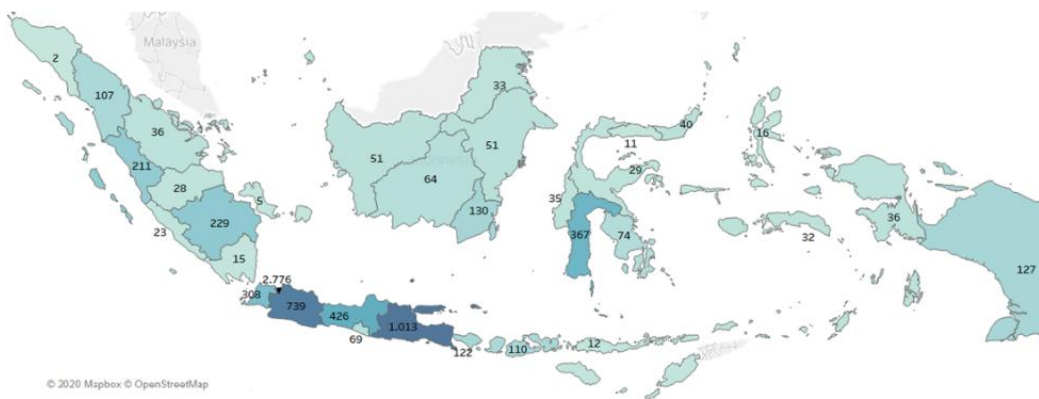


THE GENDER OBSERVATORY: COVID-19 AND THE CRISIS

Number of Women COVID-19 Positive in Indonesia per 16 May 2020

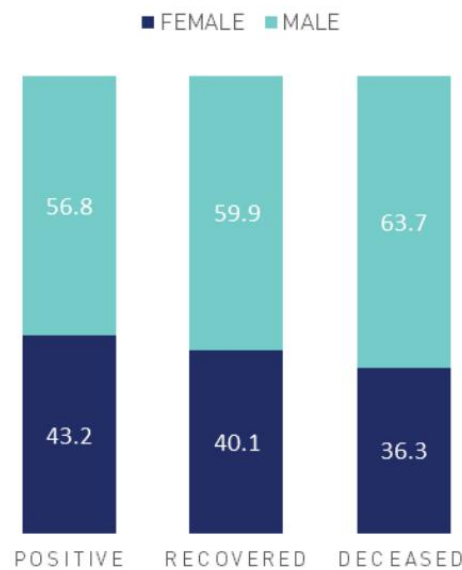


Provincial map of confirmed cases: Darker shading indicates more confirmed cases

Data: <https://covid19.go.id>

Monitoring Update: Gender breakdown of COVID-19 impacts

As of 16 May, 7364 women and girls had been infected with COVID-19 in Indonesia comprising 43.2 % of the total 17,025 nationwide infections. Women also accounted for 36.3% of total deaths (1,089) and 40.1% of 3,911 recoveries across the nation. In Jakarta, the epicentre of the national epidemic, 2,776 women and girls tested positive to COVID-19, accounting for 47.2% of cases in the province. Aceh was the least affected province, two women tested positive making up 11.1% of the total 18 cases.



Editorial

Every crisis affects men and women differently and every study seems to confirm this finding after it is too late to do anything about it. Not this time. Indonesia and its international partners, its leaders and civil society have made strong commitments to gender equity in development. How programs address women's needs and include their voices in the response to economic and social suffering is a real test of how firm those commitments really are. This newsletter has been developed by people who want to ensure that the gendered impacts of COVID-19 are captured, reported and, more importantly, addressed in both government and civil society responses to the pandemic.

This marks the first edition of what will be a monthly newsletter. Its purpose is to share information on how this crisis is affecting women and how both men and women are responding. The newsletter will report on government statistics, results from the many surveys underway, and will include stories from both the women and the local governments on the front line of the response who are prioritising the rights and appropriate interventions for women. As this is the first newsletter, we welcome any feedback, comments or contributions to improve future editions.

Happy reading!

The COVID-19 pandemic has had severe social, health and economic impacts across Indonesia, exacerbating existing inequalities and leaving women and girls facing unique vulnerabilities. Past global health crises have taught the [importance of incorporating gender analysis](#) and including women's knowledge and leadership to improve interventions.

The gendered division of labour has placed women on the frontline of the fight against COVID-19. 74% of Indonesia's doctors and nurses are women. They are exposed to infection through contact with patients and with other medical frontline staff. Despite the inflated risk, half of the country's health workers do not have full medical insurance.

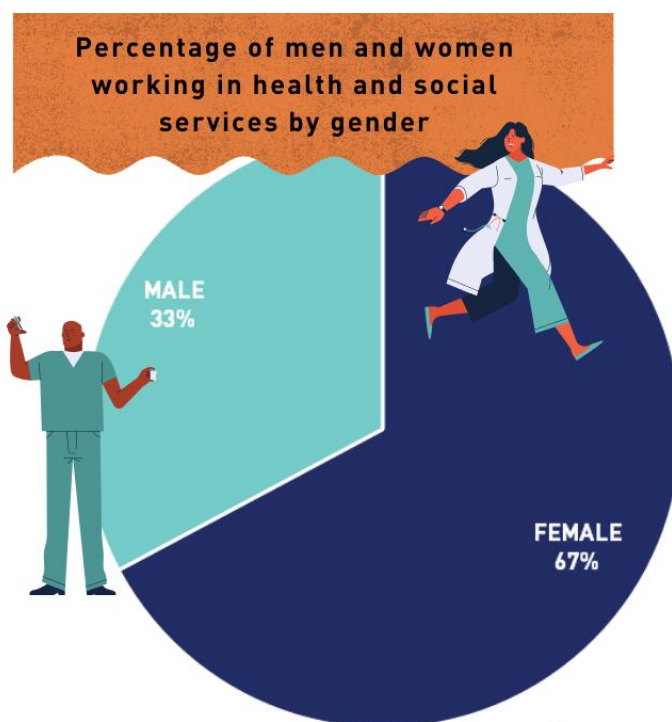
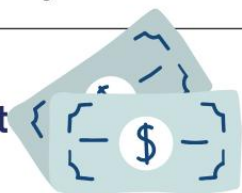
School closures increase women's unpaid work and reduce their engagement in paid work. 39% of women who work have at least one primary-school aged child. This problem is especially severe for female-headed households, which are among the poorest households in the country.

89,000 migrant workers have been repatriated to Indonesia and more will follow. [Migrant CARE notes](#) that approximately 70% of migrant workers are women who face layered vulnerabilities including lost livelihoods and potentially being missed by social welfare programs.

COVID-19 has brought with it a '[shadow pandemic](#)' of gender-based violence, the Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Ministry has [already warned](#) that the outbreak is resulting in increasing violence against women.

Women and the social safety net

Without a social safety net, [Bappenas officials estimate](#) that Indonesia's poverty rate could reach 10.54%, an additional 3.63 million poor people by year's end. As women are overrepresented in many of the sectors most affected by COVID-19 and increasingly vulnerable to poverty, it is vital that they are both included and targeted in social protection measures.



Source:
Sakernas, August 2019
Calculated by Prospera

Responses

Women are also uniquely placed to direct effective responses to the crisis. Across the archipelago, extensive networks of women's groups — for example [BaKTI's](#) Constituent Groups, [Kapal Perempuan's](#) Women's Schools and [PEKKA's](#) 'unions' — are well positioned to oversee program and policy responses. These networks have well established structures, and vast reach into grassroots communities. Many of these networks are already leading effective and empowering localised community responses. They are also good sources for information on localised gaps in social protection coverage.

The government has responded to the pandemic [with enhanced social-protection programs](#), increasing both the number of beneficiaries and the value of the benefits.

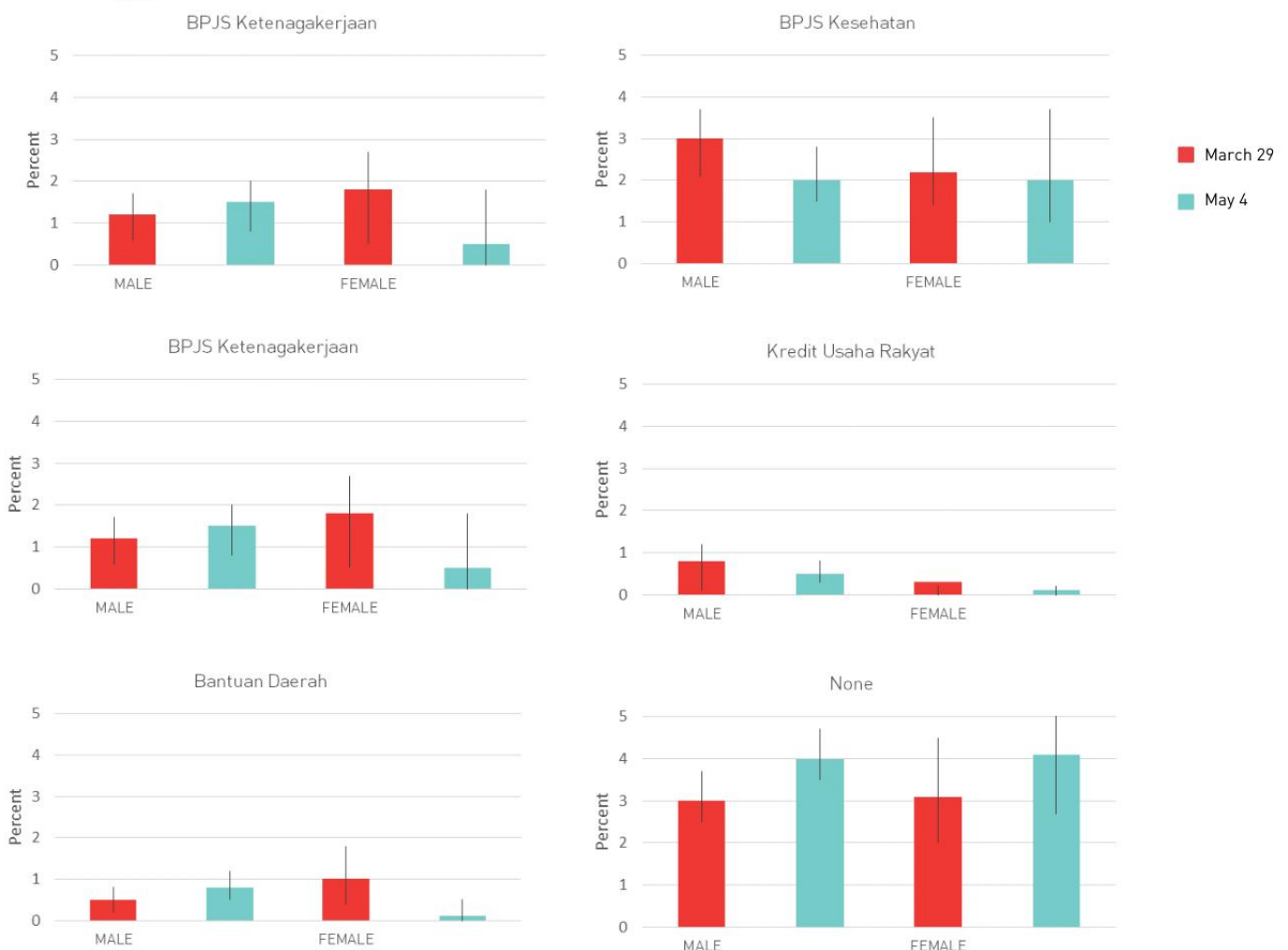
These include the Family Hope Program (PKH) and the Staple Foods Card (Kartu Sembako). The previously announced Pre-employment Card (Kartu Prakerja) has been substantially increased, with a doubling of its budget to IDR 20 trillion over four months.

Households who do not benefit from PKH or Kartu Sembako have also been targeted: in urban areas, 1.9 million will receive food aid from the Presidential Assistance program and 9 million households outside urban areas will receive cash transfers of IDR 600,000 per month. Unconditional Village Cash Transfers (BLT Dana Desa) will support 10-12 million households not registered in the social welfare database, while free or subsidised electricity will be provided to 31 million low income households for 3 months.

It will be important to monitor the roll out of these expansions to identify the gender dimensions of any inadvertent exclusions or errors in targeting, and to identify administrative obstacles to women's access to programs. This is especially so for vulnerable groups such as female-headed households who are amongst the poorest families in the country. To date, no gender-disaggregated data has been made public for any of these programs.



Use of government social protection programs among those who are not working



- Across all weeks, only 25% of men and 23% of women who were not working are covered by BPT/Sembako or PKH
- Use of government programs among those currently not working has been similar across weeks 1-6

Source: [JPAL-SEA](#) online survey of 500 respondents.

Studies on COVID-19 and gender currently underway:

Komnas Perempuan: surveying gender-based violence and policy responses to the pandemic.

MAMPU: implementing a phone survey about the gendered impact of the virus in Indonesia.

Investing in Women and **the Indonesian Business Coalition for Women's Empowerment (IBCWE):**

surveying women members of Business Coalitions about economic impacts of COVID-19 as well as challenges and concerns faced by employees.

PEKKA: preparing a survey of its members across the country, focusing on access to government programs and economic status.

The World Bank together with the **Ministry of Villages:** carrying out a survey of village heads on a weekly, monthly and quarterly basis. Information includes: health and migration (weekly), economic well being, food security (monthly), and social cohesion and access to social programs (quarterly). Information will be tracked in real time.

JPAL-SEA: conducting a bi-weekly online survey to understand the economic impact of COVID-19 in Indonesia (see summary below).

Survey in the spotlight



The Online Survey on Economic Impact of COVID-19 in Indonesia is currently being undertaken by the **Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab Southeast Asia (J-PAL SEA)**. Initial findings cover a period of 6 weeks from 29 March to 4 May and identify key impacts of COVID-19 on 500 Indonesians including:

Employment: there was an increase in unemployment for both men and women from week 1 to week 6. 56% of men and 58% of women were working before, but are no longer working. Job losses are occurring in all sectors.

Food security: 35% of households (but a higher percentage of women) reported "often" eating less than usual due to lack of money with 77% of men and women eating less than they should.

Migration: 38% of men and 34% of women reported moving location since the crisis. Migration has occurred from both cities and rural areas. In the hotel industry 57% of men and 78% of women have relocated.

The use of government assistance programs: for those who were not working remained low across the survey period with 25% of men and 23% of women covered by BPNT/Sembako or PKH. 62% of men and 58% of women received at least one government program since the beginning of the pandemic.

For information about the J-PAL survey, contact Colley Windya at: cwindya@povertyactionlab.org

Kabupaten in focus: Kubu Raya District



Kubu Raya District in **West Kalimantan**, under the leadership of **Muda Mahendrawan**, has implemented a gender-sensitive response to COVID-19 that covers a number of progressive programs and policies, including:

- Stimulating household economies by enlisting women to sew cloth masks, then purchasing and donating these to the community. More than 70,000 masks made by local women were purchased by the district government for IDR 4000 each, simultaneously providing economic empowerment and community protection against COVID-19.
- Buying rice produced by local farmers and distributing it to affected communities to ensure food security, stabilise prices and benefit many PEKKA members who are farmers.
- Developing a special assistance program for poor women heads of households and people with disabilities.
- Providing additional incentives for medical personnel and instructing midwives to conduct home visits for pregnant women;
- Involving women in the local COVID-19 Task Force. Many PEKKA cadres are members of this Task Force who distribute masks, provide community education and sanitise public facilities.



Helplines and links:

- View the Government of Indonesia's official COVID-19 data: <https://covid19.go.id/>
- The Health Ministry's COVID-19 Emergency Hotline: 119
- Report problems related to the distribution of social assistance through the Social Affairs Ministry's complaint service: WhatsApp: 0811 10 222 10, Website: bansoscovid19@kemsos.go.id
- For consultations regarding violence against women contact the National Commission on Violence against Women (Komnas Perempuan) at: +62-21-3903963
- To report issues with the distribution of BLT Dana Desa visit: <http://e-complaint.kemendesa.go.id/>

Insights from KAPAL Perempuan's Director, Misiyah

Misiyah is the Director of KAPAL Perempuan (Institute for Women's Alternative Education), an organisation dedicated to empowering women and developing women's leadership, including through the establishment of informal '[Women's Schools](#)' across the country. Since the onset of COVID-19, Misiyah explained, KAPAL Perempuan pivoted its activities to an emergency response, as it had previously done after the tsunami in Aceh and recent earthquake in Lombok.

According to Misiyah: "KAPAL Perempuan adjusted its approach in different regions in accordance with the communities' needs". In some isolated areas, for example, food security was a pressing concern as well as assistance with schooling children. "In Kupang, the local Women's School was encouraged to enter the policymaking sphere, and become a part of the regional COVID-19 Task Force, advocating for gender-sensitive responses.

In Gresik, KAPAL collected data online, which was adopted by the district government. Meanwhile, in Lombok, the organisation has stressed the importance of food security and self-reliance, including by providing women with vegetable seeds and planting materials. "Misiyah emphasises the importance of gender perspective. The pandemic affects everyone," she said. "But women experience unique and layered vulnerabilities, such as domestic violence, unpaid work, and disrupted access to pre- and post-natal care." Initially, she explained, even the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (KPPPA) was not included in the national COVID-19 Task Force but is now part of it. KPPPA successfully pushed for the publication of gender-disaggregated government data and has provided emergency assistance targeting pregnant women, infants, children, and people with disabilities. They also launched a counselling service and published guidelines on handling violence against women during the pandemic, she said.



Get in touch with the MAMPU Program and provide feedback, comments or ideas for collaboration at: info@mampu.or.id

This newsletter is a product of cooperation between international development programs working on women's empowerment in Indonesia. The monthly publication will collate and present information on how the crisis and mitigation efforts are affecting Indonesian women with the aim of encouraging gender-responsive programs and policies.