



Women RISE: Women’s health and economic empowerment for a COVID-19 Recovery that is Inclusive, Sustainable and Equitable

The COVID-19 pandemic and efforts to control it have threatened livelihoods, introduced new workplace risks and made unstable work relationships even more precarious, especially for women.

To address this, Canada’s International Development Research Centre, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council have launched **Women RISE** (Women’s health and economic empowerment for a COVID-19 Recovery that is Inclusive, Sustainable and Equitable) to support global action-oriented, gender-transformative research by teams of researchers from low- and middle-income countries and Canada.

An externally reviewed, open, two-stage competitive Call for Proposals was launched on March 8, 2022. Projects were recommended for funding by the External Scientific Review Committee on July 21, 2022, and they were approved by the Women RISE Steering Committee on July 28, 2022.

The following projects are funded under **Women RISE**.

Project No.	110011
Project Title	Strengthening preparedness for future pandemics among working women and factory workers living in urban informal settlements in Bangladesh
Lead applicant	Sohana Shafique
Lead applicant institution	International Centre for Diarrheal Disease Research
Canadian Co-PI	Zulfiqar A. Bhutta
Canadian Co-PI institution	Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto
Decision-maker PI	Tahmina Shirin
Allocation amount (CAD)	987,800.00

Abstract

Using mixed-methods implementation research, the International Centre for Diarrheal Disease Research (ICDDR), Bangladesh and SickKids Hospital Toronto will conduct this study in Dhaka and Gazipur in Bangladesh. Through a situation analysis, the drivers of women’s work and health related to the COVID-19 pandemic in Bangladesh will be explored. Formative research will identify barriers and enablers to co-create an intervention involving working women, the community and relevant stakeholders. Implementation research will then test the intervention at the micro, meso and macro level using systems thinking. The Research Team aims to influence policy toward regulating the work environment relating to pandemic preparedness.

Expected results

Expected results include:

- An effective context-sensitive intervention using a system-thinking approach to address gender inequality at the structural and political level.
- Evidence to facilitate formulation of policies to prevent future infectious disease outbreaks and pandemics in Bangladesh and similar settings.
- Policy-relevant information that can be beneficial to regulate working conditions and the private sector.

Project No.	110012
Project Title	Economic and Health Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Adolescent Girls Working in the Artisanal and Small-scale Mining Sector in Uganda and Ghana
Lead applicant	Betty Kwagala
Lead applicant institution	Makerere University
Canadian Co-PI	Lydia Kapiriri
Canadian Co-PI institution	McMaster University
Decision-maker PI	Fred Ngabirano, Ambrose Owusu Amoateng
Allocation amount (CAD)	999,154.00

Abstract

Illegal artisanal small-scale mining of gold is on the rise in Uganda and Ghana. While all people involved are vulnerable due to the often informal and unpaid nature of the work, cultural practices and gender subscribed roles mean that adolescent girls in these communities are especially marginalized. Using mixed qualitative and quantitative methods, Makerere University and McMaster University, together with their partners, will assess the economic and health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on adolescent girls living in unplanned mining communities in Uganda and Ghana. The project aims to influence the reduction of gender-based inequalities resulting from the economic and associated health impacts of COVID-19 and future similar crises on the last mile adolescents working in illegal mining communities in both countries. The project will provide policymakers and programmers with a proto-type process and outputs of a co-developed intervention on which to base future policies and interventions to address existing inequalities.

Expected results

Expected results include:

- An understanding of the economic and health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on adolescent girls living in unplanned mining communities in Uganda and Ghana, how this varied between girls and boys and the coping mechanisms adolescent girls used to support their economic and physical well-being, during the pandemic.
- A detailed list of empirical and literature-based interventions for strengthening the coping skills and fostering resilience of the adolescents living in unplanned communities during the COVID-19 pandemic recovery.
- A proto-type process and outputs of a co-developed intervention on which to base future policies and interventions to address existing inequalities.

Project No.	110013
Project Title	Women Rise Together Across the Life Course (Write-life)
Lead applicant	Diana Karanja
Lead applicant institution	COHESU Community Health Support Programme
Canadian Co-PI	Susan Elliott
Canadian Co-PI institution	University of Waterloo
Decision-maker PI	Frederick Oluoch, Emily Ajiambo
Allocation amount (CAD)	927,884.00

Abstract

Using a parallel case study design in two sites, Kisumu, Kenya, and Mukono, Uganda, that employs an innovative methodology that privileges the voices of women from all socio-economic backgrounds, COHESU and the University of Waterloo will explore how women’s health and work have been impacted by the pandemic. The research will discern women’s needs to address their health and well-being issues and to feel more empowered. The knowledge gained will inform policy and practice to empower women and address the socio-economic and health inequalities sharpened by the COVID-19 pandemic in Kenya and Uganda.

Expected results

Expected results include:

- Increased participation of women in economic activities and education in Kenya and Uganda through improved policies and practices that benefit women of all ages, particularly in the education, health and employment sectors.
- Increased access, for women in Kenya and Uganda, to reliable pensions and geriatric health care services.
- Improved South-South collaboration and strengthened capacities for 3 post-doctoral fellows and 6 graduate students.

Project No.	110014
Project Title	Ukuvula Isango: Women's Empowerment and Post-Pandemic Reconstruction in Rural South Africa
Lead applicant	Leslie Bank
Lead applicant institution	Human Sciences Research Council
Canadian Co-PI	Kathleen Rice
Canadian Co-PI institution	McGill University
Decision-maker PI	Ian Assam
Allocation amount (CAD)	883,598.00

Abstract

This project will be carried out by the Human Sciences Research Council in South Africa and McGill University Canada to address key issues related to the precarity of women in rural areas of South Africa during the COVID-19 pandemic as a starting point for post COVID-19 rebuilding. Using the 'peoples science' action approach in two phases, the team will document and explore women lives before and during the pandemic to identify trends and triggers that elevate or depreciate their livelihoods and health status. In the second phase, the project will use this analysis to explore strategies to enhance prevention in both the health and livelihood spheres.

Expected results

Expected results include:

- Generation of locally sustainable strategies to future external shocks, such as pandemics, that are women-managed and are less dependent on the state and the biomedical system.
- Development of innovative approaches through the 'co-production' of solutions by local women and other stakeholders that will "rebuild better" public health and livelihood strategies.

Project no.	110015
Project title	Post-COVID-19 Recovery: Overcoming Economic Hardship and Violence Against Women in Southern Benin
Lead applicant	Jacques Saizonou
Lead applicant institution	Centre de formation et de recherche en matière de population (CEFORP), Université d'Abomey-Calavi (UAC)
Canadian Co-PI	Anne Emmanuelle Calves
Canadian Co-PI institution	Université de Montréal
Decision-maker PI	Mèdessè Véronique Tognifode
Allocation amount (CAD)	\$992,598.00

Project abstract

Early in the pandemic, in addition to the recommended barrier measures, Benin introduced a *cordon sanitaire*, which separated the south from the hinterland and was intended to reduce the widespread transmission of the virus. These measures had the effect of slowing down economic activity and disrupting social relations at all levels. Women were particularly affected, as they were subjected to an upsurge in gender-based violence. The project is led by the Centre de formation et de recherche en matière de population at Benin's Université d'Abomey-Calavi and by Canada's Université de Montréal. The overall objective of the project is to study the differential effects of COVID-19 and the *cordon sanitaire* by gender and among socio-economic categories of women by shedding light on the increased risks of various forms of violence that women have faced. Combining quantitative and qualitative methods, the project will use primary and secondary data sources and various collection techniques such as surveys and individual and group interviews.

Expected results

They include helping to formulate policies and guide government interventions for gender equality and the fight against gender-based violence. In addition, the project will help build the capabilities of the next generation of women in research and intervention by providing scholarships to women for training in Benin and Canada.

Project No.	110016
Project Title	Endemicity, Care and Gender: Toward Developing Resilience in Malaysia’s Essential Care Workforce and Infrastructure
Lead applicant	Anis Farid
Lead applicant institution	Women’s Aid Organization
Canadian Co-PI	Denise Spitzer
Canadian Co-PI institution	University of Alberta
Decision-maker PI	Mahuran Saro Sariki, Noor Raihan
Allocation amount (CAD)	1,000,000.00

Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic and efforts to control it have threatened livelihoods, introduced new workplace risks and made unstable work relationships even more precarious, especially for women. In this context, the Women’s Aid Organization and the University of Alberta plan to study the experience of women performing paid and unpaid work during the COVID-19 pandemic and assess the effectiveness and relevance of existing policies that govern their working conditions during the pandemic. They will utilize qualitative and quantitative mixed methods to study the burden of care work, formal and informal, paid and unpaid, considering social identifiers, using an intersectional lens (considering combined variables such as race, gender and class) in Malaysia, across Peninsular Malaysia and East Malaysia. These identifiers include ethnicity, gender and class across a spectrum of essential care workers residing in varying household and familial configurations (e.g., single mothers, intergenerational households). Data generated will be participatory, guided by feminist research principles, collected through in-depth interviews, quantitative surveys, focus group discussions and policy assessments, including engagement with key government stakeholders to inform gender-transformative care policies and infrastructure moving forward.

Expected results

Expected results include:

- Government policymakers and the public have an improved understanding of the gendered impact of COVID-19 on the care sector.
- Policymakers are equipped with evidence-based policy options on how to ensure resilience and sustainability of the care sector in times of crisis.
- Community-based researchers are equipped with the necessary skills to conduct, analyze and interpret research for use in policy processes.

Project No.	110017
Project Title	Gender Inequality and Rural Women’s Health in Post-COVID-19 Nigeria: Toward Inclusive and Sustainable Rural Women’s Health in Nigeria
Lead applicant	Andrew Onokerhoraye
Lead applicant institution	Centre for Population and Environmental Development (CPED)
Canadian Co-PI	Francisca Omorodion
Canadian Co-PI institution	University of Windsor
Decision-maker PI	Mary Igharo
Allocation amount (CAD)	999,811.00

Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic and efforts to control it have threatened livelihoods, introduced new workplace risks and made unstable work relationships even more precarious, especially for women. In this context, the Centre for Population and Environmental Development and the University of Windsor will generate robust policy-relevant evidence on rural women and girls’ lives before, during and after COVID-19 periods in Nigeria and the impact on rural women’s inequality status. Their key research question is: What are the context-specific challenges which impact women’s lives before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic? The data will be collected using mixed quantitative and qualitative methods, including life histories and photovoice methods, and will be used to generate robust policy-relevant evidence and to promote the integration of context-specific innovative strategies on gender equality and women’s access to essential health into gender-transformative policies on COVID-19 response and recovery. The research will be carried out in the Edo and Delta States of Nigeria.

Expected results

Expected results include:

- New knowledge on women/girls’ lives and status in rural communities and the impact on their access to essential health services before, during and after COVID-19.
- A tested framework of community-led initiatives to promote rural women’s economic and health empowerment ready for scaling up.
- At least 50,000 women experience improved access to/use of essential health services.
- At least 2,000 policymakers and non-state actors empowered on the integration of gender equality in COVID-19 recovery programs.

Project No.	110018
Project Title	Strengthening the Impact of South Africa's COVID-19 Social Relief Distress Grant Among Unpaid Caregivers of Adolescents Living with HIV
Lead applicant	Darshinda Govindasamy
Lead applicant institution	South African Medical Research Council
Canadian Co-PI	Angela Kaida
Canadian Co-PI institution	Simon Fraser University
Decision-maker PI	Nwabisa Shai
Allocation amount (CAD)	985,217.00

Abstract

This project will be carried out by the South African Medical Research Council and Canada’s Simon Fraser University. It will evaluate a cash transfer plus a gender-transformative economic livelihoods intervention for improving psychological well-being and gender equality among woman caregivers of children and adolescents living with HIV (CALHIV) in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. The mixed-methods research approach will consist of a cluster randomized trial among HIV clinic caregivers of CALHIV. Intervention clusters will receive a monthly cash transfer and the gender/livelihoods intervention while the control clusters will only receive the monthly cash transfer. Qualitative interviews on economic evaluation will assess the feasibility, acceptability and cost-effectiveness of the intervention.

Expected results

Expected results include:

- Pre- and post-intervention impacts on outcomes of psychological well-being, intimate partner violence, depressive symptoms, gender attitudes and earnings will be assessed.
- Results will improve understanding of economic livelihood-based interventions in strengthening caregivers’ psychological well-being.
- Evidence generated will inform and strengthen the current government’s COVID-19 recovery efforts.

Project No.	110020
Project Title	Addressing the Challenges and Constraints of Social Protection Policies for Peruvian Women Domestic Workers
Lead applicant	Janeth Tenorio Mucha
Lead applicant institution	Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia
Canadian Co-PI	Andrew Pinto
Canadian Co-PI institution	Unity Health Toronto
Decision-maker PI	Viviana Cruzado de la Vega
Allocation amount (CAD)	763,599.00

Abstract

Using a community-based participatory action research approach, the Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia (Peru), St. Michel’s Hospital, Unity Health Toronto and the Socio-Economic and Labor Research Directorate of the Ministry of Work and Employment (Peru), will involve women domestic workers unions to examine the working conditions and access to healthcare of women domestic workers in three cities of Peru (Lima, La Libertad and Piura).

Expected results

Expected results include:

- The assessment and comparison of health and working conditions of women domestic workers before and during the pandemic.
- The identification of the barriers that affect their access to social protection policies in the formal and informal economies.
- The co-design of context-adapted recommendations to improve access to health services and social protection among women domestic workers.
- Specific recommendations to respond to the specific needs and context of certain groups (by age, ethnic/race identification, migration status),
- Strengthened multidisciplinary research team capacities including early career researchers and women scientists.

Project No.	110021
Project Title	Improving the involvement of women and adolescent girls working in informal sector in the development of response measures to pandemics
Lead applicant	Madeleine Wayack-Pambe
Lead applicant institution	Université Joseph KI-ZERBO
Canadian Co-PI	Eric Tchouaket Nguemeleu
Canadian Co-PI institution	Université du Québec en Outaouais
Decision-maker PI	Mamadou Cisse
Allocation amount (CAD)	829,316.00

Abstract

Using a mixed-methods participatory implementation research methodology, the consortium of Université Joseph Ki-Zerbo and Université du Québec en Outaouais will address the involvement of women and adolescent girls in informal sector in the development of response measures to pandemics. To achieve this, the team will first conduct a situational analysis to assess the degree of inclusion of adolescent girls and women in the informal sector in the definition of economic and mental health response measures to the pandemic. Secondly, the team will co-develop and implement, with all stakeholders, more inclusive strategies in response measures. Thirdly, the team will assess the implementation and costs of the co-constructed strategies.

Expected results

The project will result in a better understanding and integration of the basic needs and interests of adolescent girls and women in the informal sector according to the diversity of their profile, in post-pandemic COVID-19 response strategies in particular and programs to respond to health crises more generally. A series of outputs, including scientific papers and policy briefs, will be also produced.

Project No.	110022
Project Title	Catalyzing Women’s Involvement in Post-Covid-19 Recovery through Agricultural Cooperatives in Kenya (WINRACK)
Lead applicant	Isaac Nyamongo
Lead applicant institution	The Co-operative University of Kenya
Canadian Co-PI	Cherie Enns
Canadian Co-PI institution	University of the Fraser Valley
Decision-maker PI	David Obonyo
Allocation amount (CAD)	996,515.00

Abstract

The Co-operative University of Kenya and the University of the Fraser Valley seek to explore how COVID-19 has impacted women’s work, participation and health within the agricultural cooperative ecosystem in Kenya. Using a quasi-experimental research design, with both qualitative and quantitative approaches, the study will investigate the factors that underlay impacts of COVID-19 on women’s work, participation and health in agricultural cooperatives in three counties of Kenya - Kiambu, Kajiado and Taita Taveta. The Research Team aims to enhance knowledge on how economic changes resulting from COVID-19 disproportionately affect women and women’s health, and how recovery strategies can be inclusive, gender transformative and health promoting for women. The findings of the study will inform the design of a health-financing intervention in cooperatives.

Expected results

Expected results include:

- Increased women's membership and access to credit by 20% through cooperative membership.
- Increased women’s access to healthcare services by 20%.
- Strengthened capacity of 10 local organizations supporting cooperatives.
- Strengthened institutional and human personnel capacity of cooperatives to enhance their performance.

Project No.	110023
Project Title	Chamas For Change: A Gender-Responsive and Microfinance-Based Approach to Empowering Women and Building Resilience to Health Emergencies in Kenya
Lead applicant	Julia Songok
Lead applicant institution	Moi University College of Health Science
Canadian Co-PI	Astrid Christoffersen-Deb
Canadian Co-PI institution	University of British Columbia
Decision-maker PI	Sammy Masibo
Allocation amount (CAD)	964,253.00

Abstract

This joint Moi University College of Health Science and University of British Columbia research initiative will leverage the pre-pandemic Chamas, a community health volunteer-led program that engages women during pregnancy and the first 1000 days of their children’s lives. The research plans to answer the question of whether participation in Chamas mitigates the effects of COVID-19 pandemic on women’s and children’s health and economic well-being. Chamas provides health education, peer support and access to financial capital to promote equity in maternal, newborn and child health (MNCH). Findings from the research in Trans-Nzoia County, Kenya, will guide the scale-up of the Chamas to improve the health and well-being of women, and strengthen equitable recovery, gender-transformative policies and preparedness for future health emergencies.

Expected results

Expected results include:

- An adapted or strengthened Chamas for Change Program, promoting resilience and mitigating the negative health and economic effects of COVID-19 among women and influencing, social, finance and insurance policies and practice to better serve the needs of women during the pandemic and future health emergencies.
- Contribution to improved access to MNCH services and the creation of better conditions for women and their children during future health emergencies and disruptions.

Project No.	110024
Project Title	Innovation in Resilience to Trauma Programming for Fostering Women’s Post-Pandemic Recovery in El Salvador
Lead applicant	Erica Olson
Lead applicant institution	Asociacion Programa Velasco
Canadian Co-PI	Maria Liegghio
Canadian Co-PI institution	York University
Decision-maker PI	Annie Boyd-Ramirez
Allocation amount (CAD)	831,334.00

Abstract

Using a participatory research action approach, Asociacion Programa Velasco and York University will explore women’s resilience to trauma as an organizing framework for fostering post-pandemic recovery and addressing violence, gender inequalities, and social and economic development in El Salvador. The mixed-methods study includes an environmental scan of trauma and resilience-focused programs, policy and practice analysis, in-depth interviews and focus groups.

Expected results

The expected outcomes include a strengthened network of government, practitioner and academic representatives that is well positioned to influence policy and practice change to promote women’s resilience and health and economic well-being at the local, national and regional levels.

Project No.	110025
Project Title	Identifying Opportunities to Improve the Lived Experience and Health of Working Women in the MENA: From COVID-19 to Recovery
Lead applicant	Jocelyn DeJong
Lead applicant institution	American University of Beirut
Canadian Co-PI	Serena Canaan
Canadian Co-PI institution	Simon Fraser University
Decision-maker PI	Pamela Zhgeib
Allocation amount (CAD)	999,480.00

Abstract

The American University of Beirut and Simon Fraser University will co-lead research to answer the question of what efforts are needed to attract women to the workforce, protect their health and prevent female labour market attrition during 'shocks'. Through analysis of existing surveys in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region with a specific focus on 11 selected low- and middle-income countries (Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Sudan, Tunisia and Yemen), policy analysis and updated regional literature reviews, the team will examine changes in female labour force participation and impacts on health and well-being, before, during and after COVID-19. Using mixed methods, data collection will examine the education, health and early childhood development sectors where women predominate, using Lebanon as a case example.

Expected results

Expected results include:

- A pioneering study on the differentials in labour force attrition and a disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on women vis-à-vis men and the underlying mechanisms.
- Region-wide and country-specific associations between employment and health, and gender-specific changes in these during the COVID-19 period.
- Informed efforts by the Lebanese Ministry of Public Health and the inter-sectoral Early Childhood Development Task Force to promote and sustain women’s labour-force participation and protect women’s health.

Project No.	110026
Project Title	A Participatory Study on Improving the Pandemic Policy Responses to Reduce Adverse Health Effects on Women Workers in the Export Sector of Sri Lanka
Lead applicant	Asanka Wijesinghe
Lead applicant institution	Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka
Canadian Co-PI	Myra Yazbeck
Canadian Co-PI institution	University of Ottawa
Decision-maker PI	Anuradha Kumarasiri
Allocation amount (CAD)	949,974.00

Abstract

The joint Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka and University of Ottawa research will study the relationship between government-sponsored economic schemes to the COVID-19 pandemic and the unequal health and economic shock on female workers in the ready-made garment industry of Sri Lanka at the national level. This will help us understand the magnitude of the disproportionate pandemic shock, identify the existing best practices to mitigate the adverse effect and suggest a fiscally feasible and gender-responsive response mechanism in the future. The study will follow a participatory-research approach, comprising primary data collection using surveys, focus group discussions and key informant interviews to generate evidence for use in policy influence.

Expected results

Expected results include:

- Factory management teams that are better equipped to deal with pandemic situations and have more female workers.
- Industry and national policy response mechanisms effectively address women-specific structural issues in the garment industry.
- Policymakers, stakeholders and the Sri Lankan public are well informed about and adhere to regulations for improving pandemic readiness of factory floor designs and the need for responses to be gender responsive.

Project No.	110027
Project Title	Examining the Socio-economic and Health Vulnerabilities of Female Bushmeat Traders in the Context of COVID-19 in Ghana
Lead applicant	Yaa Ntiamoah-Baidu
Lead applicant institution	Centre for Biodiversity Conservation Research
Canadian Co-PI	Joseph Mensah
Canadian Co-PI institution	York University
Decision-maker PI	Emmanuel Ankrah Odame
Allocation amount (CAD)	892,297.00

Abstract

In Ghana, women faced serious socio-economic and health barriers prior to COVID-19, and there are clear indications that the pandemic has affected women more than men, especially those working in the informal sector. Women form the greatest portion of the informal sector in Ghana, where they sell various commodities, including bushmeat. Even though bushmeat trading has long been a major livelihood activity for women, there is a dearth of knowledge on the health hazards of the trade, including women's exposure to zoonotic diseases. The project is led by the Centre for Biodiversity Conservation Research of the University of Ghana and Canada's York University. The general objective of the project is to examine the interrelated factors that determine women's livelihood challenges and opportunities in the context of COVID-19, drawing on the case of women bushmeat traders in Ghana. The methodology entails both qualitative and quantitative data collection instruments and the participation of key stakeholders in Ghana's bushmeat trade.

Expected results

Expected results include:

- An improved understanding of an insufficiently known livelihood activity for women.
- An increased awareness of the issues among stakeholders and policymakers.
- A mobilization of efforts and resources to enhance the well-being of women participating in the bushmeat trade particularly and to promote gender and health equity in Ghana generally.

Project No.	110028
Project Title	Impact of COVID-19 on Livelihoods and HIV Risk and Vulnerability Among Women Living in Urban Informal Settlements in Uganda
Lead applicant	Susan Babirye
Lead applicant institution	Makerere University School of Public Health
Canadian Co-PI	Craig R. Janes
Canadian Co-PI institution	University of Waterloo
Decision-maker PI	Daniel Byamukama
Allocation amount (CAD)	1,000,000.00

Abstract

Makerere University School of Public Health and University of Waterloo co-led research will study the impact of COVID-19 on employment, economic status and HIV risk and vulnerability among women living in urban informal settlements in two major cities (Kampala and Mbale) in Uganda. Using a mixed-method (qualitative and quantitative) descriptive cross-sectional study, the project will explore the changes in employment (paid and unpaid) and economic status due to the pandemic, its impact on risk and vulnerability to HIV, and the strategies employed by women to cope with COVID-19 related work stress that exposes them to HIV risk and vulnerability. The evidence generated will inform inclusive, sustainable and equitable gender transformative solutions for COVID-19 recovery and future health emergencies.

Expected results

Expected results include:

- Increased understanding of the socio-economic and HIV-related impact of COVID-19 on women living in urban informal settlements.
- Increased understanding of the coping strategies of women living in urban informal settlements and how the existing COVID-19 recovery interventions have been or not been helpful to them.
- A context specific co-designed intervention package for COVID-19 recovery in urban informal settlements.

Project No.	110029
Project Title	Understanding the Gendered Impact of COVID-19 on Young Self-Employed Nigerian Women and Co-Producing Solutions that Foster Better Systems and Well-being
Lead applicant	Olayinka Omigbodun
Lead applicant institution	University of Ibadan
Canadian Co-PI	Srividya Iyer
Canadian Co-PI institution	Douglas Hospital Research Centre
Decision-maker PI	Olafunmilayo Akinpelu
Allocation amount (CAD)	998,444.00

Abstract

The University of Ibadan and the Douglas Hospital Research Centre (Montreal) will study the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and other disruptive events on the work and well-being of self-employed young women vis-à-vis self-employed young men, using qualitative interviews, secondary data analysis and digital storytelling. The co-production with self-employed young women, using policy analysis, focus group discussions and theory of change workshops, will see the piloting and evaluation of the intervention planned to provide co-produced, actionable solutions to mitigate the effects of these disruptors on their work and well-being. The research will be primarily conducted in Oyo State in southwestern Nigeria.

Expected results

Expected results include:

- Increased knowledge of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the working lives (including paid and unpaid work) and well-being of self-employed young women.
- A suitable and contextually appropriate gender-transformative intervention to improve income security and mental, physical and social health and social support systems for self-employed young women.

Project No.	110030
Project Title	Supporting Health and Economic Well-being of Women for an Inclusive, Sustainable and Equitable Post-COVID-19 Recovery in Guinea
Lead applicant	Alexandre Delamou
Lead applicant institution	Université Gamal Abdel Nasser de Conakry (UGANC)
Canadian Co-PI	Vincent Kuuire
Canadian Co-PI institution	University of Toronto
Decision-maker PI	M'mah Dopavogui
Allocation amount (CAD)	1,000,000.00

Abstract

This action-oriented research, led by the consortium of Centre d'Excellence Africain pour la Prévention et le Contrôle des Maladies Transmissibles (CEA-PCMT) of Université Gamal Abdel Nasser de Conakry and the University of Toronto, aims to design and implement strategies that result in centring women’s health and economic well-being in the COVID-19 recovery efforts and future emergency preparedness and response in Guinea. This project aims to analyze the underlying causes of current policy inertia, co-create a gender sensitive multi-sectoral policy framework and work with decision-makers to ensure the COVID-19 recovery and future emergency preparedness and response adopt a gendered approach in design and implementation.

Expected results

Expected results include:

- Scientific publications and training curriculum for decision-makers.
- Ensuring that institutional actors responsible for preparation, response and recovery from health emergencies proactively include gender-transformative and multi-sector measures in the design and implementation of health and economic policies.

Project No.	110031
Project Title	Women in Health and their Economic, Equity and Livelihood Statuses during Emergency Preparedness and Response (WHEELER)
Lead applicant	Evaline Langat
Lead applicant institution	Aga Khan University, Nairobi
Canadian Co-PI	Lisa Avery
Canadian Co-PI institution	University of Manitoba
Decision-maker PI	Bilali Mazoya
Allocation amount (CAD)	981,500.00

Abstract

The Aga Khan University, Kenya and the University of Manitoba will study the gender equality and health equity gaps experienced by the female health workforce (paid and unpaid) in Kenya during the pandemic and how these experiences impacted their physical and mental health, well-being, socio-economic status and livelihoods. In Kenya, the face of the pandemic health workforce response was predominantly female. A majority experienced anxieties, because of limited disease knowledge, limited access to protective equipment, increased COVID disease exposure and infection, and a surge in domestic household responsibilities, including unpaid labour. Yet, the socio-economic and health impacts of COVID-19 on the paid and unpaid female health workforce remains neglected. Using participatory mixed methods (qualitative and quantitative), this project aims to improve understanding of the root cultural, structural, socio-economic and political factors that perpetuate gender inequities in the paid and unpaid health sector. These findings will inform the development of gender-sensitive and transformative health systems that can withstand future emergencies in Kenya.

Expected results

Expected results include:

- A gender responsive, inclusive and sustainable human resource policy and management good practice model that can be applied in a health crisis situation in the Kenyan context.
- A community of practice that will institutionalize the policy recommendations and provide platforms for capacity development.
- Strengthened research collaboration and learning exchange between researchers in Canada and Kenya.
- Build the capacities of emerging young female researchers in Kenya.

Project No.	110032
Project Title	Women Recyclers' Work and Health in the Context of COVID-19 in Ecuador
Lead applicant	Andrea Gómez
Lead applicant institution	Universidad de Cuenca
Canadian Co-PI	Shrikant Bangdiwala
Canadian Co-PI institution	McMaster University
Decision-maker PI	Diana Yañez
Allocation amount (CAD)	997,658.00

Abstract

Using participatory-action research, the University of Cuenca in collaboration with McMaster University, the Ministry of Social and Economic Inclusion and the National Network of Waste Recyclers of Ecuador will assess the health conditions, policy factors, productive and reproductive work affecting women waste pickers in the context of COVID-19 in three cities of Ecuador: Cuenca, Portoviejo and Lago Agrio. The project team, in partnership with local organizations and decision-makers, will co-design and implement intersectoral interventions based on an inclusive circular-economy approach and gender-transformative strategies that address women waste pickers’ health and work conditions.

Expected results

Expected results include:

- An in-depth understanding of labour (productive and reproductive work) and health conditions of a sample of 300 women waste pickers in the context of COVID-19.
- Changes in labour practices for women waste pickers such as improved urban routes and transportation.
- Interventions that improve the occupational health conditions of women waste pickers.
- Strengthening of the organizational practices and governance of the national network of waste recyclers (RENAREC).
- Enhanced capacities of the multi-institutional project team on equity, diversity and inclusion best practices.
- The involvement of strategic stakeholders and key decision-makers in the formulation of public policies that improve the living conditions of women waste pickers.

Project No.	110045
Project Title	Sexual and Reproductive Health of Female Sex Workers in the Post-COVID Era in Argentina
Lead applicant	Valeria Fink
Lead applicant institution	Fundación Huésped
Canadian Co-PI	Sharon Walmsley
Canadian Co-PI institution	University Health Network, Toronto General
Decision-maker PI	Adriana Duran
Allocation amount (CAD)	978,496.00

Abstract

Using a mixed-methods design, the project will describe the sexual and reproductive health status and income protection policies covering female sex workers (FSW) after the COVID-19 pandemic and analyze the feasibility of a comprehensive prevention and care package (e.g., STIs test and treatment, gynecological and proctological care, and gender-affirming services) in order to sustain health care strategies for FSW in the post-COVID era and for future health emergencies. FSWs were severely impacted by the pandemic and are one of the most marginalized and criminalized populations in Argentina.

Expected results

By working in collaboration with the local government and relevant community-based organizations, the study is expected to provide evidence-based data to promote strategies to improve the sexual and reproductive health of FSWs and income protection policies.