**UN Working Group on discrimination against women and girls**

**Questionnaire on women’s and girls’ human security in the context of poverty and inequality**

**Introduction**

The Working Group on discrimination against women and girls, in preparation for its thematic report to be presented at the 53rd session of the Human Rights Council in June 2023, will be examining the topic of women’s and girls’ human security in the context of poverty and inequality. Human security can be understood as the protection from severe and critical threats encountered by persons and communities, and it encompasses economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security, and political security. The human security approach means creating systems that give people the building blocks of *survival, livelihood and dignity*. Human security is comprehensive, multidimensional, context-specific, and prevention-oriented. The common understanding of the concept reached by the UN General Assembly (UNGA) in 2012 (A/Res/66/290) affirms that human security includes the *right* of people to live in freedom and dignity, free from poverty and despair, stressing that all individuals, in particular those living in *situations of vulnerability,* are entitled to an equal opportunity to enjoy all their rights, and it specifically asserts that human security ‘equally considers’ *all* human rights: civil, political, economic, social and cultural. As such, the scope of this questionnaire will cover the various aspects of risks experienced by women and girls living in poverty and inequality in relation to the enjoyment and fulfilment of their human rights. For more information on the report, please refer to the [concept note](https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/women/wg/cfi-poverty-inequality/2022-09-07/CFI-poverty-and-inequality-Concept-Note-EN.pdf).

In this regard, the Working Group would like to seek inputs from the States, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other stakeholders, such as National Human Rights Institutions, international economic institutions, and academic institutions or human rights clinics, to inform the preparation of the report in line with its mandate to maintain a constructive approach and dialogue with States and other stakeholders. The Working Group would greatly appreciate it if you could reply by 31 October 2022 in a Word document of no more than 2,500 words to the following email address: hrc-wg-discriminationwomen@un.org. Responses to the questionnaire will be made publicly available at the time of the report publication, unless requested otherwise.

The specific objectives of the thematic report are to:

* Identify the causes of structural discrimination in the realization of human rights, especially lack of access to economic and social rights, due to cross-cutting risk factors stemming from both gender inequality and socioeconomic inequality;
* Deepen the understanding of the implications for women’s and girls’ multiple human insecurities and vulnerability to experiencing human rights abuses primarily in the socioeconomic dimension of their lives, leading to a series of other violations, including lack of access to justice and undue/disproportionate/excessive criminalization;
* Reveal the opportunities for strengthening women’s and girls’ human security and socioeconomic equality (e.g. obligations of *prevention* of human rights’ violations by identifying risk factors and addressing known risks; norms and policies for countering women’s and girls’ poverty; norms and policies for reducing economic inequality, such as taxation, debt and redistribution measures, gendered perspective in free trade agreements, and gendered budgeting in economic and social policy);
* Identify promising approaches and make recommendations for promoting and protecting women’s and girls’ human security, through addressing their condition of poverty and socioeconomic inequality due to systemic gender-based discrimination.

 *Relevant data*

1. What are the general levels of poverty in your country/region and those specifically of women and girls?
2. Which are the levels of economic inequality in your country/region? Could you present disaggregated data concerning women and girls?
3. Also, please present if available, disaggregated data on the specific conditions of such women in poverty (e.g., whether they belong to an ethnic or religious minority, are indigenous, migrants, asylum-seekers, stateless or refugees).

*Risks and structural barriers*

1. In which way are girls and women living in poverty or experiencing a situation of economic and social marginalization/disadvantage exposed to threats or risks in your country/region? In particular, in terms of:
* having difficulty with accessing social security, health care, housing, water, food, education, employment.
* being in a situation of homelessness or experiencing social exclusion and economic ‘unfreedom’
* facing violence or discrimination, or stigmatization due to living in poverty
* lacking access to justice and reparations for violations of their rights
* facing undue/disproportionate or excessive criminalization for different causes
1. What is the legal and policy framework in your country/region to address such risks and prevent human rights violations affecting women and girls in poverty?
2. Are there any particular groups of women and girls most at risk or conditions that especially determine barriers for women and girls to access such rights and why (such as by living in poverty, working in the informal labor market, unpaid care work or domestic work, migrant, asylum-seeker, refugee or stateless status, race, ethnicity, religion, age, gender identity, sexual orientation).
3. Are there laws and/or practices in your country/region which differentiate between persons on the basis of sex or gender, i.e., between girls and boys to access education, ability for men and women, both inside and outside marriage, to enter into contracts, own/administer property, purchase land and/or housing, own/administer business, and gain access to credit? If so, what are they?
4. How would you say that structural obstacles, and ongoing phenomena or threats in your country (such as the Covid-19 pandemic, climate change, ongoing conflict, etc.) impact on risks for women and girls, particularly in the way women and girls access economic and social rights?
5. Are there any specific actors, such as business corporations, or macroeconomic norms or policies in your country/region -such as trade agreements, taxation, debt and redistribution measures- that create particular or disproportionate risks or concrete human rights violations for women and girls?
6. Is there any legal framework or policy, program or part of your work, that focuses on the role of men in preventing economic risks or vulnerabilities of women and girls and/or ensuring the human rights of women in the context of poverty and inequality? Is there any that makes visible or emphasizes the benefits for the whole of society of a gender-equal and inclusive economy?

*Promising practices*

1. What are the concrete ways in which the State –at the executive, legislative or judicial branch- addresses the situation of women and girls’ structural disadvantage in relation to economic and social rights? Are there any particular issues and platforms in which the State protects them from the systemic threats they face due to poverty and inequality?
2. How does your institution/Government/organisation contribute to ensuring girls’ and women’s access to their basic economic and social rights in your national context? Are there particular issues, platforms or levels in which the State/your institution encourage their participation, inclusion and engagement and what role does it play?
3. Could you refer to legal norms and policies for eliminating poverty, as well as for reducing economic inequality, such as taxation, debt and redistribution measures, or specific economic or social policies, and could you specify if they adopt a gendered perspective and/or if there are any specifically directed to women and girls?
4. Could you refer to any good practice or innovative measure or initiative that has helped advance women’s and girls’ socioeconomic human security?
5. How can women and girls participate in decision-making in this area?

*International norms and policies: for UN agencies, offices and institutions, particularly international economic institutions (especially WB, IMF, WTO)*

1. Are there any policies implemented by your organization, or recommended to/applied in States, to protect women and girls from risks and sudden economic shocks derived from crises, and strengthen their resilience and that of the communities they live in?
2. What are the main actions taken by your organizations to reduce poverty of women and girls and/or to reduce their levels of economic inequality?
3. Could you mention any concrete action adopted to promote and protect the economic and social human rights of women and girls?

*Recommendations/ the way forward*

1. What concrete measures should States adopt and implement to eradicate poverty and tackle in particular the situation of women and girls living in poverty and the disproportionate impact poverty has on them?
2. What concrete measures should States adopt to address systemic gender-based/age-based/socioeconomic-based discrimination and challenges affecting women and girls living in situation of poverty?
3. What would be your main recommendation to advance women’s and girls’ socioeconomic human security?