

**Web Conference**  
**20 October 2020 15:00 pm (Korean Time)**

**COVID-19 and Gender Inequality**  
*Crisis of Social Care System and Women's Labor in the Time of Covid-19*

### **Concept note**

On March 11, the World Health Organization declared the outbreak of COVID-19 a “pandemic,” its strongest warning. It was the third time in its history that the organization declared a pandemic, finding COVID-19 so contagious that anyone could get infected anywhere. Starting in Wuhan, China in December 2019, as of 31 August 2020, more than 25.3 million cases of COVID-19 have been reported in more than 188 countries and territories, resulting in more than 848,000 deaths; more than 16.6 million people have recovered. With the outbreak of COVID-19, anyone can be exposed to infection regardless of their race or social class. However, it is an undeniable fact that its impact is further amplifying the inequality gaps in our society, whether it be gender, class, or racial.

In fear of the strong contagious of COVID-19, most countries are protecting their citizens by controlling their movement, for example, implementing lockdowns or quarantine. Such responses to COVID-19 mean that schools and daycare centers are closed, and there is a definite difference in its effect on women and men.

The lockdown or restrictions of people's movement shuttered businesses which is resulting in labor market shock as well as the closing of schools added the extra work of childcare, especially to women. This shows how it is likely that women will take on disproportionately more of the household and childcare duties. Not only the sudden increases in the burden of unpaid work for women, but also instability in labor market have made women more vulnerable than men in times of COVID-19. Most studies have pointed out that women are more likely to lose their jobs during this crisis because of women's over-representation in highly-affected sectors from COVID-19 such as restaurants, hotels, travel etc. Moreover, in Korea, women who are even having a job have been a first priority to be a caregiver rather than men, so that they are cornered by the situation whether keeping a job or caring their family.

Most countries across the world have similarities about the impact on household and market labor with gender inequality. This international web conference aims to examine the question ‘Why Women are always first target in the crisis of labor, Why care work(Unpaid) work always matters to women?’ and to share each city's present conditions, and discuss how to respond to gender inequality issues during the pandemic at the city and international levels. In particular, this conference emphasizes the important roles cities should play as a key implementing agent in solving gender inequality in the era of COVID-19.

At the conference, we will bring together city government, women organizations, women NGOs and grassroots to share their cities' current situation on gender inequality in women's labor and how they are dealing with it. It will also discuss how diverse stakeholders should cooperate to solve gender inequality during and after COVID-19.

## Target Audience

This international web conference is intended to share the current women’s labor issues that different cities are facing in relation to gender inequality in women and caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and discuss different agents’ strategies for post-COVID recovery. This conference is open to not only city governments but also all those interested in gender—non-government organizations, grassroots organizations, and the public—to give their ideas on post COVID-19 recovery.

## Provisional Program

Time	Agenda Items-Description
5 mins	<b>Opening</b>
30 mins	<b>Keynote Speech</b> Eva Kittay (Philosopher. Distinguished Professor of Philosophy (Emerita) at Stony Brook University)
60 mins	<b>Session : Crisis of Social Care System and Women’s Labor in the Time of Covid-19</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Laura Pérez Castaño (President of Metropolis Women, Deputy Mayor of Social Rights, Global Justice, Feminisms and LGTBI of Barcelona City Council, Barcelona, Spain)</li> <li>- Chong Eng(Chair of Women and Family Development, Gender Inclusiveness, Penang State Government, Penang, Malaysia)</li> <li>- Violet Shivutse(Chair of Huairou Commission, Founder of Shibuye Community Health Workers and Regional Watchdog group, Kenya)</li> <li>- Ellen Woodworth(Chair of Women Transforming Cities, Former Vancouver city councilor, Vancouver, Canada)</li> <li>- Dayoung Song(Assistant Mayor of Women and Family Affairs Office, Seoul Metropolitan Government, Republic of Korea)</li> <li>- Sofia Osmark (Secretary General, Union to Union, Sweden)(TBC)</li> </ul>
20 mins	<b>QnA</b>
5 mins	<b>Wrap up and Closing</b>

## Organizer

The Seoul Foundation of Women and Family is an organization established by Seoul Metropolitan Government with the aim to realize substantial gender equality for citizens and encourage Seoul women’s social engagement and improve their welfare. It is dedicated to gender equality research and projects that substantialize the city’s efforts for gender mainstreaming in more actionable ways.

Founded at the Fourth World Women’s Conference in Beijing (1995), the Huairou Commission (HC) is a global social movement connecting grassroots women’s mutual self-help groups across 48 countries to insure their knowledge, empowerment and development priorities are center-staged in policy and programming, locally to globally.

Women Transforming Cities(WTC) provide education, promote awareness and take action on issues such as affordable housing, violence against women, leadership, electoral reform, aboriginal women’s priorities, and the environment. WTC examines the impact different public policies on women and girls using an equity / intersectional lens that includes sex, race, gender, and income.