



**Female educators against
Covid-19 challenges: the
main avenues of self-
organization on the example
of Aragatsothn marz**

Ani Grigoryan

The following is the executive summary of a research work done by Ani Grigoryan with the support of the Women's Fund Armenia, within the framework of a research grant. The aim of the research grant was to determine the impact of the coronavirus on women. The views expressed in this study belong to the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Women's Fund Armenia.

**FEMALE EDUCATORS AGAINST COVID-19 CHALLENGES: THE
MAIN AVENUES OF SELF-ORGANIZATION ON THE EXAMPLE OF
ARAGATSOTN MARZ**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2020 is marked with the outbreak of Covid-19 epidemic worldwide thus highlighting a number of gaps in the social-economic infrastructures leaving them totally paralyzed. While leading think tanks and research groups are reporting on its disastrous impact on the world economy the Coronavirus disease and occasional lockdowns as a means of fighting against it continue to surmount existing problems with regard to vulnerable groups and especially women. School closure and distant learning have been identified as a major problem in the context of Coronavirus disruption leaving students with no possibility of receiving proper education. In addition to this, solid ground has been prepared for more violence against women as well as doubling the share of responsibilities for women.

Given this, the current research aims at identifying the major challenges female school educators have been facing in the aftermath of Coronavirus lockdown and distant learning process. The project has become possible at the generous funding of Women's Fund Armenia. The main research findings are translated into policy recommendations making it possible to publish as policy paper.

Within the framework of the project both urban as well as rural areas have been researched on the example of Aragatsotn region secondary schools and. The main findings lean upon semi-structured interviews with teachers of various age, experience and background. In total 16 interviews have been conducted.

It is unfortunate that various international organizations' findings on the vulnerability and inevitably rising tension on women educators have been verified by the current research. The main finds are below:

1. *Double workload for teachers:* in all cases we have identified that teachers have been doing double work in terms of students' mobilization, selection of teaching platforms, as well as self-training.

2. *Numerous technical issues:* the above-mentioned process has been accompanied by lack of proper internet connection as well as not enough number of gadgets for students to connect to the lesson.
3. *Lack of proper training:* All teachers have received no prior training to conduct distant teaching. Instead, the overwhelming majority of the interviewees have gone through intense self-education process benefitting from online tutorials and experience-sharing with colleagues. Later some of them have been provided with training.
4. *Hidden discrimination against women while being chosen for trainings:* as mentioned above some teachers have been provided with training, however, it still remains unknown how the selection process has been conducted. What is clear is the overall discourse that relatively young teachers show more resilience than older ones. Although this approach has been proved by some older teachers there are cases where older ones have coped with the problem.
5. *More women at schools explained:* The vast majority of school educators in Armenia are female. The majority of the interviewees hold consensus that the main reason for that are “are low salaries...a man can never afford working at school, for women it is acceptable”.
6. *A sense of insufficient appreciation:* In the aftermath of interviews it was evident that female school educators do not feel appreciated enough not exactly in material terms but in terms of moral support.

To sum up, the research revealed that there are a number of problems with regard to female school educators that need more visibility and therefore solutions. The lockdown highlighted this huge set of problems. Thus, this sphere needs more awareness raising measurements as well as proper policies to come up with acceptable solutions.