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**Statement submitted by Engender in consultative status with
the Economic and Social Council***

The Secretary-General has received the following statements, which are being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

Commented [MOU1]: Insert the official name of your organization here; All other elements of the cover page need to stay unchanged.

* The present statements are issued without formal editing.

E/2021/NGO/XX

Statement

Engender is Scotland's feminist policy and advocacy organisation, working to increase women's social, political and economic equality, enable women's rights, and make visible the impact of sexism on women and wider society. Since the outbreak of COVID-19, Engender has sought to draw attention to the highly gendered impacts of the virus and steps to mitigate it.

In Scotland and the United Kingdom as a whole, there has been inadequate policy attention paid to women's needs and a distinct lack of gender mainstreaming. The necessary public health responses to the pandemic have resulted in further displacement of childcare, schooling and other forms of care from public services to women. Engender have estimated that the impact of mothers' lost earnings or productivity during the first lockdown in Scotland equated to £15,082,320 per day as women were working part-time or leaving paid work altogether to care for their children. Women without care responsibilities have also had their labour market participation adversely affected by COVID-19 job disruption, as women, particularly Black and minoritised women, are more likely to have been furloughed, to work in a shutdown sector, and to have been made redundant.

Increases in unpaid work and care, loss of income and increasing levels of gender-based violence have been observed in tandem with worsening levels of stress and anxiety among women. Mental health problems such as anxiety, stress and depression are likely to be exacerbated by uncertainty, fear and long periods of isolation, and carers and mothers are likely to have less time and less disposable income to care for their own wellbeing. Pregnant women and new mothers have seen their maternity care compromised and have been cut off from their support networks, and women experiencing domestic abuse and other forms of gender-based violence have faced heightened barriers to safety, justice, and services.

Of the cumulative social security cuts driven by austerity between 2010 and 2022, 59% will have come from women's purses (Women's Budget Group, 2019). Economic recovery from COVID-19 must not involve further fiscal austerity and should be gender-sensitive, which means investing in a care economy, and recognising, reducing and redistributing unpaid domestic and care work from the household to the state by an increase of accessible, good quality child care and social care (Engender and Close the Gap, 2020). Urgent actions are also required to address the worsening gendered mental health inequalities and the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on minority ethnic communities. Taking an intersectional, gendered approach to economic and social recovery moving forward would enable sustainable economic growth and mitigate the negative health, economic and social consequences of this pandemic.

Word count : 499

Commented [MOU2]: A written statement submitted by an NGO in **general consultative status** must not exceed 2,000 words, and a written statement submitted by an NGO in **special or roster status** must not exceed 500 words.