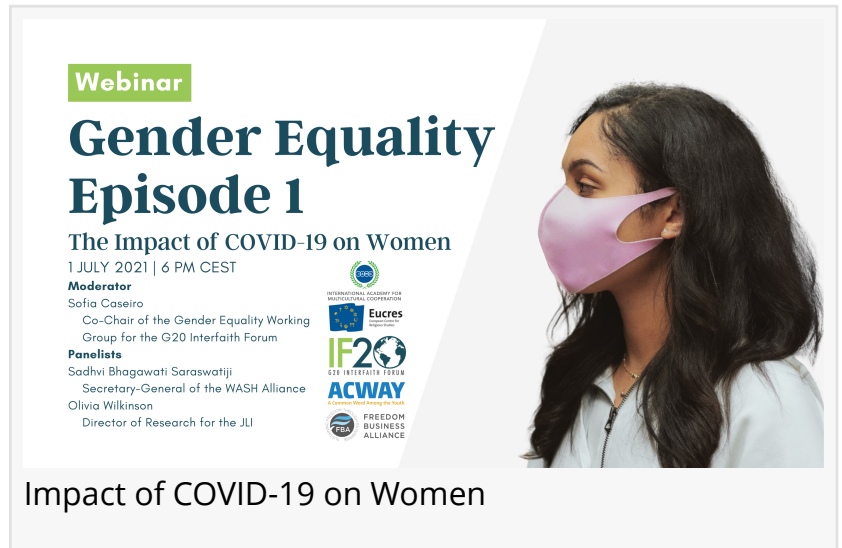


# Prominent Religious Researchers Discuss COVID's Impact on Gender Equality Worldwide

*How the pandemic affected women as a vulnerable sector of the population is a critical issue that needs to be discussed as nations begin the healing process.*

WASHINGTON, D.C., UNITED STATES, June 28, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [G20 Interfaith Forum](#), the world's leading organization focused on the intersection of faith and policy, is gathering religious experts from the humanitarian and research sectors to discuss COVID-19's global impact on women at a gender equality webinar.



**Webinar**  
**Gender Equality Episode 1**  
The Impact of COVID-19 on Women  
1 JULY 2021 | 6 PM CEST

**Moderator**  
Sofia Caseiro  
Co-Chair of the Gender Equality Working Group for the G20 Interfaith Forum

**Panelists**  
Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswatiji  
Secretary-General of the WASH Alliance  
Olivia Wilkinson  
Director of Research for the JLI

Logos: IF20, ACWAY, FREEDOM BUSINESS ALLIANCE, Eucres, INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION FOR MULTICULTURAL COOPERATION

The virtual meeting will take place on July 1, 2021 from noon to 1 pm EDT, focusing on how women have been negatively affected by COVID-19 and analyzing religion's role in promoting gender equality. Register for the [free webinar](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_RTm1QNaVRVaVIDJ2OJ4WHQ) at [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_RTm1QNaVRVaVIDJ2OJ4WHQ](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_RTm1QNaVRVaVIDJ2OJ4WHQ)

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*Dr. Sofia Caseiro*

In the 2017 Beirut Declaration, which enhanced the role of religions in promoting human rights, faith and civil society actors pledged together to “ensure non-discrimination and gender equality” in their efforts.

A UN study shows that in 2020, global gender equality experienced a 25-year setback. According to data, women saw their workload increase through remote work,

household work and increased child care responsibilities as schools and day-cares closed their doors. Violence against women also increased; women were trapped in isolation with perpetrators and left with limited contact to reach for help from already-overburdened support systems in the outside world. The pandemic increased women's vulnerability economically, socially, physically and psychologically.

As religious organizations and faith-based groups are woven inseparably into the fabric of every community, the G20 Interfaith Forum declares that the voices, perspectives, and support of religious actors are essential to any effort in building a more inclusive, peaceful, and equal society.

Sofia Caseiro, head of the G20 Interfaith Working Group on Gender Equality, said the discussion will be essential to the group's efforts to develop policy recommendations for the G20 this fall.

"This topic is essential as we move forward as a society. We need to bring to the discussion how the pandemic affected women as a vulnerable sector of the population, but also how gender equality is crucial in the post-pandemic scenario," Caseiro said. "We need expertise that is based on both experience and research, and the women speaking at this event are uniquely suited to provide that expertise."

The webinar's guest speakers occupy prominent positions in their respective religious and academic communities.

Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswatiji, Secretary-General of the Global Interfaith WASH Alliance (an international organization dedicated to clean water, sanitation and hygiene) and President of the Divine Shakti Foundation, is well-known throughout India and the world for her work with humanitarian causes, sustainable development and women's empowerment. She serves on the UN Faith Advisory Council on Religion, and has been featured on CNN, NY Times, BBC, NPR and more.

Dr. Olivia Wilkinson directs the research of the Joint Learning Initiative on Faith and Local Communities (JLI), focusing on the role of faith actors in the humanitarian and development sectors. Since early 2020, she has assisted with the "Religious Responses to COVID-19" database project, which looks closely at how the pandemic has affected (and been affected by) religious actors and vulnerable communities, including women.

### About the G20 Process

The Group of Twenty, or G20, is the premier forum for international economic cooperation, bringing together the leaders of Earth's most prosperous economies. Collectively, G20 members represent around 80 percent of the world's economic output, two-thirds of the global population and three-quarters of international trade. Throughout the year, representatives from G20 countries gather to discuss financial and socioeconomic issues as well as broader humanitarian issues targeted by the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

### About the G20 Interfaith Forum

The G20 Interfaith Forum seeks global solutions by collaborating with religious thought

leaders and political representatives to help shape the overall G20 agenda. It draws on the vital roles that religious institutions and beliefs play in world affairs, reflecting a rich diversity of institutions, ideas, and values. Through its extensive network of networks, it helps prioritize key global policy goals and point toward practical means of implementation at every level of society.

For more information, please visit [www.g20interfaith.org](http://www.g20interfaith.org).

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