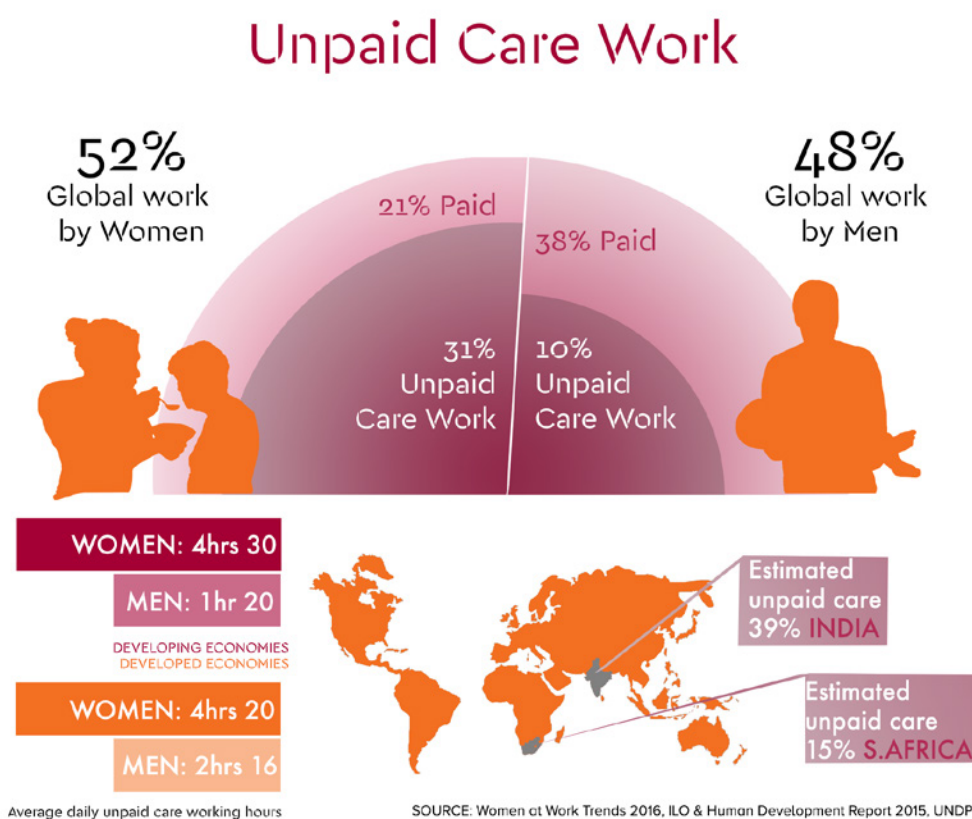


Changing the Care Paradigm, Tackling Discrimination and Closing Gender Pay Gaps



Care has an intrinsic social value. It also has an economic value. Women contribute between **20 – 60 per cent of National Gross Domestic Product** through unpaid care work. Care responsibilities and reproductive roles profoundly affect how women participate in the workforce, including the type of work women do, the positions women hold, the quality of female-dominated jobs and the pay women receive. Even when care work is paid, it remains undervalued and often characterised by poor pay and working conditions. Financial cuts, outsourcing and privatisation contribute to the casualisation and informalisation of paid care work. Redefining care

as a collective social responsibility, funded through progressive taxation systems, is a necessary step in giving women and men the freedom to care and revaluing the way we view paid and unpaid care work.

Care is indispensable to the functioning of our societies and to our well-being and contributes enormously to the economy. Yet, when women have to bear the lion's share of unpaid care work, it limits our choices in other activities, including paid work. Globally, men's share of paid work is twice that of women while women's share of unpaid care work is three times that of men.

Discrimination often follows women into paid work. The evidence of the glass ceiling is just one example. Women hold only 22 per cent of senior leadership positions. Whilst figures vary across regions, globally 32 per cent of businesses do not have any female senior managers. For women of colour, disabled women and migrant women, the figures are even worse. **Occupational segregation** has been pervasive over time and across levels of economic prosperity. In both industrialised and developing economies men are over-represented in higher paid jobs in crafts, trades, plant and machine operations, and managerial and legislative occupations, with women overrepresented in lower paid jobs in the “caring” and service sectors, such as education, health and care services, hospitality, clerical shop and sales work, and in light manufacturing in global supply chains.

put in longer hours, more likely to take leave to care for dependants and to take career breaks to care for small children. This impacts women's earnings over our working life, contributing to the gender pay gap. Again, for women of colour, disabled women and migrant women, for example, the gender pay gap is even higher. As social security systems are based on continuous remunerated employment, women are less likely to fulfil the minimum contributory requirements. Failure to address the gender pay gap adds to the already unacceptably high number of working poor women and translates to more women retiring into poverty. On current trends, the global gender pay gap of 23 per cent will not be closed until 2069. Given that women are overrepresented in low paid work, introducing **minimum living wages** helps to reduce gender pay gaps and lift women out of in-work poverty.

The **gender pay gap** is perhaps the most tangible expression of persistent inequalities between men and women at work and in society. Women make only 77 cents for every dollar men earn. Larger care responsibilities mean that women are more likely to take up part-time work, are less likely to be able to

For the **millions of women working in the informal economy**, the disadvantages are even more pronounced, including lack of access to minimum wages, labour rights and social protection. **Domestic workers** are increasingly filling in the deficits in the public provision of care, but are among the most exploited workers.

Gender Pay Gap



Macro-economic policies play a key role in advancing or hindering gender equality, as they shape the overall economic environment. Adopting macroeconomic policies to boost both short-term and, crucially, long-term inclusive economic growth and that promote women's economic empowerment requires approaches that recognise and prioritise the creation of productive and decent jobs and support existing livelihoods in agriculture and the informal economy. It requires adequate, universal social protection over the life cycle, public investments in social and rural infrastructure, reductions in the amount of unpaid care and domestic work borne by women, and maximising and optimising fiscal space through tax regimes that redress inequality and provide sufficient public resources.

Provision of quality public services such as childcare and elderly care and family friendly workplace policies that help workers balance care responsibilities and paid work are critical factors in promoting gender equality and closing gender gaps. **ITUC research** shows how investing in care can create millions of quality jobs, narrow the gender pay gap, reduce overall inequality and help redress the exclusion of women from decent jobs. Care services must form part of **universal social protection systems**, which provide for income security to the unemployed or underemployed, paid maternity leave, child care and other social and health care support, insurance against lost earnings due to sickness or occupational injuries, and "care credits" for periods spent out of the paid work caring for dependants.

SDG Target 5.4: Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate

The Nordic governments are leading **by example**, through regional and international cooperation to break occupational segregation and gender stereotypes; investment in quality public care, including early childhood education; work-life balance policies such as paid parental leave and flexible working arrangements; and promoting diversity in leadership. Iceland has become the first country in the world to

introduce legislation to mandate equal pay for work of equal value for men and women in both the public and private sectors. The new legislation, set to come into force in 2018, is also intended to address pay discrimination based on race, nationality, religion, age and gender identification.

To contribute to the implementation of **SDG Target 8.5**, the ILO, UN Women and the OECD have launched an International Coalition for Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value between women and men (EPIC). The Coalition includes governments, trade unions, employers, academics and civil society. The broad goals of the Coalition are:

- Increased awareness and greater engagement of the ILO and UN constituents and other key stakeholders at the global, regional and national levels to close the gender pay gap by 2030
- Universal ratification of **ILO Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100)**
- Improved national legislation and strengthened enforcement mechanisms and access to remedies in line with international norms and good practice
- Strengthened national capacity to formulate and implement policies and practical measures to close the gender pay gap

SDG Target 8.5: By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.

Draft recommendations:

1. Organise the unorganised, including in the informal economy, and improve working conditions for care workers, including migrant care workers.
2. Prioritise family-friendly workplace policies and arrangements in collective bargaining agendas and social dialogue
3. Lead by example and make union offices and working arrangements family-friendly.
4. Train union wage negotiators on objective job evaluations free from gender bias, and to encourage pay transparency.
5. Campaign to recognise, reduce and redistribute care work through gender-responsive macroeconomic policies and investment in social infrastructure jobs.
6. Lobby and campaign for universal social protection and national minimum living wages.
7. Challenge social norms that exist around care and women's reproductive roles.

♀ [ITUC Investing in the Care Economy – Simulating employment effects by gender in countries in emerging economies \(January 2017\)](#)

♀ [ITUC Investing in the Care Economy - A gender analysis of employment stimulus in seven OECD countries \(March 2016\)](#)

♀ [ITUC Domestic Workers Unite - A guide for building collective power to achieve rights and protections for domestic workers \(2016\)](#)

♀ [UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment: How to recognize, reduce and redistribute unpaid work and care \(toolkit\)](#)

♀ [ILO Decent work in the care economy \(video\)](#)

♀ [Macroeconomic policy and women's economic empowerment 2017](#)

♀ [IDS Redistributing Unpaid Care Work – Why Tax Matters for Women's Rights](#)

♀ [Nordic Council of Ministers/ILO The Ultimate Balancing Act – Working and Family in the Nordic region \(2016\)](#)

♀ [UN Women/ITUC “At the current rate of progress, no equal pay until 2069”](#)

♀ [Equal Pay International Coalition - Coalition for equal pay for work of equal value between women and men](#)