



STRENGTHENING CARE POLICIES AND INTERSECTIONAL MOVEMENTS FOR CARE JUSTICE:

A Synopsis of the Women Deliver 2023 Pre-
Conference on the Care Economy



Acknowledgements

The Women Deliver Pre-Conference on the Care Economy was made possible through the generous financial support of the International Labour Organization (ILO), United States Office of Global Women's Issues, International Development Research Centre (IDRC), The Asia Foundation (TAF), Equipundo: Center for Masculinities and Social Justice, International Rescue Committee (IRC), Women Deliver, The Cadmus Group, Global Alliance for Care, Early Childhood Development Action Network (ECDAN), and WeProsper.

We are immensely grateful for the support, coordination, and participation of each of the Pre-Conference co-host organizations shown below.



This document was prepared and reviewed by the Pre-Conference project managers, The Asia Foundation (Ankita Panda, Jane Sloane, Alex Solkin); WeProsper (Foteini Papagiotti); Center for Global Development (Kehinde Ajayi, Mary Borrowman, Kelsey Harris, Alba Loureiro); Women Deliver (Kinza Hasan); and the International Labour Organization (Emanuela Pozzan, Dirkje Schaaf) based on notes from Pre-Conference co-hosts and attendees. It may not be comprehensive of all of the discussions or the views of the panelists. For more information about the Pre-Conference and the forthcoming Global Roadmap for Action on the Care Economy, please reach out to Mary Borrowman (mborrowman@cgdev.org); Kinza Hasan (khasan@womendeliver.org); Ankita Panda (ankita.panda@asiafoundation.org); Foteini Papagiotti (fpapagiotti@icrw.org); and/or Emanuela Pozzan (pozzan@ilo.org).

Introduction

In recent years, ongoing conflicts and crises coupled with demographic changes have spurred the urgent need for policy action and financing to support a resilient and gender-transformative care economy. With rising childcare, eldercare, and/or disability care needs, the demand for care workers, including domestic workers, and care-related migration has increased in much of the world; yet, care worker shortages and decent work deficits are persistent. There is an urgent need for evidence-based, robust, and inclusive care policies that increase access to affordable and quality care services, establish the value of and change norms regarding care work, put the voices of care recipients and workers at the center of decision-making, and incentivize greater investment in the care economy.

While some governments are beginning to prioritize the care economy by developing and financing these policies, critical and significant gaps remain. An effective care ecosystem requires meaningful collaboration between governments, the private sector, civil society, care workers, and individual households. To support this collaboration and advance the care work agenda globally, and to build on the momentum of the [2022 Bali Care Economy Dialogue](#), the Women Deliver Pre-Conference on the Care Economy was convened to bring together these stakeholders for an action-oriented dialogue, recognizing that each has a unique and important role. By focusing on policy that influences different dimensions of care, the Pre-Conference aimed to generate recommendations that will build a sustainable, gender-transformative, and resilient care economy for all.

The day-long Pre-Conference was held on July 16, 2023, in the lead-up to the Women Deliver 2023 conference in Kigali, Rwanda. The event was designed to:

1. Identify gaps and opportunities for concrete, tangible policy action and offer a consolidated Global Roadmap for Action on the Care Economy that synthesizes past convenings and supports accountability.
2. Identify opportunities to elevate the care agenda across global platforms with concrete policy asks, such as the G20, G7, APEC, etc. and develop synergies between platforms.
3. Generate a practical discussion regarding the potential of adaptation and scaling of existing regional, national, and local best practices to different regions and countries.
4. Propel and leverage investment across governments, the private sector, and donors in promising models and for civil society organizations leading on care justice.
5. Strengthen joint learning, knowledge sharing, and movement building amongst a diverse set of actors, to support collaborative and transformative movements for care justice.

The Pre-Conference was structured in a way to allow for in-depth and detailed discussions on different elements of the care economy. The goal for each session was for speakers and participants to delve into the specific actions that are needed for advancing the care economy, including who should be involved in this process. Each session featured a set of recommendations and action items which will feed into a larger Global Roadmap for Action for the Care Economy that will serve as a tool for policymakers, advocates, researchers, and donors moving forward.

A brief video recapping the event can be watched [here](#).

Key Recommendations and Next Steps from the Pre-Conference

The following points synthesize the actions and recommendations drawn from the rich multi-stakeholder and cross-sectoral discussions that will be critical to moving the needle on the care economy:

INVEST IN A SUSTAINABLE CARE ECONOMY

- **Increase and diversify financing for the care economy.** Such financing is needed to scale public and private investments in the care economy, and to test, adapt, and scale innovations in care. This could take the form of an endowment or a care fund that provides flexible funding to support innovative care models and movements for care justice. We also need coordination bodies to holistically track and channel financing to address care needs, including from donors.
- **Invest in quantitative and qualitative data collection and technical capacity to support evidence-based policy.** This data should be at the individual level, longitudinal, regular, gender-sensitive, and intersectional; include time-use surveys; evaluate the impact of programmatic interventions in achieving social outcomes; and measure the intersections with GBV, climate change, and structurally disadvantaged populations. Finally, the technical capacity of governments should be bolstered to enable their collection and utilization of this data, including by using qualitative and newer methodologies, such as participatory data, which engages more care recipients and workers directly.
- **Create robust accountability mechanisms with metrics for tracking financial and policy commitments.** Funding and commitments by donors and governments (including bodies like G7, G20, and APEC) must be accompanied by transparent and accessible data and regular reporting. This is critical to track progress, identify gaps, and allow external stakeholders to identify ways in which they can be supportive.



PC: Women Deliver/ Franck Axel Nyabagabo

Key Recommendations and Next Steps from the Pre-Conference

ENHANCE COORDINATION AND COMMUNICATION

- **Strengthen advocacy for care work, particularly through funding the direct engagement of care recipients and care workers in movements for care justice.** This includes sharing evidence that illustrates the extent of care needs and the wide-ranging benefits from investing in care with policymakers. Funding civil society organizations, engaging men and boys, and ensuring representation of care service providers and worker groups are critical aspects of this. Identifying common goals across different advocacy movements, such as gender equality, eldercare, early childhood development, disability care, women's economic empowerment, and worker's rights, will strengthen the larger movement for care justice.
- **Coordinate care policies across sectors to achieve the greatest impact.** Care is not just a gender equality issue, but is inextricably linked to climate change, gender-based violence (GBV), migration, humanitarian crises, labor rights, informal economies, and economic growth. A whole-of-government approach is necessary for the greatest returns on investment and impacts for wellbeing. Government coordination and internal advocacy, including across Ministries of Finance, Planning, Environment, Education, Health, and others is important for both efficiency and impact.
- **Create spaces for knowledge sharing across regions on what works and in what contexts to efficiently implement the most effective policies, and come together at key global moments.** Regional convenings have already consolidated lessons learned from the many national models and policies. Though care needs are context-specific, there are valuable opportunities for learning what has worked in similar contexts that can be replicated and/or adapted, including innovative community models, saving time and resources while fostering collaboration, and creating a global community of practice. Given that care deficits exist within all countries, policymakers across the Global North-South divide can benefit through collaboration and mutual learning. Global and regional coordination around key moments (such as G7/G20, APEC, ASEAN, HLPF, etc.) is also necessary to elevate progress and discuss challenges and solutions.
- **Demystify the care economy and catalyze change around gendered care norms.** Stronger communications and better storytelling are needed to change existing norms about care responsibilities and to create behavior change. This could include awareness campaigns and education around what the care economy means, how care is a shared responsibility, and collecting and disseminating stories that normalize care work, especially how men and boys can shift gender norms.

Key Recommendations and Next Steps from the Pre-Conference

ACCELERATE POLICY CHANGE ACROSS THE CARE ECOSYSTEM

- **Recognize the value of care, and ensure labor rights and decent working conditions are a part of the care economy agenda.** Care workers need rights, wages, and social protections in line with the value of their work to society, including unionization and collective bargaining. Particular policy attention is needed for the most vulnerable care workers, such as migrant, domestic, and informal workers. Ratification and implementation of ILO Conventions, particularly C189 and C190, are key in supporting rights and protections for these workers. Care work also needs to be formalized and professionalized to ensure quality care and decent working conditions.
- **Develop regulatory frameworks which support quality care service provision.** Many contexts lack or do not enforce regulatory systems for existing care services, which can prevent utilization due to quality concerns. In places where the care economy is expanding rapidly, regulatory systems need to keep pace to ensure both worker's rights and that care services are of quality to keep care recipients safe. Methods to do so can include certification options or other innovative models, such as a star rating system, for informal enterprises and skills training to increase quality. Funding is needed to ensure that once regulations are established they are both implemented and enforced.
- **Integrate care considerations into crisis and humanitarian response efforts, including climate change mitigation and response.** Populations affected by emergency, conflict, and crisis face increased care needs that are often complicated with displacement, especially related to childcare. Humanitarian interventions must increase their investment in the multiple dimensions of increased care needs in these contexts, including by funding research that can create replicable culturally-sensitive models. Climate financing should mainstream care considerations and increase funding for civil society organizations in care justice movements, including those for gender equality, to ensure that increased financing adequately integrates the critical intersections between care and climate change.

Key Recommendations and Next Steps from the Pre-Conference

In the coming months, the co-hosts and other interested partners will be building off the recommendations shared throughout the day to collectively develop a Global Roadmap for Action on the Care Economy. This Global Roadmap will provide strategic alignment for the global community as it relates to the care economy. In particular, it will:

- 1** Build on care economy roadmaps developed at the national and regional level.
- 2** Provide a framework for recommendations and actions on the global care economy.
- 3** Outline achievable recommendations and goals over the next two years.
- 4** Identify metrics and/or indicators against which global progress can be measured.
- 5** Pinpoint key moments where the global community can come together to propel action on the care economy.

The following gives more in-depth summaries of the discussions held throughout the day and may be utilized as a reference for attendees and others who hope to continue to build on these best practices and recommendations.

Highlights from High-Level Keynote Remarks

Pre-Recorded Remarks

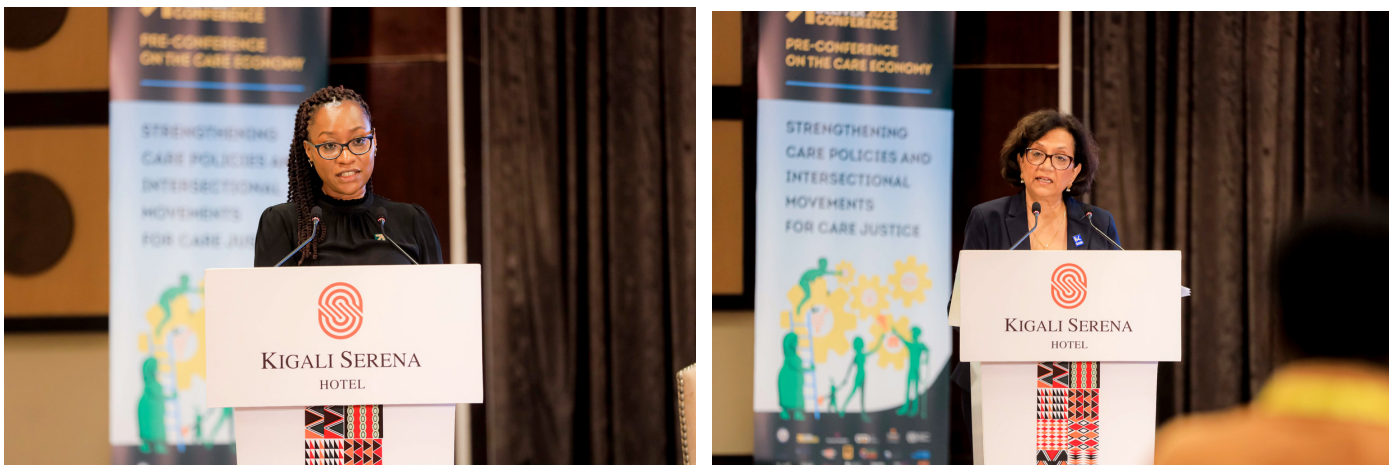
At the beginning of the event, several high-level representatives shared recorded remarks to set the stage for the day's discussions.

- [Gilbert F. Houngbo, Director General, International Labour Organization \(ILO\)](#)
- [Nabila Aguele, Special Advisor, Ministry of Finance, Nigeria](#)
- [Dr. Nadine Gasman, President, National Women's Institute \(INMUJERES\), Government of Mexico](#)

Highlights from High-Level Keynote Remarks

Keynote speakers:

- **Geeta Rao Gupta**, Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues, United States
- **Jeannette Bayisenge**, Minister of Gender and Family Promotion, Rwanda
- **Harjit Sajjan**, Minister of International Development, Government of Canada and **Arielle Kayabaga**, Member of Parliament, Government of Canada
- **Chidi King**, Chief, Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Branch, International Labour Organization (ILO)



PC: Women Deliver/ Franck Axel Nyabagabo

Ambassador Geeta Rao Gupta highlighted how the U.S. government is prioritizing care and showed solidarity with civil society stakeholders and grassroots leaders. Ambassador Gupta emphasized the shared responsibility to develop resilient ecosystems centered around women, care givers, and care receivers. She also met grassroots leaders from the Global South on a brief introduction before the conference. Lastly, she stated the U.S.'s commitment to elevate care at the G7 2023 and APEC summits.

Minister Jeannette Bayisenge provided context on Rwanda's efforts to address care infrastructure needs.

Minister Harjit Sajjan and **Member of Parliament Arielle Kayabaga** announced two major new investments in the care economy from the government of Canada: Time to Care (a \$5.2M dollar investment in Kenya to change gender norms, care policies, and legislation) and Scaling in Care Innovation in Africa (a \$25M dollar investment to scale successful African care models).

Chidi King, emphasized progress on the care economy that has been made over the last few years and the case for investments shown by ILO research, including forthcoming research that shows that every dollar invested in closing the childcare policy gap could result in an average increase of \$3.76 in global GDP by 2035. Chidi also shared powerful tools that have been developed by the ILO - the Care Policy Portal and the Care Policy Investment Stimulator - which can promote action and support national actors in their efforts to make decisions about care investments.



Opening Plenary

Opening Plenary



PC: Women Deliver/ Franck Axel Nyabagabo

Moderated by Femi Oke, Co-founder, Moderate the Panel

Panelists:

- Ankita Panda, Senior Program Officer, The Asia Foundation
- Katja Freiwald, Regional Lead, UN Women Asia and the Pacific Programme on Women's Economic Empowerment and Migration
- Memory Kachambwa, Executive Director, African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET)
- Diana Rodríguez Franco, Secretary of Women's Affairs, City of Bogotá
- Carmen Correa, Chief Executive Officer, Pro Mujer

During the discussion, panelists offered key insights, reflections, and recommendations that emerged from regional convenings on the care economy, including the [Bali Care Economy Dialogue](#), the [Asia Pacific Care Economy Forum](#), the [Women Deliver Americas Conference](#), and the [Africa Regional Sharefair on the Care Economy](#). These convenings emphasize the momentum of the care economy, and how countries and organizations are rapidly engaging with this area of inclusive development.

Opening Plenary

Key insights included:

- While the specific nature of the care challenges may differ from region to region, a lack of disaggregated care data remains a significant constraint across the globe.
- Collaboration and regional cross-learning and knowledge sharing is critical. For strong, robust, and resilient care ecosystems, we must build on existing effective models – not reinvent the wheel.
- Care work is a public good, and access to affordable and quality care services is an economic and human right.
- There is a need to transform care delivery through new models, such as Bogotá's Care Blocks, which offer publicly funded, accessible care services while creating employment opportunities, promoting caregiver well-being and education, and extending support to caregivers' families for a holistic community-centered approach.
- Women bear intersecting challenges that need to be addressed through policy change:
 - Disproportionate impacts of climate change, slow-onset disasters, and government debt increases unpaid care work due to budget constraints that result in limited public care services.
 - Climate financing remains elusive for women in the informal sector. It is imperative that climate finance be increasingly channeled to women and free of any conditionalities.
- Responsibilities for unpaid care work continue to restrict women's labor force participation. The ILO estimates that a 3.6% investment of global GDP into the care economy is required to increase women's labor participation to 56.5% by 2035.

Recommendations for further advancing the care economy included:

- Define and demystify care. No legal or common definition of the care economy exists, which is required to build a strong care justice movement that can influence policy and programmatic change.
- Promote adaptability of innovative care practices across regions, such as the Care Blocks in the City of Bogotá.
- Diversify funding to include public, private, and philanthropic sources, and explore more blended financing (investor + government) models.



PC: Women Deliver/ Franck Axel Nyabagabo



Roundtable Discussions



Participants signed up for roundtables based on their expertise and interest. Each roundtable was facilitated by an expert, with opening remarks and guiding questions. The discussion culminated in a discussion and agreement upon a set of three to five policy priorities for the next two years. Key insights and agreed upon policy priorities are reflected below and were read out at the end of the Pre-Conference.

Roundtable Discussions

Roundtable 1: Policies for Care-Related Migration

Moderator: Vicky Kanyoka, Regional Coordinator for Africa, International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF)

Opening Remarks: Lucy Minayo, Director, Home Based Childcare Initiative (HBCI), Early Childhood Development Action Network (ECDAN)

- **Insights:**

- First, it is important to define what is care work and what is counted as work, such as aspects of unpaid care work.
- Issues specific to migration are also critical to highlight, such as the vulnerability of unpaid workers, issues of intersectionality (i.e. informality and refugee status), and entrenched societal mindsets about care and migration.
- Policy gaps include insufficient attention to the global care chain, which results in lack of care in origin countries, as well as lack of accountability and coordination between ministries and agencies dealing with migrants.

- **Policy priorities:**

- Ratify ILO Conventions, e.g. [C189](#), the Domestic Workers Convention, which only 35 states have ratified, and levels of implementation are varied across these states.
- While ILO Conventions are in the process of ratification and implementation, adopt interim policies to support and protect the rights of care workers.
- Support migrant care workers and care worker groups to advocate for themselves, especially marginalized groups (e.g., refugee or informal workers) by equipping them with the resources, tools (e.g., collective bargaining, negotiation), and the knowledge needed to protect their rights.
- Better integrate migrant care workers' voices into government policies and processes.



PC: IDRC/Yvan Simbi

Roundtable Discussions

Roundtable 2: Investing in Better Care Data

Moderator: Emanuela Pozzan, Senior Gender Specialist, International Labour Organization (ILO)

Opening Remarks: Emanuela Pozzan and Patricia Kitsao-Wekulo, Research Scientist, African Population and Health Research Center

- **Insights:**
 - Public-private partnerships can encourage investment by governments and private funding support for childcare facilities.
 - Data collection should be localized and context-specific.
 - Socialize care early in life to positively impact social norms.
- **Policy Priorities:**
 - Transform existing data collection methodologies so that they are fit for purpose and practical. They should be at individual level, longitudinal, regular, gender sensitive, and intersectional. These efforts should consider:
 - What does fit for purpose look like? This must reflect today's realities and future challenges. One helpful resource could be [Equality Insights'](#) methodology.
 - Push for data collection across genders.
 - Include 'outcomes' that go beyond just describing what unpaid care work looks like – for example, what are the outcomes on women's labor participation, what does shifting norms around care look like (including starting young)?



PC: Women Deliver/ Franck Axel Nyabagabo

- Advance political organizing to support accountability mechanisms for government commitments to demonstrate short- and long-term benefits of investing in the care economy.
- Encourage technical capacity strengthening for governments to ensure efficient data collection.

Roundtable Discussions

Roundtable 3: Engaging Men and Boys in Shifting Gender Care Norms

Moderator: Dr. Wessel van den Berg, MenCare Officer, Equimundo

Opening Remarks: Dr. Wessel van den Berg and Dr. Taveeshi Gupta, Director of Research, Evaluation and Learning at Equimundo.

- **Insights:**

- Incorporate an intersectional framer to redistribute the responsibilities of care work and include men and boys as active players in the care economy. We need to acknowledge that men and boys are not a homogeneous group, and recommendations should factor in systemic oppression that various groups of men and boys face based on their identities. This could be based on socio-economic status, race, ethnicity, ability, sexuality, and others.
- Breaking cultural norms among stakeholders in children's lives is critical to ending intergenerational inequalities. We must address biases and perceptions about care work, including the often underlying belief that care work is not the responsibility of boys and men.
- Integrated social and urban design is needed to encourage men and boys' participation.
- Increased investment towards gender-transformative approaches across sectors can further support men and boys' participation.

- **Policy Priorities:**

- Develop pre-natal protocols for engaging fathers early in the care lifecycle.
- Establish facilities for both cis and trans men for childcare in public spaces and in male-dominated workplaces to normalize their role in care responsibilities.
- Build systems to ensure non-transferable, equal, paid leave for all parents in the formal and informal workforce.
- Include learning modules that frame care responsibilities as everyone's responsibility in schools and other learning spaces for children. Starting early is critical.
- Provide and encourage training for educators, community leaders, and parents on gender-transformative approaches in their classrooms, workspaces, and homes. This includes creating spaces for them to safely and supportively introspect and work through their own biases and perspectives around care work and related inequalities.

Roundtable Discussions

Roundtable 4: Promoting the Eldercare and Disability Care Agenda

Moderator: Virginia Ossana, Programs Advisor, Women Enabled International

Opening Remarks: Maryangel García-Ramos Guadiana, Executive Director, Women Enabled International

- **Insights:**
 - Clearly define who and what we mean when we discuss inclusion and intersectionality in both caregiving and care receiving.
 - Increase disaggregated data and research as tools for policy change around caregiving for elders and those with disabilities.
 - Increase leadership and involvement in decision-making processes by people who are care recipients and caregivers.
- **Policy Priorities:**
 - Identify common objectives between the feminist, eldercare, and disability agendas.
 - Redefine the narrative and concepts on who and what we mean when talking about inclusion and intersectionality in caregiving and care receiving.
 - Conduct research to collect disaggregated data on gender, disability, and age.
 - Promote participatory decision-making, including caregivers and care receivers in policymaking processes, to ensure they reflect the needs, rights, and concerns of those most affected.
 - Guarantee an intersectional approach into other cross-cutting policies (e.g., gender-based violence, social protection).



PC: Women Deliver/ Franck Axel Nyabagabo



Roundtable Discussions

Roundtable 5: Building and Enabling Care Delivery Models through Entrepreneurship, Digitalization and Innovation

Moderator: Katja Freiwald, Head of Women's Economic Empowerment & Migration, UN Women Asia-Pacific Regional Office

Opening Remarks: Maria Liliana Mor, Director of Strategic Partnerships, ProMujer and Katherine Nichols, Senior Consultant, Care Economy Knowledge Hub, Kore Global

- **Insights:**

- While public investment is crucial, the scale needed to transform the care economy also requires mobilizing the private sector. There is an urgent need and opportunity to explore innovative delivery models, including market-driven and blended solutions between the public and private sector.
- Impact investing can play a role to support social innovation and entrepreneurs in the care economy, and Gender Lens Investing can deepen its impact for gender equality.
- Emerging care enterprises provide an array of services for children, elderly, and others needing care. Many of these enterprises are small or medium enterprises (SME), informal, and operating under challenging conditions.
- Digitally enabled care enterprises can provide solutions for more decent work opportunities in the care economy, and companies, impact investors, employers, and governments can help to scale responsible and inclusive care delivery models.

- **Policy Priorities:**

- Policies or regulatory systems should be developed more quickly to be on pace with how the care economy is evolving. This is needed to protect the rights of caregivers and also ensure the quality of services offered.
- Blended finance is an important mechanism to support emerging care enterprises to invest in their businesses but needs to be outcome-based. As part of this process, awareness raising will be needed for caregivers to know their opportunities and entitlements.
- Enhance the quality of services provided to win the trust of care service seekers. To do this:
 - Strengthen skills of care workers, including the use of digital tools;
 - Provide certification options for care enterprises, since the majority are informal; and
 - Build networks to support care workers.

Roundtable Discussions

Roundtable 6: Investing in Childcare

Moderator: Chidi King, Chief Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Branch, International Labour Organisation (ILO)

Opening Remarks: Sumitra Mishra, Executive Director, Mobile Creches India

- **Insights:**

- Diverse communities and care workers need to be involved in policy development. This requires awareness-building and community outreach. Citizens' voices are vital to policy making, and movement building needs to be funded.
- Take a systems approach and promote integrated systems and policies with inclusive design and implementation keeping in mind the regulatory framework in which the policy operates.
- Support caregivers through skills building, training, and community outreach.
- Collaborate and share information across regions and sectors.

- **Policy Priorities:**

- Quality services exist but are often siloed. Invest in publicly financed community models that already exist and are scalable and replicable. Follow the ILO's 5Rs as an overarching framework for policy development and implementation.
- Invest in government and civil society-led awareness campaigns that build understanding of care and address social norms.
- Fund data collection to grow and disseminate evidence and inform and contextualize policies. Build data collection into budget processes.
- Invest in social dialogues that bring diverse community voices to the decision making table to participate in the policy development process.



PC: Women Deliver/ Franck Axel Nyabagabo

Roundtable Discussions

Roundtable 7: Promoting Decent Work for Informal Care Workers

Moderator: Khamati Mugalla, Executive Secretary, East Africa Trade Union Confederation

Opening Remarks: Khamati Mugalia

- **Insights**

- Informal work is frequently related to irregular migration, so these two issues cannot be de-linked.
- From the government perspective, informal work is often concentrated within the labor ministry, but it needs to go beyond a single ministry - health, education, industry, etc.
- Unions can be a pathway to formality; they can work to build trust with workers and convince the government to change policies when it comes to deportation and legal status (for example, so workers are at least paid their wages before deportation).
- Governments should lead on this agenda with additional investment from the private sector.
- When it comes to childcare, there are great models that can be scaled, but there are not many when it comes to reaching the most marginalized informal care workers.
- Regulation of informal care centers should be prioritized alongside implementation and enforcement. To ensure enforcement, government agencies like labor ministries need funding. Communities should also support the regulation and implementation process.
- Informal workforces are most at risk from the effects of climate change. Investing in climate proofing and just transition mechanisms is necessary.
- Where informal childcare centers in informal settlements cannot meet established regulations and thus cannot be formalized, consider innovative solutions. For example, implement a star rating system where centers are evaluated, given a star rating based on baseline indicators, and labor/small business/education ministries provide support to help improve and increase their star rating over time. This would be implemented without a requirement to pay additional taxes as that would serve as an additional impediment to formalization.

- **Policy Priorities**

- Ratify [C190](#), the ILO's Convention on Eliminating Violence and Harassment in the World of Work. This is key as it shifts the definition of "workplace" to the "world of work" and brings domestic work into the formal purview.
- Coordination is essential, and donors need to provide funding for coordination across civil society, government ministries, private sector, and research bodies to design, deliver, and create evidence to action.
- Learn from and scale what is already working in different contexts: look to South Africa for case studies on its strong informal unions, Rwanda for its universal healthcare/childcare scheme, and Kenya for establishing the home as a workplace.

Roundtable Discussions

Roundtable 8: Supporting Community and Cooperative Models for Care

Moderators: Susan Thomas, National Health Coordinator, Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA)

Opening Remarks: Susan Thomas

- **Insights**

- Affordable and accessible quality care services are not as available to low-income communities and vulnerable groups. Care delivery models, particularly community and cooperative models, across the globe have suffered and are facing challenges of financial sustainability and scalability.
- Cooperative models that are owned, managed, and used by informal workers can be innovative and integrated approaches to child care. These models can have enormous positive impacts on both the informal women workers and the community.
- Delve deeper into these models across the globe to understand the different innovations and sustainability of these models, the good practices, and replicable and scalable examples that are best suited for different regions.

- **Policy priorities**

- Make community models more visible across all levels of government.
 - Show the impact of the work by documenting and sharing best practices and conducting evaluations.
 - Conduct community education around demystifying social norms, gender awareness, and the recognition of care.
 - Build community movements that put pressure on policymakers and practitioners to act; equip these movements with critical tools (e.g., collective bargaining, negotiation) to advocate for their rights.

- Engage community activists (at least 30-40% representation) in key decision-making forums; ensure they have visibility with the governments; start at a local level and demonstrate impact before scaling up to national level.
- Organize convenings to amplify our work through forums like Women Deliver, APEC, G20, etc., ensuring that both civil society and government are represented.
- Ensure sustainable financing for community-led models.
 - Conduct evaluations that highlight costing vs. impact.
 - Collect data that demonstrates the impact of community-led interventions on economic growth.
 - Ensure financial sustainability and safety nets for informal workers. Consider innovative funding models like a care fund that would support workers during crises.
- Legitimize care work.
 - Work with governments to provide certifications and qualifications to legitimize care work.
 - Involve the media to highlight the lives of informal workers, either through advertising campaigns or other forums.

Roundtable Discussions

Roundtable 9: Care Intersections Within Emergency Settings and Humanitarian Response

Moderator: Cica Dadjo, Gender Equality Diversity and Inclusion Chief, International Refugee Committee (IRC)

Opening Remarks: Cica Dadjo and Nhial Deng, Coordinator, Refugee Education Council, and Youth Advocate

- **Key Insights**

- The humanitarian, conflict, and emergency space needs to be prioritized within care economy discussions.
- Access to childcare is especially challenging within humanitarian contexts and is often not accessible to refugees, internally displaced persons, and/or stateless groups who lack official documentation.
- In emergency settings, caregiving is amplified with complex challenges as a result of conflict and trauma. As a result, caregiving responsibilities may end up becoming more long-term and complicated by challenges related to mental health and other forms of instability.

- **Policy Priorities**

- Increase investments to the care economy as a key component of supporting humanitarian interventions.
 - Ensure long-term funding towards care when designing humanitarian interventions.
- Promote cross-sectoral programming linking care and the humanitarian context.
- Ensure that care-focused convenings, programs, and policy initiatives have a dedicated focus on the humanitarian context, with the interests of crisis-affected populations in mind.
- Invest in research and the development of care delivery models that can be adapted across contexts, including culturally-specific humanitarian settings.



PC: Women Deliver/ Franck Axel Nyabagabo

Roundtable Discussions

Roundtable 10: Care and Health Workforce

Moderators: Dr. Roopa Dhatt, Executive Director and Co-Founder, Women in Global Health and Francine Sinzinkayo, Senior Program Officer, International Development Research Centre (IDRC)

Opening Remarks: Dr. Roopa Dhatt, Women in Global Health and Dr. Shakira Choonara, World Health Organization (WHO)

- **Key Insights**

- Women healthcare workers have been amongst the most adversely affected by COVID-19. The rising care demands on women health workers have led to increased rates of burnout, resignation of women health workers (especially in high-income countries), and a greater migration of health workers from low- and middle-income countries.
- Women healthcare workers (e.g., nurses) are often subjected to routinely poor work conditions and long work hours for very little pay.
- Data suggests a correlation between rising care demands and violence in health systems toward women, such as increases in hidden violence toward healthcare workers who are providing home-based care.
- Mental health outcomes have deteriorated for many healthcare workers, especially women, in the aftermath of COVID-19 and other ongoing crises.

- **Policy Priorities**

- Fund local feminist organizations to facilitate care service delivery and better advocacy to inform care policy and delivery change.
- Identify opportunities to appeal to policymakers. For example, invite them to observe care facilities, or equip them with data on care work that links to their priority policy areas.
- Leverage tools to elevate workers' rights. For example, collective bargaining and action can be extremely powerful. Health workers have gone on strikes in over 100 countries, which have led to significant outcomes for decent work.
- Explore unionization in countries where unions do not exist (or are nascent) in the healthcare ecosystem; ensure that unions integrate gender and social inclusion in their asks.

Roundtable Discussions

Roundtable 11: An Integrated Approach for Addressing the Care and Climate Crises

Moderator: Flaubert Mbiekop, Senior Program Specialist, International Development Research Centre (IDRC)

Opening Remarks: Bipasha Baruah, Canada Research Chair in Global Women's Issues, Western University and Jemimah Njuki, Chief of Economic Empowerment, UN Women

• Key Insights

- When thinking about care and climate, we are moving from gender-sensitive towards gender-transformative policies, but are not there yet. To be transformative, it is essential to focus on: 1) WASH and energy services; 2) expansion of social protection and services; and 3) social norm change.
- Effective approaches on care and climate include programs which are localized and target adaptation, or which complement programs already happening (no need to start from scratch!).
- Climate-care financing is critical but overlooked and underfunded. To make this happen, conditional guarantees are needed in order to get investments to the place where private finance will want to step in. Additionally, advocacy to mainstream care into climate financing and public/government discourses and incorporate energy considerations into entrepreneurship programming is needed.

• Policy Priorities

- Amplify advocacy and education in order to mainstream care considerations into climate conversations. This should begin at the local level but move up to the state and multilateral levels and work to de-silo the conversation, so that this is not relegated just to climate or gender ministries.
- Push for more climate financing to go to women-led and local organizations, potentially via a new, separate fund. If funding goes to these types of organizations, care will automatically be a policy consideration.
- Increase data and research on care and climate and ensure that it is nuanced and contextual. This is necessary so that our advocacy is also contextual.
- Broaden how we are thinking and talking about care so that it is about care for “people and planet” - this means caring for people, households, animals, ecosystems, and the planet. In order to effectively do this, we must bring more people into the conversation, particularly men that are carers.

Lightning Talks

The event showcased two lightning talks delving into the intersection of care and gender-based violence, along with shifting gender norms regarding care work.

1. **Priya Dhanani** (Ph.D. Candidate, Monash University) emphasized how gender-based violence hinders women's engagement in paid work and highlighted the broad impact of imbalanced care responsibilities across formal and informal sectors for all genders.
2. **Gary Barker** (President and CEO, Equipundo) discussed insights from the recently released 2023 report *State of the World's Fathers: Centering Care in a World in Crisis*. He underscored the need to engage men and boys in discussions about care by promoting stories that normalize male caregiving roles, aiming for these roles to become an integrated societal norm.



Panels



Panel 1: Care and Movement Building in Sub-Saharan Africa



PC: IDRC/Yvan Simbi

Moderated by Diana Macauley, MenCare Global Co-Coordinator, Sonke Gender Justice

Panelists:

- **Lynette Okengo**, Executive Director, Africa Early Childhood Network
- **Joyce Njoki**, Director, Knowledge Management, Collaboration & Learning, Uthabiti Africa
- **Lucy Minayo**, Director, Home Based Childcare Initiative (HBCI), Early Childhood Development Action Network (ECDAN)

As we collectively work to catalyze policy change, budget allocations, and better outcomes across the 5Rs of care work (Recognition, Reduction and Redistribution of unpaid care work, and Rewarding and Representation of paid care work), movements for care justice have proved to be an integral component. Given the location of Women Deliver in Rwanda, as well as the opportunity to build African membership within the Global Alliance for Care, this session focused on assessing and creating action to support movement building on care within Africa, and how we can link national and regional movements to those that are globally focused. Panelists reflected on where things are moving on care work within the region, where there are opportunities and gaps, and what type of support is needed to support movement building (coordinating mechanisms, funding, etc.). Panelists also reflected on what lessons can be learned from movement building in other regional contexts and where there are common themes that can contribute to global agenda setting and advocacy.

During the discussion, **Lynette Okengo** emphasized that “We need to bring together the CSOs and map out the care space, so we aren’t duplicating work. Who can do what where best. And we need to collaborate when we approach government to have a stronger voice.”

Joyce Njoki highlighted that “Evidence-based data is important but even more so, is what do you do with the data,” bringing to light the importance of getting buy-in from technical government workers and presenting them with the data and solutions.

Lucy Minayo outlined HBCI’s mission of building “responsive, coherent and financially sustainable systems that support home-based childcare (HBCC) providers by improving the quality of care, enhancing system coordination and facilitating knowledge exchange” and noted the importance of elevating HBCC providers to ensure they are recognized and supported.

The panelists jointly underscored the importance of: 1) leveraging data to map ecosystems, tailor engagements, and present solution-driven asks to policymakers; 2) advocating to technocrats by working to establish sustainable state-partnerships, establishing support from technical government workers regardless of administration shifts; 3) building on existing platforms to scale-up interventions through local, national, and regional institutions like the African Union, which provide an avenue to drive policy and legal reform and enhance the ecosystem; and 4) collaborating through multisectoral multistakeholder CSO networking at all levels, taking a unified approach to optimize roles and amplify government engagement.

Panel 2: Elevating Care Across Global and Regional Platforms



PC: IDRC/Yvan Simbi

Moderated by Kate Francis, Technical Director, Cadmus Group

Panelists:

- Dr. Jemimah Njuki, Chief of Economic Empowerment, UN Women
- Laura Rawlings, Lead Economist, World Bank Gender Group
- Sumitra Mishra, Executive Director, Mobile Creches India

Care work encompasses a vast array of thematic issues, sectors, and divisions/ministries within organizations, institutions, governments, and multilateral fora. This creates a complexity that requires strategic and effective coordination to make the most of this time when care is on the agenda to achieve the most holistic and impactful policy change. As we look to key upcoming fora and policy moments, panelists considered how we can most effectively work together to this end. During the discussion, panelists provided insights on elevating care at global forums to catalyze government action and commitments.

Dr. Jemimah Njuki discussed the leadership role of the Global Alliance for Care in bringing a multitude of stakeholders together, including governments, to increase care commitments in multilateral and regional fora. The Alliance has particularly centered gender equality and securing the reliance and sustainability of care as critical in their participation in policy dialogues. She discussed the importance of framing in messaging to policymakers, basing it on the principles of universality, inclusivity, solidarity and co-responsibility, and making the case that care is fundamental to social, economic and environmental wellbeing. Growing recognition of care's significance was acknowledged, as exemplified by the UN General Assembly's establishment of the International Day of Care and Support (October 29); however, she argued that to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, conceptions of care must be shifted to a public good and prioritized within policy and financing to create an accelerated path.

Laura Rawlings presented the World Bank's care-related programs and investments across different teams and divisions of the World Bank Group, including the Invest in Childcare initiative, childcare commitments within IDA20, an expanded focus on care within the proposed 2024-2030 Gender Strategy, and the International Finance Corporation's (IFC) Care2Equal project, which will mobilize and support private sector action, innovation, and investment for childcare, elderly care, and mental health care. She also emphasized the importance of partnerships in driving forward momentum, such as between the Middle East and North Africa Gender Innovation Lab and J-PAL to build the evidence base, with UN Women on time-use data and measuring return on investment in the care sector, and with other multilateral development banks (MDBs) in creating coordinated policies and financing.

Sumitra Mishra flagged how fostering G20's care priorities showcased domestic care movements and underscored the need to empower frontline care providers. She noted the importance of investing in the domestic care ecosystem of the G20 host country, as supporting care movements at the national level lays the groundwork for continued progress notwithstanding annual G20 transitions. Sumitra shared her experience working with the Government of Indonesia as part of the transition to G20 India, which helped to carry forward Indonesia's care agenda while also gathering momentum to elevate care as a G20 India priority. At the same time, Sumitra called attention to the urgent need for adequate resourcing to enable care service providers like Mobile Creches to authentically and powerfully engage in global movement building without sacrificing programmatic effectiveness or resulting in burnout among organizational leaders and frontline care workers.

In looking forward to upcoming opportunities and platforms to elevate care, the panelists focused on the G7, G20, and 2023 United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), emphasizing the need to reflect the priorities of service providers and frontline care workers in policy making.

Panel 3: Care Financing Mechanisms



PC: IDRC/Yvan Simbi

Moderated by Flaubert Mbiekop, Senior Program Specialist, IDRC

Panelists:

- Jamille Bigio, Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality, United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
- Diana Rodríguez Franco, Secretary for Women Affairs, City of Bogotá
- Brett Weisel, Global Policy and Advocacy Lead, Early Childhood Development Action Network (ECDAN)

In the midst of strategic discussions on policy priorities, action plans, and creating global roadmaps for care comes the very practical component of how to and who will finance, as well as how we track this financing and assess impacts. Our collective strategy needs to be situated in the realities of the economic landscape, where in many cases there are increasing constraints to fiscal space and numerous important competing priorities. Since our global community has collectively amassed an abundance of evidence on why financing care is critical and the wide ranging benefits, this session focused on how to generate more financing and what mechanisms at the global and local level will support effective programmatic implementation, including tracking and accountability. Care needs and current policy/financing gaps are context specific, yet we need to develop models and coordination to elevate care across global and regional platforms. Panelists spoke to what is needed to secure more, track, and assess the impact of financing, and what lessons can be learned from current multilateral initiatives.

Jamille Bigio emphasized that care is a critical economic and infrastructure imperative, including for the U.S. government. She also discussed U.S. coordination with governments like Congo and Senegal, and other donor governments through the G7, noting how USAID is working bilaterally with the private sector, World Bank, and G7 to put the care economy at the top of the agenda as a critical component to achieve WEE, early childhood development, and gender equity goals.

In her remarks, **Secretary Diana Rodríguez Franco** introduced the care financing model in the city of Bogotá designed as “Care Blocks,” in which the city is organized around the care needs of women, children, and people that are older or who have disabilities. The Care Blocks model provides services (e.g. care itself, training, legal aid, laundry services) for people that give care and people that need care. To set this successful model up, Bogotá reallocated funds from existing infrastructure and partnered with philanthropic donors and international partners like UN Women and the Government of Sweden, Open Society Foundations, the International Finance Corporation of the World Bank, UN Development Programme (UNDP), and UNECLAC, among others. Sustainability of financing was a big consideration in setting up the care program.

Coming from an NGO and advocacy perspective, **Brett Weisel** noted that consistent and coordinated efforts focused on building political will and public demand for financing at all levels are essential to creating change. Input from local stakeholders is critical, and funding to ensure coordinated, locally-driven civil society advocacy is necessary to drive this demand. Brett shared that ECDAN sees an important opportunity for funders in this space to pool their funds to support local advocacy campaigns and bring movements across gender equality, early childhood development, WEE, and labor rights together by funding joint proposals and building capacity for civil society organizations to implement advocacy strategies. Overall, this bottom-up, grassroots approach to build political will and public demand will complement the investments and awareness building happening at the global level.

The panelists were aligned in the need to increase funding, break down silos in donor systems, share information on what we are learning for effective financing, and ensure funding is locally-led and well-coordinated for the greatest impact. Pre-Conference participants were able to learn from innovative care financing models discussed, like the World Bank’s Invest in Childcare initiative supported by the U.S. and other donors, a new locally-led advocacy model proposed by ECDAN, or the model being successfully implemented in Bogotá and consider replicating and scaling it to other contexts.



Strategy Discussion Takeaways



At the end of the Pre-Conference, participants engaged in a brainstorming discussion around strategic ideas, actions, and opportunities for the path forward. In addition to the summary recommendations above, the following ideas were also introduced by participants:



Engage the media, promoting the voices and perspectives of care workers from local communities.

Support the creation of a comprehensive European Union strategy on care-related migration.

Advocate for the integration of gender and care, digital care work, and decent work into the [UN Global Compact](#) on climate action.

Evaluate IMF and World Bank financing on the care economy to better understand where it is going and identify gaps.

Globally promote the UN's [International Day of Care and Support](#) (October 29th).

Identify new advocacy opportunities and global fora for the inclusion of care, such as the [2024 Summit of the Future](#) and the [Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions](#).

Engage new geographies on the care agenda, including the Arab States, utilizing policy models and best practices from countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America where care has been prioritized.

Create opportunities to connect care entrepreneurs with new funding, education, and training.

Increase grassroots representation in global care policy dialogues.

Ensure follow-up to regional care convenings, such as the [Bali Care Economy Dialogue](#), to further collaboration and policy action.

Co-create a care advocacy toolkit that can be widely disseminated.

Participating Organizations

- Africa Early Childhood Network (AfECN)
- African Population and Health Research Center
- Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- CARE International
- Center for Global Development
- Conrad N. Hilton Foundation
- Dharma Life
- Disability Rights Fund
- Early Childhood Development Action Network (ECDAN)
- East Africa Trade Union Confederation
- Echidna Giving
- Equimundo
- Girls Not Brides
- Government of Canada
- Government of Rwanda
- Government of the United States
- HelpAge International
- Hewlett Foundation
- International Center for Research On Women (ICRW)
- International Development Research Centre (IDRC)
- International Domestic Workers Federations (IDWF)
- International Labour Organization (ILO)
- International Rescue Committee (IRC)
- International Women's Development Agency
- J-PAL
- Kore Global
- Mobile Creches
- Montash University
- Nathan Associates, a Cadmus Company
- National Birth Equity Collaborative
- Oxfam
- Pro Mujer
- Rainbow Pride Foundation
- Refugee Education Council
- Réseau des Femmes
- Results Canada
- SAFAIDS Zimbabwe
- Secretariat of Women's Affairs, City Government of Bogotá
- Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA)
- Smart Start
- Sonke Gender Justice
- The Arab Institute for Women
- The Asia Foundation
- The Gender Lab
- Ujyalo Foundation
- United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
- UN Women
- UN Women Asia and The Pacific
- UN Women Rwanda Country Office
- UN Women West and Central Africa Regional Office
- Unbias the News
- UNICONGO
- University of Western Ontario
- Uthabiti Africa
- Victorian Government
- Waiariki Māori Women's Welfare League
- WomComm of CESTRAR
- Women Deliver
- Women Enabled International
- Women in Global Health
- Women's Aid Organization
- World Bank Group
- World Health Organization
- WORLD Policy Analysis Center
- YOHEP