

TransformCare:

UN WOMEN'S VISION FOR
TRANSFORMING CARE
SYSTEMS FOR EQUALITY
AND SHARED PROSPERITY



CARE IS ESSENTIAL YET UNDERVALUED AND UNEQUAL

Care underpins the well-being of societies, economies and ecosystems. Everyone requires care on a daily basis to function. Everyone will both give and receive care at some point in their lives. Without unpaid and paid care work, societies and economies would not function. If assigned a monetary value, unpaid care work alone would represent at least 9 per cent of global GDP.¹ Yet its contribution remains largely invisible in national statistics, policies and budgets.

Care work (paid and unpaid) encompasses direct care for people (physical, emotional and psychological) and indirect care (e.g. household tasks including collecting water and firewood, travel and transport), taking place within and outside the home.

UN. 2024. [Transforming Care Systems in the Context of the Sustainable Development Goals and Our Common Agenda](#). UN System Policy Paper.

DIRECT CARE

Physical, emotional and psychological



INDIRECT CARE

Household tasks including collecting water and firewood, travel and transport.



GLOBALLY, WOMEN PROVIDE NEARLY 3X AS MUCH UNPAID CARE WORK AS MEN

Social norms and gender stereotypes continue to portray care work as ‘women’s work’; a private responsibility rather than a public good. Globally,

women provide nearly three times as much unpaid care work as men.² Disability, age, poverty, race and migration status—among other dimensions—further shape care inequalities, with those who provide and require the most care often being the least able to access care services or social protection.³ Combined with limited public care policies and infrastructure, these care inequalities are one of the greatest drivers of gender inequality, constraining women’s time, choice and opportunities for education, decent work and political participation throughout their lives.

Paid care sectors are also undervalued and highly feminized. Women make up **two thirds of the paid care workforce**, undertaking essential roles in healthcare, early childhood education, long-term care and paid domestic work that are low-paid and insecure.⁴ An estimated **80 per cent of domestic workers worldwide are women, with 90 per cent lacking social security.**⁵ Women migrant domestic workers in particular face heightened risks of exploitation and abuse.⁶ These realities not only undermine the rights and well-being of care workers but also the quality of care itself.

The opportunity costs are stark. Globally, 45 per cent **of working-age women (708 million) are outside the labour market due to unpaid care work responsibilities, compared to just 5 per cent of men.**⁷ The labour market participation of women aged 25 to 54 with at least one child under age 6 drops to **53 per cent compared to 95 per cent for men.**⁸ Unequal care responsibilities are also a primary driver of the persistent global gender wage gaps⁹ and pension gaps¹⁰ that underpin women's higher risk¹¹ of lifetime poverty.

708 MILLION WOMEN

Are outside the labour market due to unpaid care work responsibilities

The current social organization of care work also limits men. Growing numbers of men want to be more involved in caregiving but inadequate care leave policies and restrictive social norms discourage them from doing so.¹²

Conflict, crisis and climate change are intensifying care workloads and unmet care needs. In conflicts

and humanitarian crises, care needs surge as formal care services and infrastructure collapse.¹³ In fragile settings, women spend up to four times more hours on unpaid care work.¹⁴ Climate change, biodiversity loss and environmental degradation are forcing many women and girls—especially in rural, low-income areas—to spend more time collecting household food, water and fuel. In sub-Saharan Africa alone, this amounts to an estimated 40 billion hours annually.¹⁵

The care economy is a critical policy priority.

Demographic shifts, including ageing populations and rising chronic health conditions, alongside increasing climate and conflict crises, mean an estimated 2.3 billion people will require care by 2030.¹⁶ Investing in care systems is imperative to meet these care demands and address current and future social and economic policy challenges.

2.3 BILLION PEOPLE WILL REQUIRE CARE BY 2030

THE OPPORTUNITY: INVESTING IN CARE SYSTEMS DELIVERS A TRIPLE DIVIDEND

INVESTING IN CARE SYSTEMS IS A TRIPLE WIN FOR WOMEN, SOCIETY AND THE ECONOMY

Care economy investments are a powerful macroeconomic stimulus and provide whole-of-society dividends. Nearly 300 million **decent jobs could be created by 2035 by investing in care services and policies, with the majority of those jobs benefiting women.**¹⁷

Each dollar spent on the care sector has the potential to generate 2 to 3 times more jobs than if the same dollar was spent on sectors such as physical infrastructure and construction, **with some of the investment**



recouped through increased tax revenues.¹⁸

Expanded care infrastructure can also reduce gender employment gaps by up to **5 per cent**, with **70 to 92 per cent of jobs in early childhood care and education potentially benefiting women in certain contexts.**¹⁹ Every US\$1 invested in closing childcare policy gaps could yield US\$3.76 in global GDP by 2035, while boosting women's employment rate by more than 10 percentage points.²⁰



Care jobs also have the potential to be green jobs:



an average care sector job can produce **26 times less greenhouse gas** than manufacturing, making care investment both economically and environmentally sustainable.²¹

Investing in care is not only a matter of women's rights, but also one of the most powerful and underutilized drivers of economic prosperity and social resilience.

THE TRANSFORMCARE GLOBAL INITIATIVE: UN WOMEN'S PROPOSITION TO DRIVE CHANGE

TransformCare: A global platform for systemic change

TransformCare is UN Women's global initiative that addresses the undervaluing and unequal division of care work to improve the lives of women and girls worldwide. Through this initiative, UN Women is advancing a vision of care as central to thriving, sustainable and just economies—societies in which care is valued as a public good, recognized as skilled and essential work, and understood as the foundation of equality and shared economic prosperity.

TransformCare supports the multiple levers and entry points needed for transformative change across the [6R Framework](#) (recognize, reduce, redistribute, reward, represent and resource care). The initiative is anchored in the [UN Women Strategic Plan 2026–2029](#) and is a core pillar of the [UN Women Women's Economic Empowerment Strategy](#).

TransformCare builds on and leverages previous and ongoing UN Women programmes supported by multiple partners across countries and regions to drive impact at scale²².

TransformCare at scale: Global reach and impact

TransformCare enables a large-scale, long-term, multi-partner response. It is grounded in context-specific country and regional interventions with an overarching global component. It operates in **over 50 countries** across **6 regions**, representing over **two thirds** (67 per cent) of the global population.

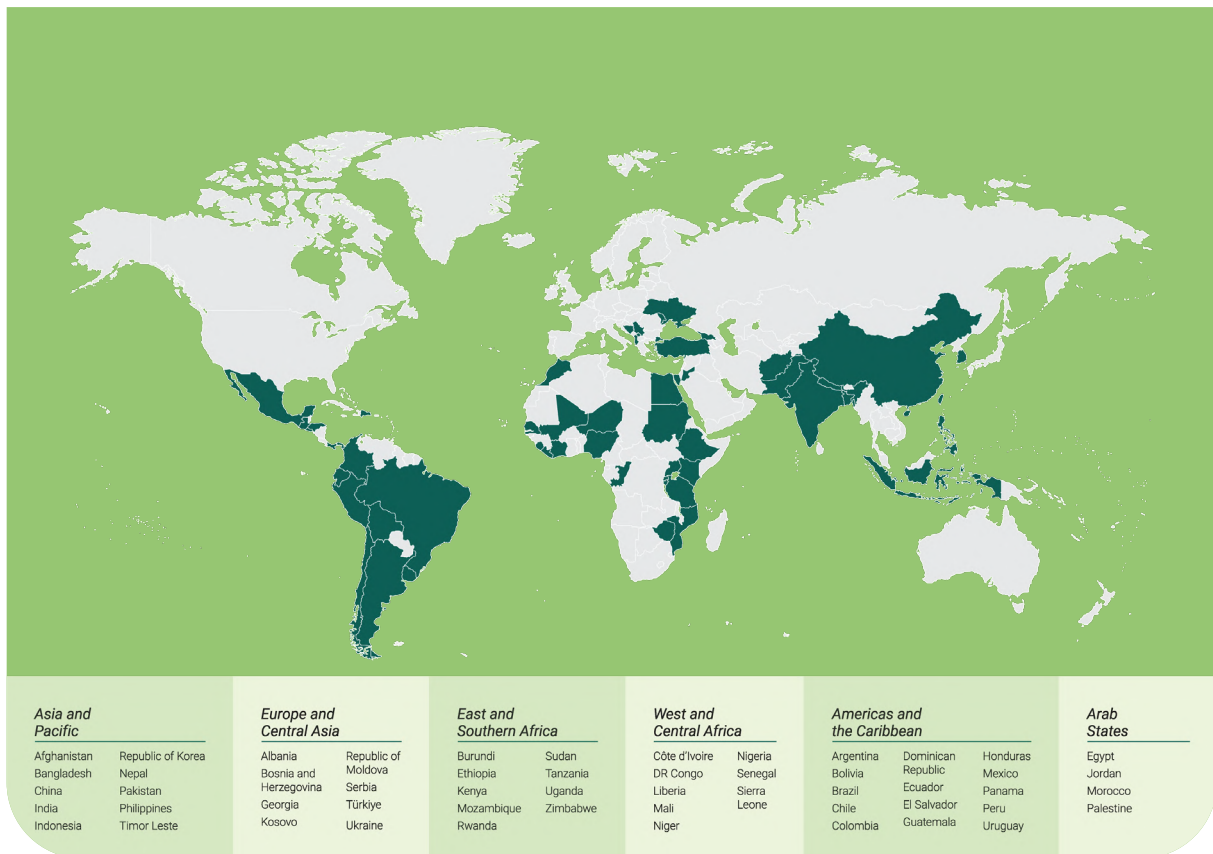
**BY 2035, TRANSFORMCARE
HAS THE POTENTIAL TO
CONTRIBUTE TO:**

Enabling systemic
impact for
2.9
billion
women and girls

Generating at least
260
million
decent jobs for women

Releasing more than
10
trillion hours
of women's and girls' time

TRANSFORMCARE COUNTRIES



TransformCare advances three global outcomes

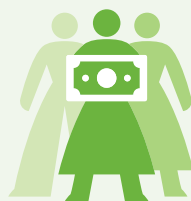
■ OUTCOME 1

Increased quality and low-carbon care-supporting services, basic infrastructure and energy-saving technology, especially benefiting women and girls in low-income and rural households.



■ OUTCOME 2

Creation of decent jobs in the purple economy and increased access to jobs in the green and digital economies, especially benefiting women informal workers and domestic workers, including women migrant workers.



■ OUTCOME 3

A shift in social norms to consider care work (unpaid and paid) as valuable and skilled work, and as a shared responsibility within households and between households, the state, businesses and communities.



TransformCare: Pathways to change

PATHWAY 1



GOVERNMENTS AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL INSTITUTIONS (Subnational, national, regional and global)

- ▶ **Adopt and implement normative and policy frameworks** including conventions, legislation, strategies, sectoral and macroeconomic policies, plans, programmes and campaigns that recognize, reduce, redistribute, reward and represent paid and unpaid care work.
- ▶ **Collect care-related data that are used to inform policymaking and budgeting**, including through macroeconomic simulations and cost–benefit analyses, time-use surveys, geo-referential mapping of care services and metrics of economic progress and wellbeing beyond GDP metrics.
- ▶ **Sustainably and equitably increase long-term financing for, and investments in**, quality universal care-supporting public services, basic infrastructure and social protection schemes, including through macroeconomic policy reform.

PATHWAY 2



BUSINESSES

(Small and medium enterprises, multinational corporations, business associations and media)

- ▶ **Adopt standards, certifications, qualifications and trainings** to ensure the provision of quality care services and decent work opportunities for paid caregivers.
- ▶ **Implement care-supporting workplace policies, practices and services** that enable all employees and workers across the supply chain to balance their paid and unpaid work responsibilities and to receive and provide quality care.
- ▶ **Adopt advertising practices, standards and campaigns** that promote positive portrayals of care work and promote an equal co-responsibility for the provision of care.

PATHWAY 3



CAREGIVERS AND CARE RECIPIENTS

(Those providing unpaid and paid care work in institutions, businesses or households, and those receiving care)

- ▶ **Supported to meaningfully engage in, and influence the outcome of, social dialogue and policymaking processes**, holding governments to account and organizing and representing their constituencies, including through women's movements, civil society groups, solidarity networks and unions.
- ▶ **Have the ability and processes to claim their rights in the workplace**, leading to the adoption and implementation of decent work policies and practices and training opportunities, especially women informal workers and migrant workers.
- ▶ **Shape and take part in social norms change initiatives that tackle the social undervaluing of unpaid and paid care work and its unequal gendered distribution**, including through social media campaigns, radio and online media, and offline forums.

TransformCare integrates with key adjacent policy areas and intersectional approaches

TransformCare takes a systems-based, intersectional and life-course approach.

It integrates the care agenda with key adjacent policy areas such as the macroeconomy, decent work, climate resilience and adaptation, migration, disability, and conflict and crisis.

- Building on UN Women's [Guidance Note on Addressing care in times of conflict and crisis](#), TransformCare is supporting countries including Ukraine and Palestine to assess and respond to shifting care dynamics across the humanitarian–development–peace nexus, from prevention and preparedness through to sustainable recovery and peace.
- Through the [climate–care nexus](#), UN Women works to address the linkages between climate change and women's and girls' unpaid care work, integrating these linkages in programmes and across global and regional normative and policy spaces.
- UN Women works on [strengthening gender-responsive and disability-inclusive transformative care systems](#), in countries such as Colombia, Kenya, Mozambique, Panama and Tanzania in partnership with other UN agencies and the [Global Disability Fund](#).

Scaling impact through multi-level partnerships

Transforming care systems requires action across multiple levels and a broad range of stakeholders.

UN Women advances a whole-of-society approach that mobilizes national and local governments, civil society and women's rights organizations, UN agencies, development partners and international financial institutions, philanthropic organizations, workers' organizations and the private sector.

Leveraging its co-convening role and as a member of the management committee of the [Global Alliance for Care](#), as co-lead of

the [Seville Platform for Action on Investing in Care](#) and through other strategic multi-stakeholder platforms, UN Women supports cross-sectoral dialogue, joint initiatives, advocacy and campaigning, and promotes research, knowledge development and exchange across different contexts and regions. This multi-level engagement links locally driven action with national, regional and global frameworks.

TransformCare is managed by UN Women and guided by a global partner steering committee of key funding partners.



UN WOMEN'S STRATEGIC ADDED VALUE

UN Women is the United Nations agency mandated to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. This mandate uniquely positions UN Women to convene and support actors through a shared vision of transforming care systems for gender equality and shared prosperity, working across its triple mandate of normative support, operational delivery and UN system coordination. UN Women has expertise in care policy advisory, programming and research. Together with partners, UN Women has produced agenda-setting reports, innovative policy tools, guidance, toolkits and training to generate critical evidence, inform sectoral best practices and approaches, and build political will towards the transformation of care systems.

Through its **normative** mandate, UN Women has provided technical support to global resolutions on the care economy²³ and regional care strategies²⁴ on helping to build political consensus and commitments on the importance of transforming care systems for social and economic development. UN Women also provided technical support to the G20 Presidencies of Brazil, India and South Africa

that resulted in care work being integrated into political declarations and commitments.

Through its **operational** mandate, UN Women is working in over 50 countries to support national and regional programming partners to develop and implement normative and policy frameworks, collect care-related data, and achieve sustainable long-term financing for care investments. This support include policy tools, methodologies and [guidance to estimate the economic and social returns of investing in care services, expand fiscal space for investments in gender equality and the care economy, address care work in conflict- and crisis-affected settings](#) and support [public development banks' investments in care infrastructure](#).

Through its **coordination** mandate, UN Women led the development of the first [UN system-wide policy paper on Transforming Care Systems in the Context of the Sustainable Development Goals and Our Common Agenda](#), and now serves as co-lead of the UN inter-agency working group on care through the [Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality \(IANWGE\)](#).

TRANSFORMCARE: DELIVERING RESULTS AT SCALE

UN Women is driving change through TransformCare through three interconnected global outcomes. Firstly, in multiple countries, support has been provided to translate national dialogue into concrete policy and legislative action, contributing to the development of care-related laws, systems, policies and strategies. Efforts have reinforced the capacity of public and private institutions to design, finance and implement care-supporting reforms, while expanding access to quality care services, infrastructure and technology at the national and subnational levels.

Secondly, UN Women has strengthened the generation and use of data, research and tools to inform decision-making and monitor progress in care systems. It has enhanced the voice and agency of caregivers and care recipients in social dialogue and policymaking, while enabling employers to adopt care-supportive workplace policies and standards for decent work.

Finally, UN Women has contributed to shifting discriminatory social norms by reinforcing institutional capacities and supporting initiatives that promote the recognition, redistribution and valuing of care work.

KEY RESULTS ACHIEVED SINCE 2020 INCLUDE:

OUTCOME 1:

Strengthened care systems, services and infrastructure

- **259 care-related** laws, policies and strategies developed or strengthened to advance care systems.

- **1,005 public and private institutions** adopted care-focused laws, systems, policies, plans or strategies.

- **1,445 institutions** enhanced their capacity to design and implement care-supporting reforms.



Photo: UN Women/James Ochweri

- **148 initiatives** generated data and evidence, including **202 knowledge products and tools.**
- **24 time-use surveys** implemented, informing policymaking.
- Since 2025, **70,000 women accessed improved care**

services, infrastructure and technology through UN Women-supported programmes and platforms.

Across all six regions, UN Women has advanced **care policy development**, including in **Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Kenya, Malaysia, Mexico** and **Nigeria**. In **Kenya**, findings from the **first national time-use survey**, supported by UN Women, informed the National Care Needs Assessment and led to the adoption of a National Care Policy in 2025. In **Colombia**, UN Women's technical assistance contributed to the establishment of a National Care System in 2023 and the adoption of a [National Care Policy](#) in 2025, with **133 measures** across **34 government entities and 15 ministries**.

UN Women anchored care services in a robust, data-driven evidence base through geospatial mapping. In **Bangladesh** and **Nepal**, the **Caring Cities initiative** supported local governments to map care demand and supply. The findings have influenced policies and budgets at the national and local levels, including in Kathmandu, where public funding was allocated in 2025 to expand urban care services.

UN Women demonstrated the social, economic and fiscal returns of investing in care systems by applying **costing and investment methodologies** in over 20 countries, including **Albania, Chile, Egypt, Ethiopia, Mexico** and **Nigeria**, to demonstrate the social, economic and fiscal benefits of investing in care and inform policies and budgeting processes. In **Nepal**, joint support with the International Labour Organization in applying the [UN Women and ILO Costing and Investment Tool](#) informed national discussions on care, leading to the creation of a National Care Working Group.

UN Women has supported countries such as Rwanda and Senegal to **strengthen climate-responsive care infrastructure**. In **Rwanda**, this included providing energy-efficient stoves and water tanks to women's cooperatives in rural areas, leading to an up to **80 per cent reduction in fuelwood consumption**, generating significant time savings in unpaid domestic work, and enabling women's greater participation in income-generating activities.

OUTCOME 2: Decent work and improved conditions in the care economy



Photo: Courtesy of NGO 'Fund 'Professional Development'/Tetyana Topchy

- **97 care-related frameworks** adopted or strengthened to promote decent work for care workers.
- **573 caregiver and care recipient organizations** supported to influence norms, standards and practices in the care economy.
- **630 employers** implemented **care-supportive workplace policies, services, standards, certification schemes or training programmes**.
- **251 multi-stakeholder processes and platforms** supported for inclusive care policymaking.

UN Women has partnered with **local governments** in countries such as **Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chile and Panama** to strengthen **training and certification systems for care workers**, promoting decent employment and quality care services. In **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, UN Women supported the rollout of the *Gerontodomaćice Model*, enabling the formal employment of home-based care workers for older persons, with **342 caregivers (337 women and 5 men) certified in 2025**.

UN Women has strengthened **the participation of caregivers and communities in the design of care policies and systems** in countries including **Brazil, Chile, Colombia, the Dominican Republic and Panama**. In **Chile**, UN Women supported the **Hablemos de Cuidados** initiative, a nationwide dialogue process on care led by the Ministry of Social Development and Family, which engaged **12,614 participants**—including Indigenous and Afro-descendant communities, unpaid and paid caregivers, and people in need of care

and support—across 16 regions, informing the development of the law establishing the National Care and Support System, as well as the National Support and Care Policy (2025–2030) and its National Plan. In the **Dominican Republic**, UN Women contributed to the establishment of **Mesas Locales de Cuidado** in Azua and Santo Domingo Este, bringing together civil society and municipalities into care policy planning processes.

UN Women has contributed to advance **policy and normative change to promote the equitable sharing of care responsibilities**, including through parental leave, carer's leave and flexible work arrangements. In **Côte d'Ivoire**, support contributed to a 2025 decree extending parental leave for public servants, doubling **maternity leave** to six months and **increasing paternity leave from 3 to 30 days**. This represents a significant advancement, supporting women and men to balance their unpaid and paid care work in a region where the average paternity leave remains around three days.

OUTCOME 3:

Shifts in social norms to value and redistribute care



Photo: UN Women, July 2025.

- **307 institutions** implemented **policies** addressing care-related discrimination and stereotypes.
- **1,181 institutions** strengthened their **capacity** to shift discriminatory norms.
- **309 initiatives** implemented to advance social norms change.

The UN Women regional programme **Dare to Care** in the **Arab States** demonstrated how **engaging men and boys in unpaid care work** can reduce women's disproportionate care work and shift entrenched gender norms. In **Jordan** and **Morocco**, the programme contributed to a significant reduction in the gender gap in time spent on unpaid care work—by **73 minutes per day** among target families in Morocco and **47 minutes per day** among married couples in Jordan.

In the **Republic of Korea**, UN Women strengthened institutional capacity to promote **transformative fatherhood and care-responsive policies**. Through targeted technical assistance, including the **Papa School: Fatherhood Care Capacity-Building Workshop** and the **Korea Impact Studio on Care**, **22 institutions**, including civil society organizations and public and private sector entities, enhanced their

knowledge, coordination and capacity to advance more equitable care practices.

In **Chile**, UN Women developed the **Intersectional Social Dialogues**, an initiative supported by the Ministry of Social Development, that created inclusive spaces for diverse caregivers—including women, Indigenous peoples, migrants, rural populations, persons with disabilities, unpaid caregivers and care recipients—to share experiences and influence the design of care policies.

In **Kenya**, UN Women supported high-impact **media engagement** to elevate the national conversation on care across television, radio and print. A flagship broadcast on **Nation FM** and **Nation TV** reached approximately **6.6 million people (12 per cent of the population)**, while senior government officials publicly reaffirmed commitment to the National Care Policy.

TransformCare:

Powered by strategic partnerships to leverage previous and ongoing programmes across countries and regions to drive impact at scale.

TransformCare was made possible through the support of diverse partners contributing to the global initiative or through global, regional and country programmes, including:

GLOBAL:

- Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO UK)
- German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
- Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), through SPFI
- Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) through SPFI
- Global Disability Fund (GDF)
- Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

REGIONAL AND COUNTRY:

- Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID)
- German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ)
- Basque Agency for International Development Cooperation (AVCD)
- Open Society Foundations (OSF)
- Visa Foundation

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SCAN TO
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- 20 International Labour Organization (ILO). 2025. [EIIP and Care: Guidance Note](#). Geneva: ILO.
- 21 Women's Budget Group (WBG) and Women's Environmental Network. 2022. [A Green and Caring Economy](#). London: WBG.
- 22 Including: 3R Programme (Global, East and West Africa); UN Joint Programme on unpaid care, disability and a gender- transformative approach (Global: Colombia, Kenya, Mozambique, Panama, Tanzania); UN Women–ILO Joint Programme on Promoting Decent Employment for Women through Inclusive Growth Policies and Investments in the Care Economy (Global: Argentina, Egypt, Ethiopia, Morocco, Nepal); Transforming Economies: Towards the recognition, reduction and redistribution of unpaid care work (Latin America); Dare to Care Programme (Arab States); The Gender-Inclusive Care Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Programme (GICEEP) (Asia and the Pacific).
- 23 Including The United Nations (UN) General Assembly Resolution ([A/RES/77/317](#)) to observe an annual International Day of Care and Support on 29 October, the Human Rights Council Resolution ([A/HRC/RES/54/6](#)) on the Centrality of care and support from a human rights perspective, the Economic and Social Council resolution ([E/RES/2024/4](#)) on Promoting care and support systems for social development, and the Second Committee of the General Assembly resolution ([A/C.2/80/L.30/Rev.1](#)) on the Contribution of the care economy to sustainable development.
- 24 Including the [Buenos Aires Commitment](#) and the [Tlatelolco Commitment](#) adopted in the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, the [ASEAN Comprehensive Framework on the Care Economy](#), and the [Regional Roadmap for the Care Economy in the Arab States](#) and the ECOWAS Care Roadmap (both under development).

UN WOMEN EXISTS TO ADVANCE WOMEN'S RIGHTS, GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS.

As the lead United Nations entity on gender equality and secretariat of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, we shift laws, institutions, social norms and services to close the gender gap and build an equal world for all women and girls. Our partnerships with governments, women's movements and the private sector, coupled with our coordination of the broader United Nations, deliver lasting changes. We make strides in four areas: leadership, economic empowerment, freedom from violence, and peace, security and humanitarian action.

UN Women keeps the rights of women and girls at the centre of global progress – always, everywhere. Because gender equality is not just what we do. It is who we are.



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