



NEW ECONOMICS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

PURPLE ECONOMY (CARE ECONOMY+)

INTRODUCTION

The Purple Economy, also sometimes referred to as the care economy, obtains its name from the color adopted by many feminist movements. It represents a new vision of economics that recognizes the importance of care work, empowerment and autonomy of women to the functioning of the economies, wellbeing of societies and life sustainability. Care work consists of two overlapping activities and can be paid or unpaid: 1) direct, personal, and relational care activities, such as feeding a baby or nursing an ill partner; and 2) indirect care activities or domestic work, such as cooking and cleaning. Paid care work refers to occupations where workers provide direct face-to-face care or indirect forms of care that provide the preconditions for caregiving. It thus includes the work carried out by nurses, childminders, community health workers and elderly care assistants as well as domestic workers, cooks, and cleaners. Unpaid care and domestic work are provided without explicit monetary reward in homes and communities. Care workers perform their tasks in a variety of settings: public, private, not-for-profit organizations as well as private homes¹. The bulk of care work worldwide is provided by unpaid carers, mostly women and girls. Paid care work is also predominantly carried out by women, often those from socially disadvantaged groups, including migrants. Being mostly in the service sector, care work is often associated with significant wage penalties and poor working conditions².

Care work sustains people on a day-to-day basis, from one generation to the next, and contributes to production and reproduction of a labor force that is fit, productive, creative and capable of learning³. Despite this invaluable contribution, unpaid care continues to be largely treated by mainstream economics as an externality, being unaccounted for in policies and national accounts. The associated costs in the form of forgone wages and opportunities for women and girls amplify gender inequality; two key concepts of the Purple Economy.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated and brought further to the fore these costs. With schools and day-care centres shut down, families witnessed a massive shift of childcare responsibilities into their homes. While both women and men increased their unpaid workloads, women continued to shoulder the bulk of unpaid care and domestic work, with negative ripple effects on their working hours and earnings, mental health and wellbeing. Many mothers have left the workforce altogether to care for children amid prolonged school and day-care centre closures⁴.

Though the pandemic raised social recognition of paid care workers – particularly those in the health sector – the high numbers of nursing home deaths, in advanced economies for example, have confirmed what many had called a looming care crisis. The large proportion of deaths in public elderly care facilities were attributed to longstanding infrastructure deficits, poor working conditions, and high turnover rates among staff, as well as dependence on private-for-profit providers⁵. Overall, public care services remain underdeveloped and chronically underfunded in many countries, with negative implications for unpaid caregivers, paid care workers, children and care-dependent adults. Women's growing participation in the paid labor force has reduced the supply of unpaid family care, while poor working conditions and wages have exacerbated labour shortages in the paid care sector⁶. At the same time, population ageing has driven up demand. This has led to large-scale migration of nurses and domestic workers from poorer to more affluent countries, both reflecting and exacerbating inequalities between countries⁷. This search for economic opportunities often leaves care deficits in countries of origin with potentially negative implications for children and increased burdens on the women who stay behind, including grandmothers, siblings and daughters⁸.

As we enter the third year of the pandemic, economic penalties and occupational health and safety hazards in the sector remained largely unaddressed, with migrant women and women of color being disproportionately affected. The pandemic raises the urgency of addressing looming care labor crises around the world.

The Purple Economy aims to overcome the fragility of the care economy at the national and international levels and address the multiple and intersecting inequalities created by the disproportionate reliance on women's unpaid and underpaid labour, and under-investment in the care sector.

To do so, it calls for a paradigm shift in economic thinking and policies whereby:

- ◆ care is no longer reduced to a commodity, a personal choice or a family obligation – but recognized for what it is: a public good that generates benefits that extends beyond the individual care recipient to societies at large and into the future;
- ◆ where societies stop freeriding on women's unpaid and underpaid labor, and collectively assume the costs of quality care for all; and
- ◆ where all workers in the care sector enjoy equal pay for work of equal value, with value being redefined to recognize social contributions, not merely market based rewards⁹.

Like the green economy's call for internalizing environmental costs, the Purple Economy calls for the internalization of the costs of care¹⁰. Indeed, proponents of gender-just transitions¹¹ or a "feminist green new deal"¹² argue that transitions to sustainable care arrangements and environmental sustainability must and can go hand in hand. Harnessing potential synergies and co-benefits requires public investments in the care sector as a source of decent and quintessentially green jobs alongside measures to ensure that women benefit from job and entrepreneurship opportunities created in other, less feminized green sectors, such as energy or transport. Acknowledging that policies are not gender neutral, it also calls for ex ante and ex post assessments of the impact of proposed policies on women and girls to address past and potential future biases such as the feminization of sectors with accompanying deterioration in wages and benefits.

EXISTING GLOBAL AND/OR REGIONAL GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK OR AGREEMENTS ALREADY AVAILABLE

Historically UN member States have recognized and made global and regional commitments towards gender equality and eventually towards both unpaid and paid care work and economic empowerment of women [Box 1].

Other resolutions, including the 2015 UN resolution A/RES/70/219 on Women in Development reaffirms "that the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls will make a crucial contribution to progress across all the SDGs and targets", and recognizes "that unremunerated work, including unpaid care and domestic work, plays an essential role in improving well-being in the household and in the functioning of the economy as a whole".

Key global commitments with regards to paid care work have been established, including a broad range of international human right and labour standards and conventions for the protections of paid workers in the care economy. The human right principle of non-discrimination requires that care workers (in health, education, child and

elder care etc.) enjoy the same labour rights as workers in all other sectors. Member States also committed to ILO Convention No. 189 recognizing the significant contribution of domestic workers to the global economy and outlining clear standards for improving their living and working conditions and providing them with protections equivalent to those enjoyed by other workers. The International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families includes further commitments that are relevant to the growing number of migrant care workers, including in the health and domestic work sectors.

BOX 1. INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS AND GOALS RELATED TO GENDER EQUALITY

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) was signed by governments in 1979, entered into force in 1981, and at present has 189 state parties. CEDAW is the first legally binding instrument that takes a comprehensive approach to prohibiting discrimination against women in all domains of economic, social, and political life, and it is considered a significant achievement.

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, signed by 189 governments in 1995, is the first international legal instrument to incorporate a detailed action plan that sets out strategies to ensure equality and full human rights for women in 12 areas of concern: poverty, education and training, health, violence against women, armed conflict, the economy, power and decision-making, institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women, human rights, the media, the environment, and the girl-child.

MDG3, the Millennium Development Goal that specifically focused on gender equality, was subject to some criticism for its narrow (mainly social) interpretation of gender equality and women's empowerment, and for its limited attention to the impact of economic factors on women's well-being. SDG5, the Sustainable Development Goal that succeeded MDG3, has a broader approach to gender equality. SDG5 aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. It includes nine targets in the following areas: elimination of all forms of discrimination (5.1), violence (5.2) and harmful practices (5.3) against women and girls, recognition and valuing of unpaid care and domestic work (5.4), supporting women's decision-making power (5.5), ensuring access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights (5.6), providing women with equal rights and access to economic resources (5.a), use of technology to support women (5.b), and adopting and strengthening policies and legislation toward greater gender equality (5.c).

Source: UNCTAD. 2021. Trade and Gender Linkages: An analysis of Least Developed Countries. Teaching Material on Trade and Gender: Module 4E. UNCTAD/DITC/2022/1.

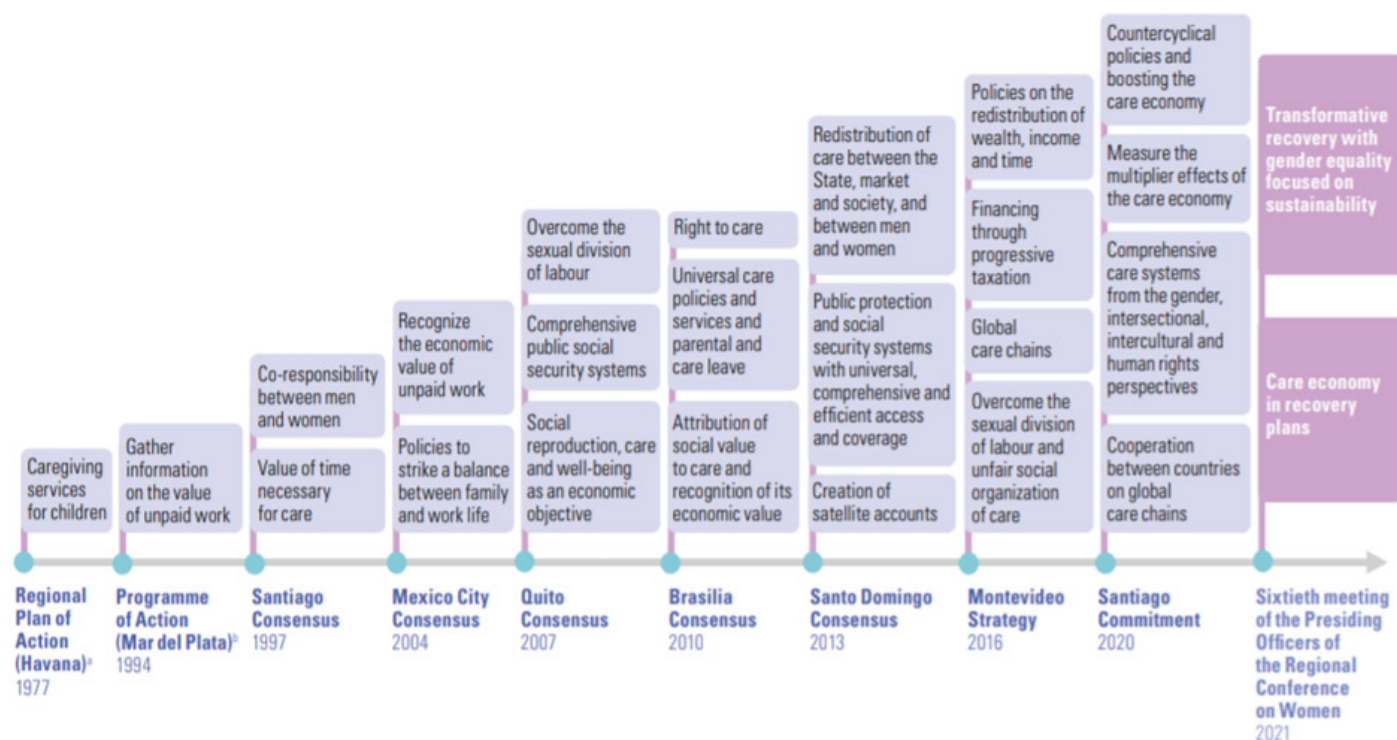
On economic empowerment of women, the UN Resolution on Entrepreneurship for Sustainable Development “reiterates that the persistently low wages earned by women workers impact their economic empowerment, giving rise to the need to build their economic resilience” and calls on member States to “strengthen the capacity of women to transition from the informal economy to formal employment”, “outline measures to reduce and redistribute women’s and girls’ disproportionate share of unpaid care and domestic work and promote decent paid care and domestic work for women and men in the public and private sectors”; “support the promotion and advancement of women in labor markets, including through policies and programs aimed at the elimination of structural barriers and stereotypes that women of all ages face”; and “facilitate women’s entrepreneurship, including by improving access to financing and investment opportunities, tools of trade, business development and training” and “increase trade and procurement, including public procurement from women’s enterprises”¹³.

At the regional level, in 2020, member States of the Latin America and the Caribbean region, have adopted a comprehensive Regional Gender Agenda (RGA) [Diagram 3] to advance women’s rights and autonomy, and gender equality, with care at its core¹⁴. It calls for the development

and strengthening of universal care policies and services based on the recognition of the right to care for all¹⁵; gender impact assessments of fiscal policies before and after implementation, to ensure they do not have negative effects, on gender equality, women’s rights or autonomy¹⁶; the implementation of gender-sensitive countercyclical policies to mitigate the impact of economic crises and recessions on women’s lives and put in place measures and policies to galvanize the economy in key sectors, including the care economy¹⁷; and the design of comprehensive care systems from a gender, intersectional, intercultural and human rights perspective that foster co-responsibility between men and women, the State, the market, families and the community, and include joined-up policies on time, resources, benefits and universal, good-quality public services to meet the different care needs of the population, as part of social protection systems¹⁸.

This Agenda complements the commitments made at the global level and advances in agreements aimed at overcoming the sexual division of labour and the unfair distribution of care responsibility, implementing comprehensive care policies and systems, promoting the redistribution and recognition of care work, and strengthening the role of the care economy as a dynamic sector in the movement towards a transformative recovery with equality¹⁹.

Figure 1
The central role of care in the Regional Gender Agenda



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) (2021)

^a Refers to the Regional Plan of Action for the Integration of Women into Latin American Economic and Social Development.

^b Refers to the Regional Programme of Action for the Women of Latin America and the Caribbean, 1995-2001.

In the sixty-first meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, held in September 2021, governments agreed to “Advance recovery plans with affirmative actions that foster comprehensive care systems, decent work and the full and effective participation of women in strategic sectors of the economy for a transformative recovery with gender equality aimed at the sustainability of life and for the transition to a care society” (para 18, Agreements). They also adopted the subject of “The care society: a horizon for sustainable recovery with gender equality”, as the central theme of discussion of the fifteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women (para 14, Agreements).

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NEW ECONOMICS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (NESD) CONCEPTS

The Purple Economy has strong links with other NESD concepts both analytically and in terms of potential co-benefits that can be derived from policies that address them in an integrated way. For example, the reproduction of people and of the natural environment, although distinct, have much in common: they largely take place outside of markets and they produce public goods whose benefits extend beyond individuals and across generations. Both are essential for the functioning, sustainability and survival of economies and humanity at large, but consistently sidelined or undervalued in mainstream economics.

Just as the **green** and **blue economies** are organized around sustainably providing nature’s services through internalization of environmental costs into production and consumption patterns, the Purple Economy is organized around sustainably providing for human needs through the redistribution of the costs of care and their internalization into the workings of the economy system²⁰. And, to maximize co-benefits for gender equality and social sustainability, it is critical that green and blue economy proposals integrate a gender lens – that we stack the social and environmental objectives. Without this, we risk further entrenching existing inequalities or even create new ones. The New Deal put in place by the USA to create jobs during the great depression for instance, focused largely on physical infrastructure investments in sectors dominated by men. We cannot afford another decade of working on decarbonization without also considering how it can redress inequalities at the same time. Instead, the transition to a low-carbon economy can and must be leveraged to advance gender equality and social justice. Current discussions about economic recovery in the USA, for example, have positioned investments in *social* infrastructure as equally important to future productivity and sustainable growth. In addition, targeted measures are needed to increase women’s asset ownership, access to productive resources and decent work

in the renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, digital entrepreneurship, and other growth sectors. The massive setbacks in women’s employment triggered by the pandemic have added further urgency to these proposals.

Seen from this perspective, investments in the care economy could be a driver to advance a green transition by creating jobs in sectors with low carbon emissions. ILO estimate, for example, that investments in the care economy could create a total of 475 million jobs by 2030, that is 117 million additional new jobs over and above the status quo scenario. Of these additional jobs created, 78 million would be in education and health and social work, increasing total sectoral employment from 206 million jobs in 2015 to 326 million jobs by 2030. Early childhood care and education (39 million) and long- term care (30 million) are the largest contributors to this job creation potential, followed by health and social work with 9 million new jobs²¹. This potential has recently been recognized by the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions which aims to create at least 400 million jobs, including in the green, digital and care economies. It also recognizes the urgent need to ensure fair wages and decent working conditions for workers in these sectors. In many low-income countries, it is not uncommon for community health and childcare workers to be paid either a minimal stipend or nothing at all. Countries across sub-Saharan Africa, for example, rely on over 900,000 community health workers (CHWs) to support their fragile health systems. Nearly 70 per cent of these workers are women, mostly young adults with only primary education; some 86 per cent are unpaid, while shouldering often unmanageable caseloads, compromising the provision of quality care²².

There are also synergies between the Purple Economy and the **social** and **solidarity economies** (SSE) concepts. Social and community services, and in particular care services, are one of the core sectors of the SSE. With adequate public support, SSE entities are well placed to deliver affordable care services that are attuned to the needs of the communities they serve and create opportunities for decent job creation at the local level, including for women. SSE’s diversity in terms of organizational and financial models, the flexibility with which the organizational principles can be applied across sectors, and their anchoring in local contexts, have rendered SSE organizations sites of social innovation and reconfiguration of economic and technological solutions in the context of social and environmental challenges providing opportunities for women. Women create and innovate differently and have made the most of the limited resources they have access to, making them “frugal innovators” by default within the SSE framework. With further access to resources, women’s

entrepreneurship capacity would be expanded, and their innovations scaled.

IMPLICATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA AND LINKAGES TO SPECIFIC SDGS

Care is indispensable to human wellbeing, social cohesion and economic development. The Purple Economy – both paid and unpaid – contributes to the achievement of a range of SDGs, including poverty eradication (SDG1), food security and nutrition (SDG2), health and wellbeing (SDG3), quality education and lifelong learning (SDG4), gender equality and the empowerment women and girls (SDG5), inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work (SDG 8), and reduced inequalities (SDG10). Many care policies advance more than one objective. For instance, affordable quality childcare services play a key role in enabling women's access to decent work within and outside the care sector (SDG 8), while also contributing to improvements in children's health (SDG 3), nutrition (SDG 2) and educational outcomes (SDG 4)²³. The Care Economy also directly supports the central tenet of the Agenda 2030 – Leaving No One Behind. Women and migrants who face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination not only carry higher care burdens, but their households also remain disproportionately excluded from access to quality care services²⁴. Purple Economy advocates for an economic system that promotes equality and social justice, including by contributing to the advancement of women and vulnerable groups, including older people, young people and people with disabilities.

PRIORITY WITHIN NESD CONCEPT

Gender equality is a key priority within the Purple Economy. Women contribute 76 per cent of unpaid work time and 43 per cent of paid work time. Once paid and unpaid work are combined, women's total contribution (52 per cent of paid and unpaid work hours) exceeds that of men, despite women's lower labor force participation rates. The Purple Economy aims to shift these patterns by reducing the double burden on women and freeing up their time for employment, entrepreneurship and political participation as well as for self-care, leisure and rest; by reducing educational disparities between girls and boys²⁵; and by addressing intersecting inequalities, such as those faced by informal and migrant workers as well as women of color who make up a large proportion of essential care workers – including among childminders, domestic workers, nurses and long-term care workers – across the world.

But the benefits of a universal access to quality care extend way beyond women; **redefining public spending on the Purple Economy as investment instead of consumption**

expenditure is therefore another important priority. Good quality care creates, develops, and maintains human capabilities generating benefits that extend beyond the individual care recipient to communities, societies, and economies at large and into the future. If care work enables future sustained and sustainable economic growth by reproducing a workforce that is fit, productive and capable of innovation, then public spending that enables the sufficient supply and adequate quality of this work must be viewed as a productive investment not unlike spending on the railways, ports and bridges that enable commercial activities. Numerous studies have shown that investments in social infrastructure have higher multiplier effects on economic growth, job creation and fiscal sustainability than investment in physical capital²⁶.

CONSTRAINTS TO INTEGRATION INTO MAINSTREAM ECONOMY

There are conceptual, methodological, and political constraints for integrating the Purple Economy into the mainstream economy at the country level.

Conceptually, mainstream economics dominating economic policies in most countries, continues to ignore key aspects and enablers of the Purple Economy. Individualism and the primacy of rational choice which have traditionally formed the core of economic analyses fail to capture the complex dynamics and motivations that shape care provision²⁷. In response, alternative models such as feminist economists have underlined the interdependence of human beings, with everyone requiring care and support from others at least at some point in their lives, and the complex interplay of self-interest, reciprocity, obligation and coercion in shaping people's "choices" or "preferences". Within families, for example, some members may "choose" to specialize in providing unpaid care and domestic work for others in exchange for economic sustenance; but this "choice" – as well as reflecting intrinsic motivations – is almost always the result of cooperative conflict that reflects the relative bargaining power of different family members²⁸. When care work is commodified, its economic reward is often devalued by the perception that it is an extension of women's domestic duties rather than a "real job"; it is also subject to productivity pressure that are at odds with quality care provision which is inherently labour intensive²⁹. The resulting downward pressure on wages means that care may not be supplied in sufficient quantity and quality.

Methodologically, there are challenges to measuring the value of unpaid care and household work and capture the positive spill-over (increasing returns to scale) of the care economy. It is hard to put a price tag on the sustenance of life and improvements in well-being; to bill for empathy in

relationships between care workers and those who rely on them; to quantify the dignity of an older or disabled person receiving quality care; or to avoid discounting investments in children's capabilities that are made today because their economic benefits will accrue largely in the future. In other words, care has important characteristics of a public good –but is not recognized as such in mainstream economic thought and practice. Neoclassical general equilibrium models used to design policies are inadequate to capture the benefits of the care economy and the costs of inaction. Dynamic stochastic models or micro simulation models combined with the Luxembourg Income Survey or the EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions micro databases would be better suited to capture the direct and indirect contributions of care to economies and societies.

Because unpaid care and domestic work is not accounted for in national measure of progress, such as GDP, it is not fully considered in micro and macroeconomic policies which are biased towards the market economy, with potentially negative effects on overall welfare³⁰. One remedy that has been explored is the extension of the scope of the System of National Accounts to include non-market activities performed within and between households without monetary compensation. Attempts to put a value on unpaid care and domestic work have yielded estimates varying between 10 to 39 per cent of current GDP; in Latin American countries, the estimate varies between 18.8 per cent and 25.6 per cent of GDP³¹. A full 41 per cent of total work time globally is unpaid. More of this work is needed to ensure care work is fully integrated into decision-making. For instance, the UN Secretary-General has mandated DESA, UNDP and UNCTAD to advance work under SDG target 17.19 to creating metrics for measuring progress beyond GDP to account for what people actually care about, including household work.

The UN Statistical Commission has already developed the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting – Ecosystem Accounting to augment the GDP with measures of natural capital, such as forests, oceans and other ecosystems. Recent advance in calculation of the satellite account of unpaid work to complement GDP has been a powerful tool used to make visible women's contribution to the economies and the macroeconomic dimension of care work. The Statistical Conference of the Americas has made significant progress in creating the Methodological guide on time-use measurements in Latin America and the Caribbean, which seeks to systematize experiences in the measurement of time use and to develop guidelines for the conduct of time-use surveys and the calculation of indicators on time use and unpaid work in the region³².

Finally, progress on policies that support the Purple Economy require political will and fiscal space which in

light of competing priorities at the country level is often a challenge. Calculating and socializing the multiplier effects of investments in education, health, social protection systems, child and long-term care services, as recommended in the Santiago Commitment (2020) of the Regional Conference on Women of Latin America and the Caribbean³³, could help increase acceptance.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PURPLE ECONOMY

The 5Rs approach—*recognizing, reducing and redistributing* unpaid care, ensuring adequate *reward* systems for paid care workers and prioritizing *representation* of caregivers and care recipients from policy design to evaluation—can provide overall guidance³⁴. Social protection systems, for example, can support family caregivers with paid leave and pension credits (recognition); the expansion of affordable quality care services for children, older persons and persons with disabilities can shift the responsibility from individuals and households to more collective forms of provision (redistribution); and investments in sustainable water, electricity and transport infrastructure can decrease unnecessary drudgery and time intensity of care (reduction).

Where care is provided for pay, decent working conditions and equal pay for work of equal value are needed to protect a largely female workforce in public institutions and private households (reward). This must include paid domestic workers, many of whom are migrant women, who often lack basic labour rights and protections. To be effective, priorities and policy options must be defined with the participation of key stakeholders, including paid and unpaid caregivers, care recipients and their respective organizations (representation). UN Women and ECLAC have recently launched a report on the lessons learned from experiences in Latin American and Caribbean countries in the construction of Integrated Care Systems³⁵. The document proposes that investment in care allows for the consolidation of national care systems as the fourth pillar of social protection and as a driving force for an inclusive and transformative recovery.

With its Integrated National Care System (Sistema Nacional Integrado de Cuidados), Uruguay has spearheaded such an approach, inspiring other Latin American countries to follow suit³⁶.

A. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS

While a country's context is a key determinant of which policies to enact first, the Care Economy requires strengthening in all countries irrespective of their income level. Priorities may differ depending on starting points. For low-income countries, improving fragile health and education systems – as well as investing in basic infrastructure,

such as water, sanitation and electricity to reduce unpaid care and domestic work – may be a priority³⁷, while some middle- and higher-income countries may place increased emphasis on expanding the availability of affordable child and elderly care services. Independent of priorities, the implications of all policies for women's time use, access to economic resources, health and wellbeing should be carefully forecasted and closely monitored to adjust design and implementation for maximum impact. Furthermore, national policies must be adequately localized, with special attention to spatial cleavages between urban and rural or rich and poor neighborhoods, including within the framework of climate change actions, specifically in the response to extreme weather events and disasters.

Below we outline four priorities areas for national-level action, each with a (non-exhaustive) list of concrete steps, at varying levels of ambitions, for integrating care into sectoral policies.

Create an enabling macroeconomic framework to ensure adequate investments in the care economy

- ▷ Further strengthen evidence of the multiplier effects from investing in the care economy in terms of job creation, women's employment, health and wellbeing, income and time redistribution, economic growth, and increased tax revenues;
- ▷ Redefine public spending on the care economy as an investment instead of spending and increase resource allocations to universal and gender-responsive social protection systems, and in high-quality public care services and infrastructure through the mobilization of domestic resources, including by increasing the efficiency of tax systems, employing gender-responsive budgeting, curbing tax evasion and illicit financial flows, equitably expanding the tax base and channelling revenues from natural resources to social spending;
- ▷ Resist the temptation to put in place austerity measures and/or raise indirect taxes which have a disproportionately negative effect on low-income households, women and marginalized groups;
- ▷ Integrate a gender perspective in trade and climate agreements, including through ex ante and ex post assessments that identify ways to increase positive gender impact and can guide the development of compensatory measures for those affected by potential adverse effects; and
- ▷ Strengthen international cooperation, meet official development assistance commitments and ensure that investments in social protection, public services and sustainable infrastructure made with official development assistance are directed

towards the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

Adopt and strengthen policies to recognize, reduce and redistribute unpaid care and domestic work

- ▷ Progressively guarantee universal access to time-saving infrastructure, including electricity, water and sanitation on household premises, and ensure their affordability, adequacy, acceptability and quality;
- ▷ Expand access to affordable, quality child- and long-term care services in modalities that serve the needs of different groups of workers, including those in informal employment;
- ▷ Strengthen the care dimension of social protection systems, by increasing coverage of universal child benefits and paid parental leave and reforming pensions systems to recognize periods dedicated to unpaid care;
- ▷ Reform labor market policies and institutions, and transform work environments to enable the participation of and reduce penalties for workers with care responsibilities, including viable part-time employment;
- ▷ Work towards the creation of integrated national care systems, spearheaded by some countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, aimed at guaranteeing the rights of children and care-dependent adults as well as their paid and unpaid caregivers;
- ▷ Promote comprehensive care systems from a gender, intersectional, intercultural and human rights perspective that foster co-responsibility between men and women and between the State, the market, families and the community, and that include joined-up policies on time, resources, benefits and universal, good-quality public services to meet the different care needs of the population, as part of social protection systems and within the framework of climate change actions, specifically in the response to extreme weather events and disasters³⁸;
- ▷ Strengthen information and knowledge management that allows for the comprehensiveness of integrated care systems and the possibility of making adequate political decisions, based on quality information. This includes the collection of statistical data on satellite accounts and time-use, which also allows for measuring the impact on the reduction and redistribution of unpaid care work³⁹.

Combat occupational segregation and promote women's economic empowerment in the Purple Economy and beyond

- ▷ Address care worker shortages and regulate staffing levels in health-care and long-term care facilities,

home-care services, childcare and other care areas to prevent risk of injury, illness and burnout, reduce waiting times and ensure adequate care for patients and clients;

- ▷ Ensure the occupational health and safety of all care workers, including through access to personal and protective equipment as well as counselling to address mental health issues arising from stress and overwork;
- ▷ Enact and enforce laws mandating equal pay for work of equal value with value being redefined to recognize social contributions of care work, not merely market-based rewards;
- ▷ Pursue formalization, professionalization, and skills certification measures to upgrade paid care work and strengthen quality care provision;
- ▷ Ensure living wages, full labour rights and access to social protection for care workers at the bottom of the occupational pyramid, including domestic workers, community health and community childcare workers;
- ▷ Put in place policies to ensure fair recruitment practices for migrant care workers to prevent human trafficking, the recognition of skills and qualifications across borders, decent wages and working conditions in receiving countries;
- ▷ Prevent the precariousness of work conditions in emerging forms of employment such as in the gig economy, and guarantee women's rights to work and at work;
- ▷ Ensure that growth in male-dominated sectors, including green and digital economies, is accompanied by an increase in women's participation and retention, including by targeting them with training, retraining and skills development, and by ensuring work environments are free of discrimination and harassment; and
- ▷ Support women-owned businesses, self-employed workers and entrepreneurs in the formal and informal economy, including through targeted public procurement initiatives, access to subsidized loans and other financial services and products without reproducing gender biases in risk assessments, credit histories, interest rates, sureties and collateral.
- ▷ Advance recovery plans with affirmative actions that foster comprehensive care systems, decent work and the full and effective participation of women in strategic sectors of the economy for a transformative recovery with gender equality aimed at the sustainability of life and for the transition to a care society⁴⁰;

Ensure robust participation, accountability, and monitoring mechanisms

- ▷ Ensure the regular and timely collection of time-use data by fully integrating time-use surveys into national statistical systems and support the use of such data in evidence-based policymaking and decision-making;
- ▷ Strengthen mechanisms for the regulation and accountability of private providers of public care services and infrastructure to ensure quality, accessibility and affordability;
- ▷ Enable the meaningful participation of key stakeholders in the care economy – including trade unions and informal worker organizations, child and older persons' rights advocates and women's rights organizations – in the design and implementation of care policies;
- ▷ Ensure women's participation in the monitoring and evaluation of care services, social protection and infrastructure programmes, including through participatory assessments and gender audit tools;
- ▷ Assess the risks and benefits of using new technologies to provide social protection services, public services and infrastructure to ensure that, in their introduction, no one is left behind, and standards of quality, accessibility and privacy are maintained; and
- ▷ Implement gender-responsive budgeting and strengthen monitoring and accountability mechanisms to ensure that budgets support gender equality priorities and do not further exacerbate inequality or vulnerability.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UN COUNTRY TEAMS

The United Nations system and country teams can play a key role in supporting governments to strengthen the Purple Economy. We highlight seven priority areas here, many of which are already being catered to by UN agencies and country teams in different contexts.

Incorporation of Purple Economy analysis in Common Country Analysis (CCA)

A strong CCA would capture analysis that reflects the challenges of the Purple Economy, for example, by using time-use surveys to capture the care economy in the CCA social exclusion analysis. By including a "Purple Economy" lens in the CCA analysis from the get-go, we can help ensure that the Cooperation Framework developed based on the CCA would explicitly have interventions directly targeted at the Purple and Green/Blue Economy and provide a platform to advocate for much needed attention on the Purple Economy. Below are tools developed by the UN system that can support this analysis. The Purple Economy angle can

help amplify the social and equalizing aspect of the green and blue transition by allowing women, and often migrant, to fully contribute to sustainable development. It can also help explore options for building a system that would ensure sustainable provision of care taking expected to face considerable increased demand in coming years.

Development of legal and policy frameworks

Several UN agencies, including ECLAC, ILO, UNICEF and UN Women are providing technical support to governments across Latin America in the design and implementation of integrated national care systems. Specific activities include process-related support, for example on the set-up of inter-institutional and inter-sectoral coordination mechanisms, as well as integrated policy advice in sub-items of the framework.

For instance, UN Women and ECLAC is providing technical support to the Government of Mexico for the development of an Integrated National Care System that codifies the right to care and to be cared for. Specific activities include cost-benefit analyses and scenarios for the expansion of existing care services to hitherto excluded sectors of the population; the piloting of local care systems through the detailed mapping of existing services and their gradual expansion; working with the Institute for Social Security to increase access to social protection for paid care workers, including childminders and domestic workers; and the development of courses for the professionalization of care workers across five states. In Argentina, ECLAC has been supporting the development of the Inter-Ministerial Care Policy Roundtable, integrated by national government agencies. The purpose of this body is to coordinate the actions that guide the creation of a Care System. The Roundtable has already developed a commission to draft a bill for the design of a comprehensive care system⁴¹.

Mapping of existing Purple Economy/ care infrastructure

This can include geo-referenced assessments of supply and demand for care services, coverage, quality and provider structure (public/private-for-profit/non-profit, MSMEs and SSE organizations) to identify gaps and pathways for closing them as well as analyses of the composition, capacity, status, working conditions and wages of care workforce in the formal and informal economy to identify needs and opportunities for professionalization and priorities for the protection of workers' rights.

In Colombia, ECLAC is providing technical support to the Mayor's Office of Bogotá in the diagnosis and georeferencing of a set of indicators as part of the implementation of a District Care System. The diagnosis has been a crucial element in determining not only the

demand in terms of policies and care services but also the synergies that could be established with public and private institutions in the territory. In Argentina, ECLAC has supported the creation of the Federal Care Map, which allows to locate organisations, educational institutions and care services throughout the country⁴².

Development and application of costing and economic multiplier effects.

This includes cost-benefit analyses of investments in care services that include an assessment of gross and net costs for different scenarios (e.g., universal vs. partial coverage of childcare services; current or improved wages for care worker; etc.)

UN Women has developed a methodology for costing the expansion of childcare services and showing the employment and multiplier effects of public investments in this area. The methodology was piloted in South Africa, Turkey and Uruguay and subsequently applied in Kyrgyzstan and North Macedonia to convince governments to invest in the care economy. A similar exercise was undertaken for Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Senegal, Tanzania and Zimbabwe.

Fiscal space analysis and recommendations

Joint UN Programmes on "Integrated Social Protection" have supported national governments in the development of financing and fiscal sustainability strategies for extending the coverage of social protection and care services in several countries including Barbados and Ecuador. The ILO-UN Women Joint Programme "Promoting decent employment for women through inclusive growth policies and investments in care" has produced a policy support tool for estimating care deficits, investment costs, and economic returns across sectors (including healthcare, long-term care, early childhood care and education, and primary and secondary education). The joint programme is currently supporting governments and other stakeholders in Argentina, Egypt, Ethiopia, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Nepal, and Palestine in the application of these tools to inform their COVID-19 recovery strategies.

Development and support for service delivery models at national and local level

Capacity building to strengthen the institutional capacities for service delivery, design and validation of strategies to reach vulnerable groups, and piloting of innovative care service delivery models at the local level. For instance, the UN Joint Program on Integrated Social Protection is working with national and local governments in Chile and Albania to develop community networks and improve services for care-dependent older persons and persons with disabilities. In Ecuador, the UN Joint Program is helping the government

design a locally-based care service model for young mothers and fathers in the informal economy.

Strengthening capacity and ownership of the care economy agenda at country and regional level

Mobilizing research and policy networks and fostering South-South cooperation is critical to strengthen the capacity and national ownership of the care economy agenda in countries where it is not yet fully on the agenda. UN country teams could draw lessons from others who are more advanced in their advocacy and advisory work, nurture regional networks of feminist economists and other experts to nurture the capacity of national researchers and policymakers. Research and higher education institutions could be mobilized to gather knowledge and speed up data collection and measurement where lacking. One pathway would be through the International Association of Universities already leading coordination among universities to advance the SDGs. Models, such as the interuniversity center, multidisciplinary and intersectoral center, CIRANO in Quebec could also be explored to increase cooperation among national universities and contributes to the strategic decision-making of governmental, para-public and private partners by producing and transferring high value-added university knowledge. A network of national centers could be supported by satellite centers for capacity building and knowledge transfer.

Ex ante assessment of trade agreement

As early as 1995, paragraph 165 of the Beijing Platform for Action called advised governments to seek to ensure that national policies related to trade agreements “do not have an adverse impact on women’s new and traditional economic activities”, and “to use gender-impact analyses in the development of macro and micro-economic and social policies to monitor such impact and restructure policies in cases where harmful impact occurs.” This assessments of likely gendered impacts of planned trade measures and policies are arguably required under the human rights law, of which the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is part. In 2017, UNCTAD developed the Trade and Gender Toolbox, which offers a systematic framework to evaluate the impact of trade reforms on women and gender inequalities, prior to the implementation of these reforms. It focuses on the impact of trade reforms on gender employment gap. The Toolbox was first applied to assess how the economic partnership agreement (EPA) between the EU and the East African Community (EAC) would affect Kenyan women⁴³. The toolbox methodology was applied by the EU in the Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA) of the modernisation of the Trade Part of the EU–Chile Association Agreement among others.

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