



**OXFAM**  
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**2019**

**COUNTING ON WOMEN'S  
WORK WITHOUT  
COUNTING WOMEN'S WORK**



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# INTRODUCTION

Beyond Reform and Development, in partnership with OXFAM, conducted a literature review on women's unpaid work in Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan and Tunisia. The aim of this literature review is to inform the design of programmes that promote women's economic empowerment in the MENA region, and to pinpoint the gaps in the literature which would require further investigation for more accurate programmatic guidance.

This paper is based on an extensive in-depth review of existing literature on paid labour, gender-based division of household tasks, unpaid non-economic labour and economic labour, as well as the different ecosystems within which these concepts intertwine.

The paper starts by reviewing the terminology used when tackling unpaid work and the different conceptual perspectives found in the literature. This is followed by a review of the factors affecting unpaid work as well as the institutions responsible for regulating, managing and reducing the influence of these factors on women's participation in unpaid work. A subsequent section looks at the existing data and information on women's unpaid work in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Tunisia at the level of a) regulatory frameworks, b) socio-cultural norms and c) socio-economic contexts within the respective countries. The paper then goes on to review the suggested framework for responding to unpaid work and finally concludes with several research questions that are lacking in literature and that could help governments, policy makers and programme designers in addressing unpaid work.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# METHODOLOGY

## OBJECTIVES

The literature review was conducted between April and May 2018 and has the following objectives:

- Understanding the concepts and terminologies adopted in unpaid care work and the values and norms that promote it in the MENA region,
- Understanding the patterns and concepts of household unpaid care work and its relation to paid work opportunities,
- Highlighting gender-based labour market trends of employment and opportunities,
- Reviewing existing laws and regulatory frameworks that influence women's access to opportunities and participation in general.

## RESEARCH PRINCIPLES

### 1. COMPREHENSIVE

This literature review exercise aims at being as comprehensive as possible to guarantee the inclusion and review of all different perspectives on the topic.

- This proved to be a challenge, especially since the topic of 'unpaid work' is multidimensional and is influenced by numerous factors. Those factors (listed in detail in Chapters 1, 2, and 3) still cannot be proven by empirical data because a) data from the MENA region is missing in most cases and b) because these factors are yet to be linked through research to suggest solutions. The research team attempted to draw a comprehensive list of all factors as well as their influence as per the available literature.

### 2. FEMINIST RESEARCH

The exercise was implemented with an agenda for change, seeking to provide knowledge as well as to influence social change. The feminist methodology of this research allowed the research team to focus on women's narrative and agency over the topic, promote articles and studies conducted by women from the region, and finally, use feminist principles throughout the implementation of the literature review.

- A main challenge in adhering to feminist research ethics was the limited availability of published studies conducted by women in the MENA region from Arab universities and research centres. While this required a more in-depth and thorough selection of resources, the research team aimed at shedding light on existing feminist literature on the topics discussed in the paper, whenever possible.

### 3. INTERDISCIPLINARY AND TRANSDISCIPLINARY

The research team adopted an intersectional approach and understanding to the problem to highlight the different layers and how they interact with each other and influence women's preferences and ability to enter the labour market. The same approach was adopted in understanding unpaid work and its multidimensional ecosystem. While this approach is quite similar to the 'comprehensive' principle in general, 'interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary' here refer to the political intersectional approach to understanding gender discrimination, whereby factors including political, social, economic, as well as regulatory intersect and create different layers of discrimination.

# UNPAID WORK ACROSS EXISTING LITERATURE

The issue of unpaid work requires an intersectional analysis as it affects - and is affected by - a large range of variables and factors entrenched within socio-cultural patterns, economic trends, and policies. In fact, studies on unpaid work cover a large range of perspectives and assumptions and follow diverse analytical schemes and frameworks. A lot of research also tackles unpaid work indirectly as a result or a component to be addressed within a wider economic or social justice scope.

This section provides an overview of the terminology used in the literature related to unpaid work and the various scholarly perspectives and frameworks used to tackle unpaid work, with a focus on specific trends from the MENA region. Literature on unpaid work is looked at through different lenses, including the care economy perspective, the social justice perspective, and the gender equality perspective. It also looks into the link between macroeconomic analyses and unpaid work, as well as the dynamics that affect the labour economy when it comes to unpaid work. At the same time, despite the differences among these perspectives as far as unpaid work is concerned, the literature highlights an intersection among them, especially since many are used in the same studies. The objective of this chapter is to highlight conceptual differences and the breakdown of arguments based on the type of perspective used.

## UNPAID WORK TERMINOLOGY AND DEFINITIONS

Before delving into the different scopes of unpaid work, the factors that affect it and the tools to measure it, it is important to set terminologies and definitions as found in the literature. Below are the main concepts directly or indirectly related to unpaid work.

Activities conducted by individuals during their day fall into the following categories:<sup>1</sup>

- Paid work, including wage/salary jobs, small trades and domestic work.
- Care for the environment, including recycling, livestock rearing and subsistence agriculture.
- Care for people, including care for children, care for the elderly, housework and collection of fuel and water.
- Recreational activities, including learning, social and cultural activities, and the use of mass media such as radio, TV, the Internet and newspapers.
- Rest and self-care, including sleep, rest, eating, dressing, washing and receiving healthcare.

Unpaid care work is used to refer to services provided within a household for its own members or the community, mostly the elderly, the sick, and children. Unpaid care work is non-remunerated and includes caring for others and carrying out household chores.<sup>2</sup>

The concept of unpaid work, as used in this paper, is referred to in the literature as unpaid care work, unpaid work, unpaid labour, unpaid domestic work, and unpaid domestic labour. Despite the differences in terminology, the most commonly addressed type of work, when using those terms, is direct care work and domestic work:<sup>3</sup>

- Direct care refers to the care for children, elderly, ill persons and persons who cannot care for themselves.

1 Maria Cascant Sempere, (2015). *Redistributing care work for gender equality and justice – a training curriculum*. Action Aid, Institute of Development Studies, Oxfam.

2 Mar Maestre and Jodie Thorpe, (2016). *Understanding Unpaid Care Work to Empower Women in Market Systems Approaches*, The BEAM Exchange, accessed from <https://www.beamexchange.org>. © 2016 The BEAM Exchange

3 Lucia Rost et al., (2015). *Women's economic empowerment and care: Evidence for influencing*. Oxfam, WE-CARE

- Domestic work refers to the maintenance of a clear and organized household such as cleaning, cooking, and bringing in water and groceries.

*For simplicity, this paper uses the terms 'unpaid care work' and 'unpaid work' interchangeably to signify the tasks as defined under the latter definition of unpaid care work.*

*The term 'work' signifies activities that require an investment of time and energy and could be either part of the remunerated or unpaid production market.<sup>4</sup>*

It is important to mention that critics of the term 'unpaid care work' point out that the concept of 'care' does not systematically take into consideration the indirect chores that ensure a healthy and clean environment in the house. Those critics speak about concepts such as 'committed time' and 'social reproductive tasks' and refer to the importance of using an accurate and comprehensive definition of unpaid work.<sup>5</sup>

Unpaid market work, also referred to as unpaid family work, is used to signify the contribution of household members to the paid work of another household member. Examples are relatives or wives who help in operational functions or spouses who advise and co-manage a business without receiving remuneration.<sup>6</sup>

Based on the United Nations System of National Accounts (SNA), unpaid work can be broken down into unpaid economic activities and unpaid non-economic activities. This division is an international initiative that aims at setting measurement and classification standards for economic activities.<sup>7</sup> (Figure 1)

#### **Unpaid Economic Work: (Included in the SNA)**

Activities in procuring inputs and producing for one's own use as well as for the market:

- Production of fixed assets for household use (*building a house for example*)
- Subsistence production work: such as crop cultivation, forestry, fishery, etc. for one's own use
- Collection of basic necessities: water, fuel wood, etc.
- Collection of raw materials for income generating activities like crafts, etc.
- Activities such as unpaid family work, for crop production that reaches the market.

#### **Unpaid Non-Economic Work: (Excluded from the SNA)**

Work that contributes to society but not to the economy:

- Household maintenance,
- Cleaning, washing, cooking, shopping,
- Care for children and infants,
- Care for the ill
- Volunteer work for community services.

Figure 1: Breakdown of unpaid work as per the SNA

4 Rania Antonopoulos, (2009). The Unpaid Care Work – Paid Work Connection. International Labour Organization Working Papers  
 5 Rania Antonopoulos, (2009). The Unpaid Care Work – Paid Work Connection. International Labour Organization Working Papers  
 6 Lisa Philipps, (2008). Silent partners: The role of unpaid market labour in families. *Feminist Economics* 14.2, 37-57  
 7 United Nations' System of National Accounts of 1993 (SNA), <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/sna1993/introduction.asp>

More specifically, care and domestic services under unpaid non-economic work are activities produced by household members and consumed within the same household. These include the following: (Figure 2)

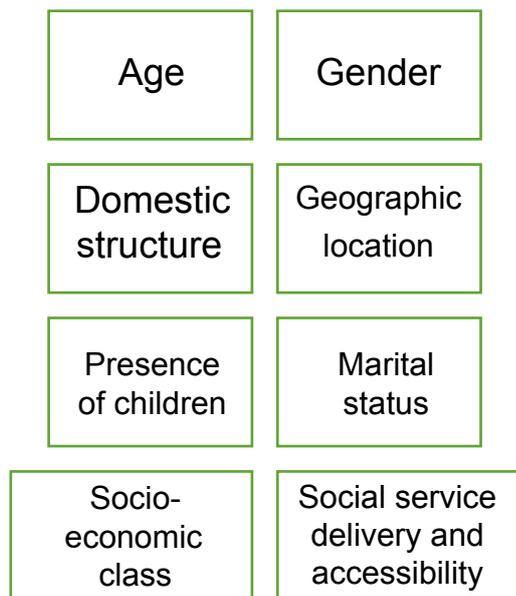


Figure 2: Factors influencing the distribution of unpaid work

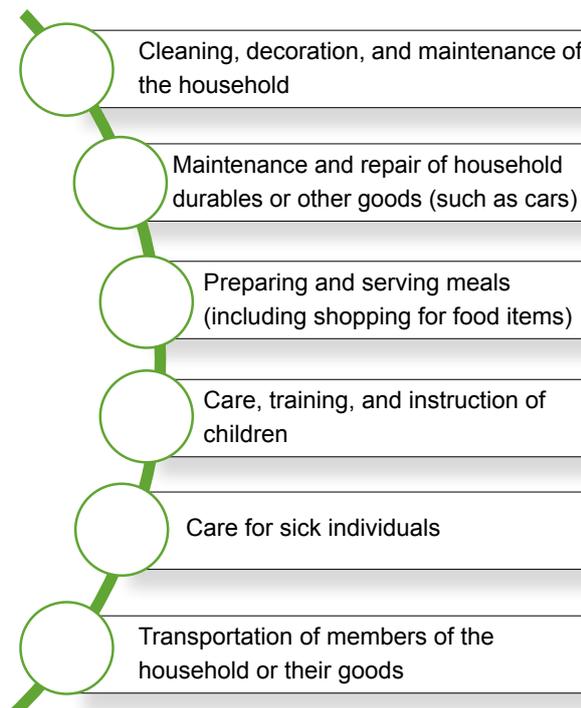


Figure 3: Care and domestic unpaid work activities

Emotional labour refers to the emotional effort that a worker is expected to exert in the workplace. Women’s predisposition to emotional labour has been commonly manifested, primarily in the nature of jobs that women are expected to fill and that are relational rather than technical, and secondly in the employers’ expectations of women emotional labour which outweighs that expected from men.<sup>8</sup>

Unpaid work, whose distribution is particularly among different societal groups and individuals, is highly affected by demographic, social, economic, cultural and political factors (Figure 3). This paper explores those factors in the sub-section 'Factors affecting unpaid work.'

<sup>8</sup> Mary Ellen Guy & Meredith A. Newman, (2004). Women’s jobs, men’s jobs: Sex segregation and emotional labour. Public Administration Review.

# UNPAID WORK FROM THE CARE ECONOMY PERSPECTIVE

Looking at unpaid work from the perspective of the care economy involves the distinction of care work as an essential component of the household wellbeing; thus a main contributor to the development and improvement of human capital. In this context, unpaid care work is an investment that is worth measuring and considering as a major part of the economy and its growth.<sup>9</sup>

Care-related services are characterized by their direct link to the person providing them, as well as to the social and personal norms of the givers and receivers of care.<sup>10</sup> Care is therefore not an easily transferable service,<sup>11</sup> and it is susceptible to a biased distribution, mostly burdening women and lower-class individuals.<sup>12</sup>

The care economy perspective seeks a fairer distribution of care services inside the household, but also to have care responsibilities shared by different actors in society, including the government and the public.<sup>13</sup> In this regard, the Care Diamond introduced by Razavi (2007) projects four sources of care provision through either paid or unpaid services, including households, the market, the state, and the non-governmental sector.<sup>14</sup> Redistributing care among those different actors may require financial investment in the private service market or a public investment by the government or the community. Because care is essential and its benefits exceed the receivers of care themselves, public and community investment in care work and services is considered an investment in the social infrastructure.<sup>15</sup>

Analyses of the care economy also stress care as a major employment field for women, in addition to it taking over women's unpaid work time. This is rooted in cultural conformities, as discussed in the gender-equality perspective (refer to the following section).

Particular attention has been given to the global trends of care and the consequences of care deficits in countries where women have taken over a bigger role in the productive market while public services have not risen to cover up for the unpaid work load that has been redirected away from local women. This has led to the 'feminisation of international migration' to cover up for the needed services while the private services are favoured when imported from lower-income countries.<sup>16</sup>

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9 Anila Shariah, (2014). Magnitude and Determinants of unpaid work in a local setting: Implications on human wellbeing. Mahatma Gandhi University. Chap 3

10 Anila Shariah, (2014). Magnitude and Determinants of unpaid work in a local setting: Implications on human wellbeing. Mahatma Gandhi University. Chap 3

11 Mar Maestre and Jodie Thorpe, (undated). Unpaid Care Work – facilitating change towards women's economic empowerment when market systems care. Institute of Development Studies & Oxfam GB

12 Anila Shariah, (2014). Magnitude and Determinants of unpaid work in a local setting: Implications on human wellbeing. Mahatma Gandhi University. Chap 3

13 Megan Daigle et al. (2017). Sharing the load: Unpaid care work and women's economic empowerment. Gender Development Network Briefings

14 Shahra Razavi, (2007). The Political and Social Economy of Care in a Development Context: Conceptual Issues, Research Questions and Policy Options. United Nations Research Institute for Social Development.

15 Susan Himmelweit, (2017). Care jobs and the care economy: Framing the issues for the future of decent work. Conference on Regulating for Decent Work, International Labour Organization, Geneva 3-5 July, 2017.

16 Rania Antonopoulos, (2009). The Unpaid Care Work – Paid Work Connection. International Labour Organization Working Papers

## ...IN THE MENA REGION

In MENA countries, care is considered as the main responsibility of women and highly prioritized over their participation in the productive labour market.<sup>17</sup> This is why the female labour participation rate is considerably lower than that of men who in turn are expected to provide financial support for their families.<sup>18</sup>

In higher income families, care work is channelled to the private market where families hire nannies from lower-income families or countries.<sup>19</sup> Although families have provided a large share of care and domestic work, this has been changing over the last decade due to various factors such as poverty (need for more time invested in paid work, particularly for young women who would have otherwise stayed at home to care for others) and breakdown in family bonds. Care, among other social support services, has been thus channelled from the household towards private schemes.<sup>20</sup>

The MENA region has rather a shortage of government policies that respond to the care needs of society. This is due to the lack of evidence-based policy-making mechanisms and challenges in financing service delivery.<sup>21</sup> The case differs for every MENA country, where country-specific contexts are highly driven by the government structures, political dynamics, and aspects of economic instability and conflict.<sup>22</sup> While existing public and private (often a mix of both) welfare schemes are targeted at the proportion of the population employed in the formal sector, a large part of local populations, mostly the more vulnerable and poor communities who tend to work in the informal sector, receive support from religious welfare organizations, which are estimated to be spending millions of dollars, often through well-rooted and organized systems of schools, hospitals and service provision organizations.<sup>23</sup>

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- 17 Valentine Moghadam, (2013). Women, work and family in the Arab region: Toward economic citizenship. DIFI Family Research and Proceedings, Special Issue on 'Protecting the Arab Family from Poverty: Employment Integration and Intergenerational Solidarity.
- 18 Angel-Urdinola, Diego F.; Tanabe, Kimie. 2012. *Micro-Determinants of Informal Employment in the Middle East and North Africa Region*. SP Discussion Paper; No. 1201. World Bank, Washington, DC. © World Bank
- 19 Valentine Moghadam, (2013). Women, work and family in the Arab region: Toward economic citizenship. DIFI Family Research and Proceedings, Special Issue on "Protecting the Arab Family from Poverty: Employment Integration and Intergenerational Solidarity.
- 20 Rana Jawad, (2015) Social protection and social policy systems in the MENA region: emerging trends. UNDESA New York
- 21 Better Policies for Better Health Conference, (September 2007, Cairo). The Middle East and North Africa Health Policy Forum.
- 22 Rana Jawad, (2015) Social protection and social policy systems in the MENA region: emerging trends. UNDESA New York
- 23 Ibid.

# UNPAID WORK FROM THE SOCIAL JUSTICE PERSPECTIVE

The importance and inevitability of unpaid work as an integral part of socio-economic activity is often analysed in the light of the distribution of unpaid work within a society. That is why studies have addressed the unfair distribution of unpaid work among men and women, as well as among different communities with variable income levels, levels of education, access to basic and advanced infrastructure, and access to government childcare and maternity support. The level of unpaid care work imposed upon every person varies greatly based on the social conditions of that person and is mostly related to income and cultural expectations. A fair distribution of unpaid work yields a subsequent fair access to economic and political opportunities while encouraging pro-poor growth and social cohesion.<sup>24</sup>

The rights-based approach to defining and studying unpaid care work focuses on the fact that the unfair distribution of unpaid work sets a burden upon individuals, particularly because the nature of care work is rather redundant, overwhelming, isolating and limiting. The rights-based argument aims at eliminating the discriminatory distribution of unpaid work to allow equal access to opportunities including economic, political and public life.<sup>25</sup>

Whereas gender-based discrimination in care work distribution is the most commonly addressed, in this perspective, distribution is envisaged based on other discriminatory elements. As such, literature looks at how women from communities of higher income and/or who have access to more developed infrastructure are prone to less unpaid work levels when compared to those from poorer communities. This is due to two factors: firstly, those women are capable of hiring a third party to do the unpaid work tasks such as cleaning, cooking and taking care of children and the elderly; and secondly, a more advanced basic infrastructure including electricity, piping, and waste management reduces the number of hours spent in doing basic chores such as transporting and heating water, manual cleaning of dishes and doing the laundry.

The capability approach goes beyond the human rights and women's rights argument to consider 'obligations' that are imposed on women. When it comes to care, in the light of women's access to their own human capabilities such as mental and emotional wellbeing, sociability/connectedness, political participation, bodily health and integrity, living with others in non-exploitative relationships, equality, and care for themselves in time of dependency are among other factors that also affect women.<sup>26</sup>

Also from the social justice perspective, literature emphasizes the positive link between the burden of unpaid work and the development of primary capabilities.<sup>27</sup> This means that a higher burden of unpaid work can come at the expense of personal development, education, and health.<sup>28 29</sup> Specifically, poorer households require longer hours of paid work in order to keep up with the basic consumption level to live decently, which reduces the time available for domestic and care work. Poverty implies that care can neither be outsourced to private market providers because the household income cannot cover it, nor is it likely to be provided by government supported entities. This limits the choice

24 Rania Antonopoulos, (2009). The Unpaid Care Work – Paid Work Connection. International Labour Organization Working Papers

25 Anila Shariah, (2014). Magnitude and Determinants of unpaid work in a local setting: Implications on human wellbeing. Mahatma Gandhi University. Chap 3

26 Mary Leahy, (2010). Care and the capabilities approach: A path to gender equality? Annual Conference: Global Economic Crises and Feminist Rethinking of the Development Discourse (Argentina, 22-24 July, 2010)

27 Barbara, KY, (2011). Measuring women's unpaid work for better human development. Human Development and Capability Association.

28 Anila Shariah, (2014). Magnitude and Determinants of unpaid work in a local setting: Implications on human wellbeing. Mahatma Gandhi University. Chap 3

29 Barbara, KY, (2011). Measuring women's unpaid work for better human development. Human Development and Capability Association.

of households to either increase their paid working hours to afford external support in care services or to spend additional time on unpaid care work. In both cases, this 'additional' time is taken out of the 'free' or 'no work' time which is generally expected to be spent on sleep, basic self-care, education, and leisure.<sup>30</sup> Some studies use the concept of 'time poverty' to signify the lack of self-care, leisure time available for individuals as a result of the overwhelming load of unpaid work which takes up the majority of their time.<sup>31</sup>

While unpaid work in relation with social justice and policies is often tackled directly, it is also looked at indirectly through work-life integration policies,<sup>32</sup> informal employment,<sup>33</sup> work conditions and decent work, rural labour trends,<sup>34</sup> urbanization, and urban poverty.<sup>35</sup> Those studies delve into the social policy framework that affects communities and marginalized groups and tend to discuss the effect of those policies on employment trends, work opportunities and conditions, and access to resources.<sup>36,37</sup>

Nancy Frazer (1999) differentiates between the two directions of social justice policies: the first, rather economic, looks into the redistribution of resources, while the second is more political and looks into the inclusion and recognition of different societal groups.<sup>38</sup> This conceptual dichotomy emphasizes the importance of developing policies that simultaneously seek redistribution and recognition of unpaid work.

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- 30 Rania Antonopoulos (2009). *The Unpaid Care Work – Paid Work Connection*. International Labour Organization Working Papers
- 31 Afshin Zilanawala, (2013). *Women's Time Poverty: Differences by Family Structure, Employment, and Gender Ideology*. Columbia University.
- 32 Suzan Lewis, (2003). *Work-life integration and social policy: a social justice theory and gender equity approach to work and family*. Work and Life Integration: Organizational, Cultural and Psychological Perspectives in a Global World.
- 33 Angel-Urdinola, Diego F.; Tanabe, Kimie. 2012. *Micro-Determinants of Informal Employment in the Middle East and North Africa Region*. SP Discussion Paper; No. 1201. World Bank, Washington, DC. © World Bank
- 34 Malika Abdelali-Martini, (2011). *Empowering women in the rural labour force with a focus on agricultural employment in the MENA*. The International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA). Algeria.
- 35 Cecilia Tacoli, (2012). *Urbanization, gender and urban poverty: paid work and unpaid carework in the city*. International Institute for Environment and Development – United Nations Population Fund
- 36 Resources include wealth and access to equal opportunities, and social privilege.
- 37 The social policy framework that affects and is affected by unpaid work is discussed in the section section “Responding to unpaid work”.
- 38 Nancy Frazer, (1999). *Social justice in the age of identity politics: Redistribution, recognition and participation*. Culture, and Economy after Cultural Turn. Thousand Oaks, CA:Sage, pp 25-52

## ...IN THE MENA REGION

Women in the MENA region are still affected by their limited mobility, are more prone to harassment inside and outside the workplace, and do not have fair access to innovative and entrepreneurial opportunities.<sup>39</sup>

There is also evidence in the MENA region that, once girls reach puberty, social norms regarding their roles and status in society sharply limit their access to educational opportunities.<sup>40</sup>

Literature argues that despite the legal reforms which aim at easing women's access to social justice in the MENA region, gender-neutral policies and procedures have been commonly subject to misinterpretation, often leading to becoming devoid of meaning.<sup>41</sup> The idea promoted in some of the literature is to ensure 'substantive equality' by promoting policies which recognize the patterns of disadvantage against women and which are moulded to respond to them. Literature also points to informal justice systems that are in place in MENA countries where communities use social pressure to impose informal practices and rules. Those informal systems are more common in rural areas and poorer communities. Those systems have put women in the MENA region under pressure to accept terms and ways of life even if they do not agree with them.<sup>42</sup>

It is important to note as well that social stigmatization has put women under a lot of pressure and difficulty in claiming their rights, let alone their access to fair opportunities and assault-free work contexts. Even when laws are in place to protect women, the process of undergoing a trial is burdensome and puts women at risk.<sup>43</sup>

Unpaid care work is part of the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly goal 5.4, which aims at 'recognizing and valuing care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure, and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family.' It is also considered an essential prerequisite for SDGs 1, 5, 8 and 10, which address gender equality, poverty reduction, targeting inequality and sustainable development through decent work, respectively.<sup>44</sup>

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- 39 Gayle Tzemach Lemmon & Alyssa Dougherty, (February 27, 2017). Improving Women's Economic Participation in MENA nations. Council on Foreign Relations.
- 40 Angel-Urdinola, Diego F.; Tanabe, Kimie. 2012. *Micro-Determinants of Informal Employment in the Middle East and North Africa Region*. SP Discussion Paper; No. 1201. World Bank, Washington, DC. © World Bank
- 41 Reem Bahdi, (2007). Background paper on women's access to justice in the MENA region. International Development Research Center (IDRC)
- 42 *ibid.*
- 43 *ibid.*
- 44 Anarkalee Perera, (15 Sep 2017), Unpaid Care Work: The Overlooked Barrier in Women's Economic Empowerment. *Gorundviews - Journalism for citizens.*

# UNPAID WORK FROM THE GENDER EQUALITY PERSPECTIVE

The distribution of unpaid work load has been proven in the literature to be significantly higher for women than for men, in poorer as well as in richer contexts.<sup>45,46</sup>

Existing research suggests that there is a negative correlation between the national income and the levels of gender inequality in unpaid work: the wealthier the country, the more men are engaged in care activities.<sup>47</sup> Additionally, it has been assumed and researched that when women participate in the labour force, men's contribution to household activities increases.<sup>48</sup> These results have led researchers to believe and conclude that, in Western societies mostly, domestic labour contributions from family members is affected by whether or not they participate in the labour force, whether they generate income or not, and the status of their financial independence.<sup>49</sup>

However, other researchers have argued that women's participation in the labour market and the status of their financial independence does not reduce their contribution to the household activities, especially not in societies where women are at the end of the 'power' ladder within the household.<sup>50</sup> Literature on unpaid work focuses on this gap and studies the factors that bias the distribution of unpaid work such as cultural norms, social expectations, economic structures and regulatory frameworks.<sup>51</sup> Those studies apply an intersectional approach in the analysis of unpaid work, looking at the diverse variables that play a role in increasing or reducing the burden of unpaid work on women. This results in the inclusion of issues such as social values, violence against women, and other context-specific trends that particularly affect women, their brunt of unpaid work, their access to paid work and other rights of economic and political participation as well as decision-making opportunities.<sup>52</sup>

Studies have calculated that women across all regions of the world spend on average between three and six hours doing unpaid work while men spend on average between half an hour and two hours on unpaid work daily.<sup>53</sup> In the Arab world, the culture privileges men and elders in the domestic division of labour<sup>54</sup>, and women often perform the roles associated with domestic maintenance such as childbearing, caring for the children and the elderly, and cooking, etc.<sup>55</sup>

Marginalized women including women living in poverty, women of particular racial or socially marginalized groups, informal settlements, and rural areas are at higher risks of carrying an unfair burden of unpaid work as compared to men.<sup>56</sup>

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- 45 OECD Development Centre, December 2014 'Unpaid Care work: The Missing link in the analysis of gender gaps in labour outcomes'.  
46 Rania Antonopoulos, (2009). The Unpaid Care Work – Paid Work Connection. International Labour Organization Working Papers  
47 OECD Development Centre, (2014)  
48 Brines J. Economic dependency, gender, and the division of labour at home. *American Journal of Sociology*. 1994;100:652–688.  
49 McFarlane S, Beaujot R, Haddad T. Time constraints and relative resources as determinants of the sexual division of domestic work. *Canadian Journal of Sociology*. 2000; 25:61–82  
50 Greenstein TN. Husbands' participation in domestic work: Interactive effects of husbands' and wives' gender ideologies. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*. 1996; 58:585–595  
51 OECD Development Center, (2014)  
52 Megan Daigle et al., (2017). Sharing the load: Unpaid care work and women's economic empowerment. *Gender Development Network Briefings*  
53 OECD Development Centre, (2014)  
54 Joseph S, (1996), Patriarchy and development in the Arab world. *Gender Development*. Jun; 4(2):14-9.  
55 Elhum Haghghat-Sordellini (1992). Chapter 7, 'Work: Definition and Patterns',  
56 Megan Daigle et al. (2017). Sharing the load: Unpaid care work and women's economic empowerment. *Gender Development Network Briefings*

A fairer distribution of unpaid work is also linked to women's economic empowerment which in turn is believed to increase incomes and positively impact women's agency, their health, education, and security.<sup>57</sup> This argument is however naively stated without considering the rigid elasticity of women's time and the importance of looking comprehensively at the paid and unpaid work roles that must be played by women.<sup>58</sup>

### ...IN THE MENA REGION

Gender disparity in terms of unpaid work in MENA countries is highly affected by economic trends, one of which is related to the regional economic migration of men to oil-producing countries to work and send remittances to their families. Economies of oil-producing countries have tended to be more male-oriented, also due to the high-income jobs which often leave women with no need to work to provide for their families. Coupled with religious institutional regulations reflected in the cultural norms in MENA countries, these economic factors have rendered women more susceptible to being stay-at-home moms.<sup>59</sup>

The patriarchal family laws in many countries of the MENA region have been witnessing a trend of reform, particularly with the rise of women-rights groups and activists who have risen from the population of modern middle-class educated and employed women.<sup>60</sup>

Women's participation in the labour force in the MENA region has often been facilitated by state-sponsored education schemes and the expansion of the public service sectors which have opened up the possibility of women participating in public employment.<sup>61</sup> Nonetheless, the labour force participation rate of women in the MENA remains low.

Scholars also argue that the patriarchal kinship networks and the cultural norms have long existed in the Arabian Peninsula's history and are persistent today<sup>62</sup>. These networks favour men over women, and promote men's access to opportunities, given that women are the lower end of the 'power' and 'influence' ladder in the MENA region.

57 Mar Maestre and Jodie Thorpe, (2016). Understanding Unpaid Care Work to Empower Women in Market Systems Approaches, The BEAM Exchange, accessed from <https://www.beamexchange.org>. © 2016 The BEAM Exchange

58 *ibid.*

59 Valentine Moghadam (2013). Women, work and family in the Arab region: Toward economic citizenship. DIFI Family Research and Proceedings, Special Issue on "Protecting the Arab Family from Poverty: Employment Integration and Intergenerational Solidarity.

60 *Ibid.*

61 *Ibid.*

62 See Charrad, (2009).

# UNPAID WORK AND MACROECONOMIC DYNAMICS

Literature makes the link between unpaid work and macroeconomic trends by stressing the importance of integrating unpaid care work in the data records and statistics at the national level. The purpose is to redefine market trends and market growth measures with a more comprehensive set of indicators. Macroeconomists who have tackled unpaid work have pointed out the risk of basing national policies on traditional macroeconomic analysis, which can increase inequality in the distribution of unpaid work,<sup>63</sup> bias macroeconomic analyses towards male-centred trends,<sup>64</sup> and reduce the opportunities for inclusive and sustainable economies.<sup>65</sup>

Three scopes are suggested by feminist economists: one that calls for the inclusion of unpaid work in the GDP accounts, a second that calls for the analysis of the link of unpaid work with the market dynamics including production and consumption trends, and a third that looks into the effect of public spending on specific goods and services, which affects unpaid work.<sup>66</sup>

At the economic level, there have been attempts to quantify some activities that fall under the scope of unpaid work, by adding them to the SNA.<sup>67,68</sup> However, scholars argue that there is a need to reconsider the entire way of looking at the labour market by moving away from traditional labour economics tools and the amendment of the very basic concepts, such as the labour force, in a way that fosters unpaid work along with its emotional and social costs.<sup>69</sup>

Theoretical endeavours have been made by economic researchers to explore the integration of macroeconomic policy and social policy, rather than simply adding onto social policy. Such endeavours identify the 'male breadwinner bias' as one of the main biases to traditional macroeconomic policy.<sup>70</sup> The purpose of including unpaid care work in macroeconomic analysis and developing empirical and theoretical frameworks for more accurate representation of women's time and efforts aims to integrate the analysis in the formation of socio-economic policies, as well as those related to women and the labour market.<sup>71</sup>

The alleviation of women's unpaid work has a substantial effect on the socio-economic wellbeing of a country. It provides the space for women for more liberated choice of economic participation, rendering paid jobs and entrepreneurial initiatives more accessible to them. It thus encourages higher levels of economic engagement, more extensive human resources and specialized economic actors who can take roles in local innovation and economic development.

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63 Anila Shariah, (2014). Magnitude and Determinants of unpaid work in a local setting: Implications on human wellbeing. Mahatma Gandhi University. Chap 3

64 Indira Hirway, (2015). Unpaid Work and the Economy: Linkages and Their Implications. Levy Economics Institute of Bard College. Retrieved from: [http://www.levyinstitute.org/pubs/wp\\_838.pdf](http://www.levyinstitute.org/pubs/wp_838.pdf)

65 Megan Daigle et al. (2017). Sharing the load: Unpaid care work and women's economic empowerment. Gender Development Network Briefings

66 Rania Antonopoulos, (2009). The Unpaid Care Work – Paid Work Connection. International Labour Organization Working Papers

67 System of National Accounts: an international initiative that aims at setting measurement and classification standards for economic activities. (United Nations System of National Accounts of 1993 (SNA), <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/sna1993/introduction.asp>)

68 Indira Hirway, (2015). Unpaid Work and the Economy: Linkages and Their Implications. Levy Economics Institute of Bard College. Retrieved from: [http://www.levyinstitute.org/pubs/wp\\_838.pdf](http://www.levyinstitute.org/pubs/wp_838.pdf)

69 *ibid.*

70 Diane Elson & Nilufer Cagatay, (2000). Social content of macroeconomic policies. *World Development* 28-7, 1347-1364.

71 Indira Hirway, (2015). Unpaid Work and the Economy: Linkages and Their Implications. Levy Economics Institute of Bard College. Retrieved from: [http://www.levyinstitute.org/pubs/wp\\_838.pdf](http://www.levyinstitute.org/pubs/wp_838.pdf)

Additionally, when looking at women's contribution to the economy, researchers have found that women's paid work benefits both the collective and the individual.<sup>72</sup> That is not only because they contribute to the production of services and products, but also because working women create jobs and new industries.<sup>73</sup> To name a few, one can mention kindergartens, elderly care institutions, migrant workers recruitment agencies, janitorial services, fast food restaurants, bus and taxi drivers, etc.

### ...IN THE MENA REGION

MENA countries have been experiencing challenging economic contexts due to the regional political and financial instabilities to different extents; these are reflected in increasing unemployment rates, slower growth rates and higher pressures on households to sustain themselves financially.<sup>74</sup> Macroeconomic policies in most MENA countries are not evidence-based, mainly due to the lack of data and convenient systems.<sup>75</sup>

It is worth pointing out that in MENA countries, the labour market is highly affected by the economic infrastructure of 'authoritarian bargain' which has drowned the private sector and jobs in the vicious cycle of rent-seeking and political relationships between the authority and specific political groups. Even though different in every country, a common trend in the MENA region highly affects women's participation in the formal employment market. Women's unemployment in the MENA region tends to be high, and their labour market participation rate remains low, which contradicts the improvement in educational attainment of women in the region.<sup>76</sup>

72 Elhum Haghighat-Sordellini, (1992). Chapter 7, 'Work: Definition and Patterns'

73 Elhum Haghighat-Sordellini, (1992). Chapter 7, 'Work: Definition and Patterns'

74 Valentine Moghadam Work and family in the Arab region: Toward economic citizenship. DIFI Family Research and Proceedings.

75 Better Policies for Better Health Conference, (September 2007, Cairo). The Middle East and North Africa Health Policy Forum.

76 Ragui Assaad, (2014). Making sense of Arab labour markets: the enduring legacy of dualism. IZA Journal of Labour and Development.

# UNPAID WORK AND LABOUR ECONOMICS

Studies on unpaid care work have gone as far as questioning the basic calculations of labour force and workforce statistics. Tackling unpaid work in the light of labour economics and labour dynamics includes looking into individuals' decisions to be part of the labour force, and how much their care responsibilities affect those decisions. In this regard, some studies lobby for a re-estimation of labour force numbers with a contextual measure of unpaid work, including factors that bias it towards women or particular societal groups.<sup>77</sup>

## Relationship with paid work

Unpaid care work affects women's access to paid work opportunities, and often makes them confined to lower paid jobs and job insecurities due to the pre-set care responsibilities that they are expected to complete.<sup>78</sup> Women's access to proper and protected paid work is also hindered due to the gender-based segmentation of available jobs<sup>79</sup> whereby women are more likely to enter jobs that are relational, as opposed to technical, with the latter jobs mostly expected to be undertaken by men.<sup>80</sup>

The connection between paid and unpaid work stems from the fact that 'time' is a limited resource that can be invested in either one of them at a time. This means that paid and unpaid work are exercised at the expense of each other, and reducing the load of unpaid work means either channelling it to someone else in the form of unpaid work, or remunerating someone else to do it through direct paid work or government support.<sup>81</sup>

Unpaid care work is therefore connected to a person's access to decent work opportunities, and thus brings about issues such as the forceful pushing of women into the informal sector, part-time positions, and underpaid jobs, where they are denied fair protection and representation.<sup>82</sup>

## Relationship with the informal sector

The size of the informal economy is large in countries and regions of poverty, economic distress, and political instability.<sup>83</sup> Although the informal sector absorbs both men and women, women are more prone to work in the informal sector.<sup>84</sup> This is due to the expectation of women to perform care and domestic duties and to the 'male breadwinner' stereotype which renders women's work less significant to family income and more likely to be manifested in informal jobs that would seem more flexible, attractive and accessible to women. Nonetheless, these jobs do not always guarantee women their workers' rights.<sup>85</sup>

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77 Anila Shariah, (2014). Magnitude and Determinants of unpaid work in a local setting: Implications on human wellbeing. Mahatma Gandhi University. Chap 3

78 Megan Daigle et al. (2017). Sharing the load: Unpaid care work and women's economic empowerment. Gender Development Network Briefings

79 Cecilia Tacoli, (2012). Urbanization, gender and urban poverty: paid work and unpaid care work in the city. International Institute for Environment and Development – Urbanization and Emerging Population Issues Working Paper 7.

80 Mary Ellen Guy & Meredith A. Newman, (2004). Women's jobs, men's jobs: Sex segregation and emotional labour. Public Administration Review.

81 Miranda, V. (2011). 'Cooking, Caring and Volunteering: Unpaid Work Around the World', OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers, No. 116, OECD Publishing.

82 Rania Antonopoulos, (2009). The Unpaid Care Work – Paid Work Connection. International Labour Organization Working Papers

83 Robert Looney, 'Economic Consequences of Conflict: The Rise of Iraq's Informal Economy', JOURNAL OF ECONOMIC ISSUES, Vol. XL No. 4 December 2006

84 Angel-Urdinola, Diego F.; Tanabe, Kimie. 2012. Micro-Determinants of Informal Employment in the Middle East and North Africa Region. SP Discussion Paper; No. 1201. World Bank, Washington, DC. © World Bank

85 Rania Antonopoulos, (2009). The Unpaid Care Work – Paid Work Connection. International Labour Organization Working Papers

## ...IN THE MENA REGION

Literature suggests a multitude of factors that intersect and lead to women's low labour force participation in the MENA region. These include modernization, patriarchy, gender roles, educational attainments, access to opportunities, among many others<sup>86</sup>. Some argue that the agricultural heritage may have led to entrenched gendered work norms<sup>87</sup> while others argue that Islamic beliefs are at the centre of women's low rates of labour participation in the MENA region<sup>88</sup>.

Both women and men in crisis areas within the MENA region have been recently suffering from economic distress, mostly forcing them to work in positions that do not match their skills. Furthermore, women have been pushed into the remunerated work space, not necessarily out of liberalization but rather out of desperation and poverty, and the jobs they have been taking over are mostly in the informal sector where their protection and rights are not guaranteed. This is coupled with pessimism and hopes for migration. The problem with this pattern of women entering the world of paid work is that women are still socially expected to do most of the unpaid care and domestic work, which is leaving them devastated.<sup>89</sup>

Almost half of employed women in the MENA region are working in vulnerable jobs.<sup>90</sup>

### EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS<sup>91</sup>

#### NUMBERS FROM THE MENA REGION...

- 27% (2015)<sup>92</sup> of women in the working age population are either employed or actively seeking work in the MENA region
- Only 25.2% of the female population aged 15 and above in the MENA region participates in the labour market
- Women's participation in the workforce has increased by only 0.17% annually in the MENA region over the last 30 years
- The MENA region has almost a 40% unemployment rate among young (15 to 24 years of age) women and 20% unemployment rate among women
- The MENA region's unemployment gap between women and men doubled from 5.5% in 1985 to more than 10% in 2010
- Women make up approximately 25% of the workforce in female-owned firms, compared to 21% in male-owned firms
- Out of 5,887 firms in 10 MENA countries that were surveyed by the World Bank between 2003 and 2010, only 15% were female owned
- The highest levels of native female labour force participation in MENA countries are found in Lebanon, Morocco, Turkey, and Yemen, where women constitute more than 25% of the labour force<sup>93</sup>.

86 World Bank (2013), 'Opening doors: Gender Equality and Development in the Middle East and North Africa'.

87 See Alesina et al. (2011)

88 See Landes and Landes (2001), Inglehart and Norris (2003)

89 Kristine Anderson, (2017). Now is the time: Research on gender justice, conflict and fragility in the Middle East and North Africa. Oxfam Great Britain.

90 World Development Indicators (2012)

91 ibid.

92 ILO, 'women in business and management: gaining momentum in the Middle East and North Africa', 2016

93 WikiGender, 'Women's access to education in the MENA region', retrieved online on May 11, 2018

# FACTORS AFFECTING UNPAID WORK

This section includes a review of the factors affecting unpaid work as well as the institutions responsible for regulating, managing and reducing the influence of these factors on women's participation in unpaid work. It seeks to link contributions of stakeholders from the Care Diamond (the state, the family, the market, and the community) to the factors that increase women's unpaid work or decrease their availability and capacity to engage in other sectors of public life.

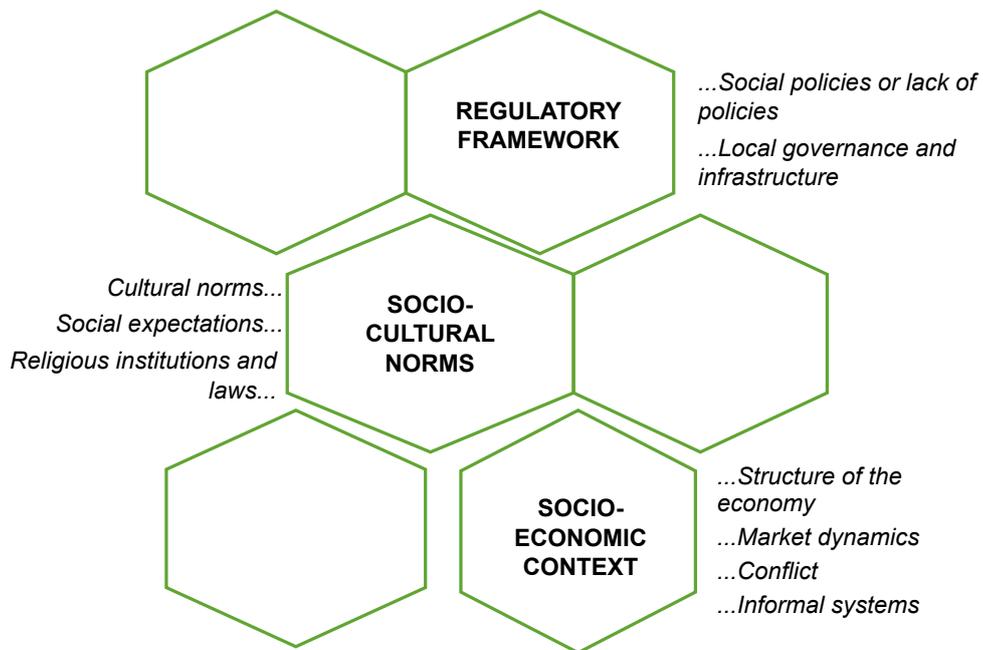


Figure 4: Themes and factors affecting unpaid work

# FACTORS AFFECTING UNPAID WORK

The role of women in the domestic and public spheres is influenced by a multitude of factors within the ecosystem they live in. The intersections among the different perspectives described in the previous section categorize the factors into the following three themes (see Figure 4).

## REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Unpaid work is highly influenced by the existence or non-existence of policies and regulations which organize economic activities, social service provisions, and women-related issues.<sup>94</sup> Public policies can contribute to balancing the private and the public in order to promote the participation of both men and women in the political and economic public spheres, as well as in the domestic and parental responsibilities (like paternity leave, for example).<sup>95</sup>

When looking at the legal and political status of women in the MENA countries through the neo-patriarchal framework, Moghadam argues that governments encourage patriarchal structures because of their social welfare<sup>96</sup> functions.<sup>97</sup> The welfare functions of the state represent the roles that the state plays in providing the basic needs of the people and becomes as a patriarch to its people, especially to women.<sup>98</sup> The state as a patriarch seeks to protect the family, and patriarchy is a system that favours men and enables them to dominate women to maintain the power and control of resources (Cain et al., 1979; Mason, 1986). What stands at the basis of patriarchy is the 'patriarchal family that is designed to guarantee the paternity of property-heirs and vesting in men the control of female sexuality, that is institutionalized, codified and carried out by the state', (Ahmed, 1992:12).<sup>99</sup> Patriarchal families, as described by Kandiyoti (1992),<sup>100</sup> are structures that place younger women and children at the lowest level of the hierarchy.

## SOCIO-CULTURAL NORMS

It has been long argued that since the Industrial Revolution in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, men have been categorized as the breadwinners while women are the child-bearers and emotional support for men.<sup>101</sup> This model of separation of spaces suggests that for someone (the man) to participate in the political and labour public spheres, someone (a woman) must be preparing the food, cleaning the house and raising the next generation of citizens through reproductive labour.<sup>102</sup>

Literature also highlights that it is the wife and/or mother who carries out the functions of the family: socialization of the children through passing on the norms and values of the society, and the stabilization of the adult personalities through providing emotional security.<sup>103</sup> This theory has been heavily

94 Rania Antonopoulos, (2009). The Unpaid Care Work – Paid Work Connection. International Labour Organization Working Papers

95 Pomeroy, C. (2004)

96 See Seccombe (1974), Dalla Costa and James (1975), and Eisenstein (1978)

97 Moghadam, V. (2004).

98 Thoradeniya, D., (2015) 'Women in the patriarchal welfare state', Colombo Branch of the South Asia Institute, Heidelberg University, Germany

99 Elhum Haghghat-Sordellini, (1992). *Women in the Middle East and North Africa*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, Chapter 3, 'Patriarchy, Modernization and the Global Economy'. P 12.

100 Kandiyoti, D. (1998). 'Bargaining with Patriarchy', *Gender and Society*, Vol.2, No.3 (Sep 1988), pp 274 – 290.

101 Pomeroy, C. (2004). 'Redefining Public and Private in the Framework of a Gendered Equality.' *Knowing the Body: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Sex and Gender*. Third Set of Web Papers. Haverford College. Dec (2004)

102 Pomeroy, C., 'Redefining Public and Private in the Framework of a Gendered Equality', Bryn Mawr College. (2004)

103 Moghadam, V. (2004). pp. 137 – 167

criticized for ignoring the exploitation of women within the division of gender roles that are socially constructed and limit women's opportunities outside of the household.<sup>104</sup> The existing familial binary assigns different roles to the mother and father (and/or husband and wife) in a hetero-normative family as follows<sup>105</sup>:

- THE MOTHER AND/OR THE WIFE who plays the role of nurturing, support, and socialization of children,
- THE FATHER AND/OR THE HUSBAND who plays the instrumental role of earning the family's financial needs and ensuring discipline

Such societal ideologies attribute 'secondary home-related' tasks to women and raise the expectation that childcare (for one) will be done by the free labour of the mother in exchange for financial sustainability and protection. The gender-based division of activities has created and further reinforced the notion of unpaid female labour within the family, women's lack of access to valued labour opportunities, and the gender pay gap that derives from this conceptualization that women can rely on men for financial security in exchange for the 'emotional and childbearing' labour.<sup>106</sup>

The dichotomy reinforces and reproduces women's lack of power in economic and political domains, as men and women are socialized with the idea that women belong in the home space and are best suited (naturally) to perform activities related to reproduction, emotional care and child care.<sup>107</sup> In the domestic sphere, patriarchal norms and values allow men to socially and physically dominate women by using different social mechanisms such as emotional and psychological abuse, domestic violence, and rape.<sup>108</sup>

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104 *Revise Sociology* (2014, February 9). 'The Functionalist Perspective on the Family', accessed on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018

105 Moghadam, V. (2004). pp. 137 – 167

106 See for example, Rauch and Kostyshak (2009) and Offenbauer (2005)

107 Dhari, S., 'Private Public Dichotomy', The Indira Gandhi National Open University

108 *ibid.*

“Women have the heavy responsibility of procreation and rearing a generation: this is a divine art [...] God, therefore, absolves the women from all economic responsibilities... Therefore, it is the duty of the man to provide all economic means for this woman [...] in exchange for her companionship and courtship.”  
Fereshteh Hashemi, Iranian woman writer, 1981.

Socio-cultural norms are often interlinked with religious beliefs. For instance, Muslim scholars have long debated that marriage and family living are at the core of social reproduction and are a manifestation of the Divine Will and Purpose.<sup>109,110</sup> The family is viewed as the ‘nursery of the future’ and as having the instrumental role of reproduction under the guardianship of women.<sup>111</sup> These ideologies suggest that women fulfil the functions assigned to them by nature and biology: the woman is at the centre of the wellbeing of the family and the man earns the family’s daily bread. Nonetheless, such statements do not account for the wide variations among Muslim societies that have a diversity of outcomes for women.<sup>112</sup> Additionally, this ideology does not account for the dynamics and familial division of roles in a female-headed household (widowed, single mothers, etc.) especially in the MENA region, where the different wars have led to a growing number of widows.<sup>113</sup> Literature suggests that this ideology which clearly separates the roles within the household does not take into account the different opportunity structures available to women and men in their communities and in the economy.

*“Care is a collective responsibility that involves not only households, but also communities/NGOs, the private sector (the market) and the State”*

Redistributing Care Work for Gender Equality and Justice – a training curriculum, OXFAM, ActionAid, and IDS

## SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

When looking at family-related factors that affect unpaid work, the literature looks into characteristics such as the family structure, whether the households are 'headed' by single mothers, the family members' level of contribution to family income, the number of children, and the existence of elderly in the household.<sup>114</sup> The theoretical framework sets that households with younger members, higher income, less children, or non-single headed households are less prone to unpaid work.<sup>115</sup>

The structure of the economy, including its market dynamics and main sectors, its level of development, unemployment rate, and the gender balance in access to economic opportunities affect the overall load of unpaid work that is required from the household but also its distribution between women and men.<sup>116</sup> The level of economic development also goes hand in hand with infrastructural and technological advancements which are found to reduce (and not abolish) unpaid work by accelerating the required time to complete some of the burdensome unpaid domestic work such as heating, washing and cooking.<sup>117</sup> When services are accessible and provided for care providers, the availability for work opportunities and more active citizenship is optimized. For example, when women spend less time caring for chronically ill individuals in the household (mainly because of the lack of public service provision of care services), women can have more time to look for a job and participate in the labour market<sup>118</sup>.

109 Iranian Islamist Murteza Mutahhari, Egyptian Islamist Seyid Qutb, etc.

110 Ibid. pp. 137 – 167.

111 Youssef Choueri, 'Islamic Fundamentalism 3rd Edition: The Story of Islamist Movements', The family, p.167-168

112 See Landes and Landes (2001), Inglehart and Norris (2003)

113 Ibid. pp. 137 – 167.

114 Afshin Zilanawala, (2013). Women's Time Poverty: Differences by Family Structure, Employment, and Gender Ideology. Columbia University.

115 Rania Antonopoulos, (2009). The Unpaid Care Work – Paid Work Connection. International Labour Organization Working Papers

116 Rania Antonopoulos, (2009). The Unpaid Care Work – Paid Work Connection. International Labour Organization Working Papers

117 Ibid.

118 Leyla Karimli, Emma Samman, Lucia Rost, Thalia Kidder, 'Factors and norms influencing unpaid care work: Household survey evidence from five rural communities in Colombia, Ethiopia, the Philippines, Uganda and Zimbabwe', *Oxfam*, 2014

During economic recessions, women are more susceptible to be unemployed than men; this is mainly due to their higher involvement in unpaid care work and the social expectations imposed upon them. Economic recessions imply that the economic situation of households and the government are in distress, so care is less easily shared and distributed among actors and is posed systematically on women.<sup>119</sup>

## PROVIDERS OF WELFARE SERVICES

Care services are being increasingly discussed at the policy level in different countries that are looking at the factors affecting unpaid care work.<sup>120</sup> When discussing care services, some research divides the provisions of care into four main categories as follows:<sup>121</sup>

- Provisions related to monetary and social security benefits: tax deduction for parents, cash payments for child care, social security, affordability of hospital services, elderly care services, etc.
- Provisions related to employment regulatory measures: flexible working hours for mothers, maternity and paternity leaves, childcare services within the place of employment, paid and unpaid leave, etc.
- Provisions related to service or benefits provided in-kind: community support services, community childcare places (gardens, playgrounds, kindergarten), etc.
- Provisions related to incentives towards higher employment and creation of labour opportunities in the market: incentives for employing paid forms of care by domestic workers or nannies or other providers, benefits for individuals employed as care providers, incentives for division of household labour among all family members, etc.

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119 Cecilia Tacoli, (2012). Urbanization, gender and urban poverty: paid work and unpaid care work in the city. International Institute for Environment and Development – Urbanization and Emerging Population Issues Working Paper 7.

120 Shahra Razavi, 'The Political and Social Economy of Care in a Development Context: Conceptual issues, Research Questions and Policy options', *United nations Research Institute for Social Development*, Gender and Development Programme Paper Number 3, June 2007

121 Shahra Razavi, 'The Political and Social Economy of Care in a Development Context: Conceptual issues, Research Questions and Policy options', *United nations Research Institute for Social Development*, Gender and Development Programme Paper Number 3, June 2007

It is argued that care services are not the sole responsibility of the household or the family, as while some of the care responsibilities are assumed by the family, others can and should be provided by the state, the employer and/or the community (not-for-profit organizations, welfare organizations, charity institutions and community groups).<sup>122</sup> Care can be provided in schools (public service), through the market (employment, etc.), in the community (collective or municipal service), and/or at home (the family, nannies and domestic workers).<sup>123</sup> A curriculum developed by Oxfam, ActionAid and IDS uses the Care Diamond model to suggest a fairer redistribution of care in the following manner<sup>124</sup>:

### Care and the Household

- Women must have power to control resources in order to decrease the unequal distribution of unpaid work
- Power relations within the household must be able to transfer care and distribute it

### Care and the Community

- Communities must be able to support the changes and redistribution of care work within the household
- Communities must involve women in planning and budgeting for resources and infrastructure that seek to re-establish the balance of unpaid work

### Care and the Market

- The market must provide care providers with an enabling environment to incentivize formal employment while also providing care services. This includes all different types of private sector employment (self-employed, large companies, formal and informal, etc.)

### Care and the State

- The state is the ultimate bearer of care services provision
- The state should ensure that rights are respected
- The state uses taxes to pay for public care services
- The state must institute a tax system that can reduce taxes on the poor and increase them on the privileged and wealthy

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> Oxfam, ActionAid, and IDS 'Redistributing care work for gender equality and justice – a training curriculum'

## FACTORS AND WELFARE SERVICE PROVIDERS' MATRIX

Based on the above discussion of factors affecting unpaid work, the following matrix categorizes those according to the potential care service provider that can influence them.<sup>125</sup>

	SOCIO-CULTURAL NORMS	SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT	REGULATORY FRAMEWORK
STATE	The availability and implementation of national awareness raising campaigns seeking to change perceptions and social expectations of women	Family planning regulations (regulations concerning abortion and contraception, social security provisions on women's access to reproductive healthcare)	Macroeconomic data, such as macro time-use surveys, time-use studies of men and women, including simultaneous activities and supervision
	The adaptation of national educational curricula that discuss gender equality, norms, social expectations and unpaid work in the household	Availability of infrastructure and services reducing women's unpaid work (for example: availability and quality of infrastructure, namely electricity, clean water, safe transportation means, as well as availability and accessibility of care services, namely child care and healthcare)	<p>National policies, such as labour market regulations, property law and the public provision of products and services that can replace or reduce women's unpaid work</p> <p>Labour laws and regulations on social protection (such as: parental leave regulations, unemployment compensation, regulations for domestic workers, including migrant domestic workers, and regulations addressing harassment in the workplace)</p> <p>Policies addressing unpaid work (researching unpaid work, investing in infrastructure and services to reduce unpaid work, gender-responsive budgeting)</p>

<sup>125</sup> Mar Maestre and Jodie Thorpe, (2016).

MARKET	Perceptions of women in employment (women's access to higher positions in private sector employment, gender-based wage gaps, women's involvement in syndicates, gender-based segregation of jobs)	Labour market characteristics (such as: unemployment rates and the state of the economy, main sectors in the economy, formal and informal sectors, availability of employment and entrepreneurship opportunities)	Employment policies (the level of application of labour law provisions, maternal and paternal leaves guarantees, flexible working hours, availability of child care within the workspace, gender sensitive policies, etc.)
		Supply of care and domestic services in the market (availability and accessibility of paid care and domestic services, including proximity and affordability, creation and inclusion of care jobs)	
		Provision of equipment, products and services, such as time and labour-saving equipment	
COMMUNITY	Norms and perceptions around care tasks	Existing infrastructure in the community, such as water, electricity and child care, healthcare and transportation	Gender-responsive budgeting for NGOs (programmes targeting unpaid work)
	Social perceptions of women's role in the public sphere (social perception of sectors of women's employment and education, social perception of women in politics, social perceptions of women's mobility, gender-based perception of income-generation within the household)	Availability of supporting communal services and infrastructure (for example: availability of communal care services, availability of communal infrastructure reducing women's unpaid work, availability of communal support for women in vulnerable communities)	Participation and representation of women in policy formulation circles as well as executive branches of the government (including local government institutions like municipalities and public community centres)
HOUSEHOLD	Household dynamics, such as structure, roles and responsibilities of family members and the gender-based division of labour	Household socio-economic situation (household's income level, household's accessibility to technology reducing domestic and care work, girls' and women's access to education)	Control over and access to income, savings and property
	Women's bargaining power within the household (that can be assessed and evaluated by looking at gender-based violence, women's access and control of household resources)	Distance to infrastructure and accessible services (water, childcare or healthcare facilities)	Personal status law (such as marriage, divorce, custody and inheritance laws, etc.)
		Availability of time and labour-saving equipment (food mills, cooking stoves, washing machines, cribs)	

# THE CASE OF EGYPT, JORDAN, LEBANON, AND TUNISIA

## THE CASE OF EGYPT

INDICATOR	EGYPT
Rank on the Global Gender Gap Report (2016)	132 (out of 144), 2016
Economic participation and opportunity	132 (out of 144), 2016
Educational attainment	112 (out of 144), 2016
Labour force participation	138 (out of 144), 2016
Wage equality for similar work	19 (survey results), 2016
Legislators, senior officials, and managers	119 (out of 144), 2016
Professional workers	105 (out of 144), 2016
Health and survival	95 (out of 144), 2016
Political empowerment	115 (out of 144), 2016
Law mandates non-discrimination in hiring women	No
Law mandates equal pay <sup>126</sup>	Yes
Length of maternity leave	90 days
Provider of maternity leave benefits	Employer and government
Government supports or provides childcare	Yes
Government provides child allowance to parents	No
Mention of non-discrimination clause in the constitution	Yes
Marital-status gap <sup>127</sup>	30% <sup>128</sup> (2013)
In Egypt as a whole, youth illiteracy is 11%, whereas, in Upper Egypt, the corresponding rate is 17% (2013)	
In Egypt, almost half of all industries have minimal (below 10%) female presence	
In Egypt, some of the industries that have above-average female employment intensity are: education, health, social work, agriculture and textile	
in Egypt, around three quarters of employees in the public sector are women (2014) <sup>129</sup>	

\*Source: World Economic Forum, *Global Gender Gap Index, 2016*, Source (2): World Bank, *Gender report (2013)*

Egypt is a conservative country where women's participation in the public sphere, including the labour market, has long been associated with negative perceptions.<sup>130</sup> The Nasserite policies of the 1950s have been considered as drivers to women's education and contribution to the paid labour market. These policies promulgated higher education as a free right to all Egyptians followed by guaranteed employment in the public sector in 1962. Consequently, the percentage of women in universities increased from 16.3% to 30.4% between 1961 and 1974, since joining white collar jobs as opposed to traditional jobs was seen as a way to escape poverty.<sup>131</sup> Nonetheless, the idea that educating mothers was educating the nation was infused into the national discourse at the time, thus reinforcing the need for women's domesticity. The importance of women's education was perceived

126 Amal Khairy Amin Mohamed, 'An Analysis of the Gender Pay Gap in the Egyptian Labour Market', *International Association for Research in Income and Wealth*, November, 2015.

127 The difference in economic participation between married and never married women

128 Governance and Social Development Resource Centre, 'Women's economic role in the Middle East and North Africa', (2013)

129 ILO, 'women in business and management: gaining momentum in the Middle East and North Africa', 2016

130 Barsoum, G. (2010), When There is 'No Respect' at Work: Job Quality Issues for Women in Egypt's Private Sector. *OIDA International Journal of Sustainable Development*, 1(1), 67-80.

131 Barsoum, G. (2010), When There is 'No Respect' at Work: Job Quality Issues for Women in Egypt's Private Sector. *OIDA International Journal of Sustainable Development*, 1(1), 67-80.

through the purpose of breeding, rather than serving their communities as individuals. Women often ended up attaining an education but not contributing to the labour force.<sup>132, 133</sup>

## REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Egyptian labour law has been witnessing recurrent reforms to try to protect employed women. The general regulatory framework in Egypt is up to international standards for protecting women's employment. However, it is not being fully enforced in all regions because of the government's lack of institutional capacity to do so and because of the rising informal sector<sup>134</sup>.

The current labour law mandates a 90-day paid maternity leave for women working in the private sector while women in the public sector receive a 120-day paid leave. The labour law states that women are not required to work for 45 days following childbirth.<sup>135</sup> Women only receive maternity leave for up to three children provided that the woman has been contributing to social insurance for the ten months preceding the delivery. The new law proposal includes modifications for maternity leave; women would be entitled to a 120-day paid maternity leave in both public and private sector. However, this leave would only be allowed for two children, rather than three.<sup>136</sup>

'Article 35 of the new Labour Law specifies that discrimination in wages based on religion, origin, language or sex is prohibited. Additionally, Article 88 of Chapter 2 (on the Employment of Women Workers), states that 'All provisions regulating the work of male employees shall apply to female employees if their working conditions are like those of men'.

*EconoWin, 'A Country Study of Egypt, 2010*

The restriction on the number of paid maternity leaves, at two or three, entails the exclusion of many women from their right to leave, as the fertility rate in the country is 3.47 births per woman.<sup>137</sup> If the labour law is to allow paid leave for up to only two births, 1.5 births per woman would not be covered by paid leave. Furthermore, the law does not provide any provisions for paternity leave; women are thus expected to care for their new-borns mostly alone.

Nonetheless, mothers working in larger institutions receive further benefits as per the labour law. Article 96 of the law requires that any company with more than 100 female employees, establishes a nursery, or contracts a nursery, to provide childcare for female employees' children. Additionally, a woman working in a company with more than 50 employees has the right to an unpaid childcare leave for up to two years, for not more than two times during her employment. With regards to the new Labour Law, although it seeks to promote gender equality and encourage female employment, it excludes women working in purely agrarian works from the provisions of the new labour law.<sup>138</sup>

Additionally, the Egyptian labour code explicitly excludes domestic workers, resulting in a lack of legal protection for these workers. This exclusion is justified by the alleged specificity of domestic work conditions. It is important to note that domestic work in Egypt is increasingly being dominated by migrant workers, given that it does not require licensing and that it is poorly paid, thus not desirable by locals.<sup>139</sup> Even though data from the 2012 labour market assessment show that the total time for care and domestic work performed by the man and woman in wealthier households is smaller than that performed in poorer households,<sup>140</sup> no research addresses the redistribution of unpaid work as a result of hiring domestic workers in Egypt.

132 Shahin, M., & El-Ghazaly, Y. (2017). The Impact of Notions of Nationalism on Women's Rights in Egypt. *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism*, 17(2), 177- 192.

133 The Economic Research Forum, 'Egypt, Labour Market Panel Survey, ELMPS', 2012

134 Hendy, R. (2015). Women's Participation in the Egyptian Labour Market: 1998-2012. *Economic Research Forum*, Working Paper Series, Working Paper N. 907

135 Egyptian Labour Law, Article 91

136 Tarek, M. (2017). 4-month maternity leave in the new labour law instead of 90 days. *El Watan News*.

137 CIA World Factbook (2018). Fertility rates statistics.

138 EconoWin, 'Labour Regulation and Female Labour Market Participation', (2010), GIZ, BMZ.

139 Thomas, C. (2010). Migrant Domestic Workers in Egypt: A Case Study of the Economic Family in Global Context. *Cornell Law Faculty Publication*, Paper N.610

140 Antari, S. (2015). Estimating the Value of Women's Unpaid Domestic Work in Egypt. *New Woman Foundation*

In general, the labour market in Egypt remains largely unregulated, and the application of the labour law remains limited to the public sector and to a small number of private formal sector firms most of which are multinationals. Data from the 2012 Egyptian labour market survey show that only 17.5% of women working in the private sector have contracts, with 75% of contracts being for one year or less.<sup>141</sup> Given that most of the workforce is employed in the informal sector or in the unregulated formal sector, the labour law that aims at facilitating possibilities for women to combine market work and household work only provides protection to a few elite women.<sup>142</sup> Consequently, most women do not have access to legal protection, social insurance and union rights in paid employment.<sup>143</sup> In the 2012 edition of the Egyptian labour market survey, 18% of women who are employed in the private sector claimed that they did not receive any paid maternity leave after having their first child. In 17% of the cases, maternity leave was between 2 and 6 weeks, which is lower than the 90-day legally mandated leave duration.<sup>144</sup> Additionally, the legal requirement that large companies provide childcare for their female employees is not applied in most of the cases.<sup>145</sup> Furthermore, 47% of women in paid employment do not have social or health insurance.<sup>146</sup>

Even though the Egyptian criminal code includes specific legislations against sexual harassment in employment, an estimated 30% of surveyed working women report being sexually harassed within their workplace.<sup>147,148</sup> The law in practice remains ineffective due to weak enforcement, evasion and an ever-growing informal sector.<sup>149</sup> Given the low rate of women participating in formal employment, the labour law - even if applied - would only be able to protect the rights of a small portion of the female working population. Therefore, the majority of working women in Egypt find themselves abiding by informal regulations set by their employers.

The availability of time-use data in Egypt shows a certain level of recognition for women's unpaid work at the governmental level. For instance, the Egyptian Labour Market Panel Survey, which was carried out by the Economic Research Forum in cooperation with Egypt's Central Agency for Public Mobilisation and Statistics, collected nationally representative time-use data for women's domestic, care, and unpaid market work in its 1998, 2006 and 2012 editions.<sup>150</sup> The availability of panel survey data allows for a longitudinal analysis, such as following trends in unpaid work for the same respondent over the years.<sup>151</sup> Similarly, time-use data were useful in estimating women's unpaid care work.<sup>152</sup>

Despite the abundance of studies on Egyptian women in the labour market, researching women's unpaid work remains a need.<sup>153</sup> For instance, the first study including an analysis of Egyptian women's time allocation was conducted in 2010, despite data on women's and children's time allocation – including market, domestic and care work – being available in the findings of the 1998 and 2006 editions of the Egyptian

In Egypt, 58.3% of the employed population is estimated not to have access to social security.

*Angel-Urdinola et al. (2012), 'Micro-Determinants of Informal Employment in the Middle East and North African Region'*

141 Ibid.

142 Lohmann, T. (2010). Labour Regulation and Female Labour Market Participation. A Country Study of Egypt. *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH Economic Integration of Women MENA*

143 Assaad, R. (2015). Women's participation in paid employment in Egypt is a matter of policy not simply ideology. *Egypt Network for Integrated Development. Policy Brief 22*

144 Ibid.

145 Ibid.

146 Ibid.

147 Women, Business and the Law (2018). World Bank.

148 UN Women (2014) as cited in Ezzat, M. (2015). Estimating the Value of Women's Unpaid Domestic Work in Egypt. *New Woman Foundation*

149 International Comparative Legal Guides (2018). Employment and Labour Law | Egypt,

150 Egypt – Labour Market Panel Survey (2012). *Economic Research For*

151 Hendy, R. (2010). Rethinking Time Allocation of Egyptian Women: A Matching Analysis. *Economic Research Forum. Working Paper N. 526*

152 Assaad, R. (2015). Women's participation in paid employment in Egypt is a matter of policy not simply ideology. *Egypt Network for Integrated Development. Policy Brief 22*

153 Ibid.

Labour Market Survey.<sup>154,155</sup> Additionally, the availability of data on unpaid work did not result in government policies addressing it, nor in an abundance of studies analyzing factors that affect unpaid work, as many existing studies limit their scope to describing the panel survey data.

## SOCIO-CULTURAL NORMS

Women's unpaid work in Egypt exists within a socio-cultural context that determines certain expectations from women.<sup>156</sup> Most notably, Egyptian women are expected to perform the majority of their households' domestic and care work, with market labour being relegated to a secondary position.<sup>157</sup> Women's ability to generate their own income is consequently compromised, not only because the household labour that takes up the majority of their time is unpaid, but also because the prioritization of domestic work over market work limits women's options for paid employment.<sup>158</sup> This is translated into lower participation in the labour market for women and is particularly the case for married women, since women's paid labour participation for survey respondents aged between 25 and 29 is twice as high for unmarried women (56%) than it is for married women (20%).<sup>159</sup> Marriage increases the value of women's time at home, as their domestic responsibilities increase.<sup>160</sup>

The cultural perception that women are the homemakers and principal household members in charge of household duties and care for children is predominant in Egypt and is complemented by the perception of women as economically dependent on men who are expected to be the family's main breadwinners<sup>161,162</sup>.

Traditions in Egypt restrict women's mobility and give importance to their role in the domestic sphere, thus restraining their possibilities for engaging in the public sphere.<sup>163</sup> It is notable that rural areas, like as-sa'id (Upper Egypt) tend to have more negative perceptions of women's participation in the public sphere.<sup>164</sup>

Social perception of employment varies greatly depending on the type of employer. For instance, the social acceptance of married women's work in the public sector is due to the fact that this kind of employment offers flexible and shorter working hours, thus supporting women in reconciling their jobs with their expected household role.<sup>165</sup> For instance, the average daily working hours in the public sector are 7, versus 8.9 in the private sector.<sup>166</sup>

Additionally, working in the private sector is also perceived as socially degrading, with women reporting a lack of respect and decent treatment by male employers.<sup>167</sup> This exercise of power is seen as a manifestation of structural inequalities along gender and class lines; private sector firms often operate as patriarchal structures. For instance, female employees report being asked to

154 Ibid.

155 Hendy, R. (2010). Rethinking Time Allocation of Egyptian Women: A Matching Analysis. *Economic Research Forum*. Working Paper N. 526

156 Sayre, E. and Hendy, R. (2013). Female Labour Supply in Egypt, Tunisia, and Jordan. *ASSA Meetings in Philadelphia*. vol. 18

157 Ibid.

158 Ibid.

159 Ibid.

160 Assaad, R. (2015). Women's participation in paid employment in Egypt is a matter of policy not simply ideology. *Egypt Network for Integrated Development*. Policy Brief 22

161 Hendy, R. (2015). Women's Participation in the Egyptian Labour Market: 1998-2012. *Economic Research Forum*, Working Paper Series, Working Paper N. 907

162 Barsoum, G., Ali, R. and Hassanein, D. (2009). When there is no Respect at Work: Job Quality Issues for Women in Egypt's Private Sector. *Gender and Work in the MENA Region Working Paper Series: Poverty, Job Quality and Labour Market Dynamics*, No. 2. Cairo: Population Council.

163 Assaad, R., & Arntz, M. (2005). Constrained geographical mobility and gendered labour market outcomes under structural adjustment: Evidence from Egypt. *World Development*, 33(3), 431-454.

164 Antari, S. and Dsouqi, N. (2015). Women's Unpaid Market Labour within the Family in the Informal Egyptian Labour Market. *New Woman Foundation*

165 Assaad, R. and El-Hamidi, F. (2009) Women in the Egyptian Labour Market: An Analysis of Developments, 1988-2006. *The Egyptian Labour Market Revisited*, pp.219-258.

166 Hassan, M. (2015) *Women's Rights in the Aftermath of Egypt's Revolution*. EU Spring Working Paper 5

167 Working and Women's Empowerment in the Egyptian Household: The Type of Work and Location Matter, Sadania

perform tasks that are outside of their employment terms but in line with their traditional gender roles.<sup>168</sup> Furthermore, social perceptions restricting women's mobility result in more affinity towards women's self-employment from within their household, or their employment in the family enterprise.<sup>169</sup>

A large number of women in Egypt (estimated at 2.8 million in 2016) want to delay or stop childbearing but are not using contraception, despite the Ministry of Health and Population providing free family planning services as part of the national family planning programming.<sup>170</sup> Family planning services are also offered by NGOs, the private sector, community development associations, mosques and churches. Nonetheless, the fertility rate remains high at 3.5, and contraceptive discontinuation is estimated at 30%.<sup>171</sup> Additionally, the dependency ratio which includes both the children and the elderly in Egypt is at 61.53%; this ratio is higher in rural areas and in Egypt in general.<sup>172</sup>

Family size was identified as an important factor that affects the amount of unpaid work in the Egyptian household, given that caring for dependents is mostly performed by women.<sup>173</sup> While the hours men spend on domestic labour remain almost constant as the family size increases, women's domestic labour triples for the first child the couple has. It is important to note that the market work of surveyed women increases when the family size moves from 3 to 4, from an average of 5.15 hours to 7.75 hours per week.<sup>174</sup> This indicates that after surveyed women get used to having children after the birth of their second child, they are ready to increase their contribution to the labour market. In fact, some survey respondents claimed that they stopped their paid employment to care for their children at their early age but joined it again once they had the opportunity.

The personal status laws in Egypt require that women obey their husbands, thus reinforcing women's low bargaining power within the household.<sup>175</sup> The link between women's decision-making power within the household and their unpaid work was made across various studies.

Within the labour market survey, the members of a gender-balanced nationally representative sample were asked if they had performed certain tasks during the previous week. The results showed that women are more responsible than men for:<sup>176</sup>

- Working within the household, such as food preparation, dishwashing, laundry and cleaning the house (88.6% versus 4.4%)
- Caring for young, sick or elderly household members (64.5% versus 9.3%)
- Shopping for food, clothes and household needs or in providing transportation for the household members (62.3% versus 34.7%)
- Performing activities related to agriculture, agro-food production (namely dairy products) and raising animals for domestic consumption (16% versus 8.8%)
- Bringing water or collecting wood (5.4% versus 1.1%)
- On the other hand, men are more responsible than women in house repairs and maintenance (4.9% versus 1.9%).

An analysis of the above shows that women perform household tasks at least twice as much as men.<sup>177</sup> The main areas where men have a significant contribution to unpaid domestic work involves

168 Barsoum, G., Ali, R. and Hassanein, D. (2009)

169 Hendy, R. (2015). Women's Participation in the Egyptian Labour Market: 1998-2012. *Economic Research Forum*, Working Paper Series, Working Paper N. 907

170 The Evidence Project (2016). The private sector as provider of Family Planning Services in Egypt: Challenges and Opportunities

171 The Evidence Project (2016).

172 Sayed, H. (2018). Egypt's Demographic Opportunity: Preliminary Assessment based on 2017 Census

173 Assaad, R. (2015). Women's participation in paid employment in Egypt is a matter of policy not simply ideology. *Egypt Network for Integrated Development*. Policy Brief 22

174 Assaad, R. (2015). Women's participation in paid employment in Egypt is a matter of policy not simply ideology. *Egypt Network for Integrated Development*. Policy Brief 22

175 Women, Business and the Law (2018). World Bank.

176 Ibid.

177 Ibid.

shopping and providing transportation for household members.<sup>178</sup> Men's involvement in some domestic tasks more than others manifests their willingness to contribute to household chores with ascribed decision-making power (namely shopping for household needs), those which involve leaving the household (providing transportation), or those which are associated with their traditional gender roles (repairs and maintenance).<sup>179</sup>

The expectation that women's main role is to perform domestic and care labour rather than work in the market is manifested through the ascribed importance to young girls' education. Out of a sample of women working as unpaid family members in a family business, 8.6% claimed that they stopped their education to help with the household and 3.1% did so to get married. Additionally, 17.9% of these women stopped their education because they did not want to continue, and 12.4% of them had parents who did not want them to continue.<sup>180</sup> These responses show that many women get involved in household labour at the expense of their education, thus having less bargaining power within the household.<sup>181</sup> Furthermore, the disinterest in women's education is evident with 30% of the respondents stopping their education because either they or their parents did not want to; education is thus perceived to be of little relevance to young girls' future.<sup>182</sup>

Additionally, a woman's bargaining power within the household is shown to be affected by her employment status.<sup>183</sup> For instance, a woman's employment in the public and private sector enhances her autonomy in making decisions within the household while working from home decreases her decision-making power.<sup>184</sup> Nonetheless, panel survey data show that the main reason for women discontinuing their paid employment is the disapproval of their husbands or fiancés.<sup>185</sup>

## SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

During the past two decades, the Egyptian government's economic policies have been encouraging, capital-intensive mega-projects in the country's major cities, namely Cairo, Alexandria and other coastal cities.<sup>186</sup> These policies do not respond to the needs of Egyptian society, which has low cost, abundant labour supply and high rates of unemployment. Additionally, rural areas witness less economic development projects due to these policies, leading to large discrepancies in the availability of formal job opportunities.<sup>187</sup> For instance, most of those working in the public sector reside in urban areas.<sup>188</sup>

As the Egyptian capitalist model fails to provide formal employment opportunities to a growing workforce and the government's enforcement of regulations on companies remains limited, the informal sector is expanding.<sup>189</sup> The informal sector is dominated by micro-enterprises that provide 70% of the employment opportunities in the country.<sup>190</sup> Informal employment has even spread to the formal private sector, where 51% of the employees do not have legal contracts or social security.<sup>191</sup>

178 Ibid.

179 Ibid.

180 Antari, S. and Dsouqi, N. (2015). Women's Unpaid Market Labour within the Family in the Informal Egyptian Labour Market. *New Woman Foundation*

181 Ibid.

182 Antari, S. and Dsouqi, N. (2015). Women's Unpaid Market Labour within the Family in the Informal Egyptian Labour Market. *New Woman Foundation*

183 Sadania, C. (2016). Working and women's empowerment in the Egyptian household: The Type of work and location matter. *AMSE Working Paper 2017 No. 22*. Aix-Marseille School of Economics: Marseille.

184 Ibid.

185 Assaad, R. (2015). Women's participation in paid employment in Egypt is a matter of policy not simply ideology. *Egypt Network for Integrated Development*. Policy Brief 22

186 Antari, S. and Dsouqi, N. (2015). Women's Unpaid Market Labour within the Family in the Informal Egyptian Labour Market. *New Woman Foundation*

187 Ibid (2015).

188 Sadania, C. (2016).

189 Antari, S. and Dsouqi, N. (2015). Women's Unpaid Market Labour within the Family in the Informal Egyptian Labour Market. *New Woman Foundation*

190 Ibid (2015).

191 Ibid (2015).

Informal labour takes one of three forms from a labourer's perspective in Egypt: these could be informal paid employment, informal paid entrepreneurship or unpaid employment in a family business. The below table shows the distribution of informal labour in its three different forms, within cities, rural areas, and in the country overall.<sup>192</sup>

	1998		2012	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
<b>Distribution of informal employment in cities</b>				
Informal paid employment	64%	51.4%	65.8%	46.9%
Employer	11.3%	5.2%	13%	7.7%
Self-employer, not employer	13.7%	26.9%	16.8%	19.1%
Unpaid employment in family business	11%	16.5%	4.4%	26.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Distribution of informal employment in rural areas</b>				
Informal paid employment	55.3%	25.1%	60.8%	15.4%
Employer	17.5%	4.3%	18.3%	7.1%
Self-employer, not employer	11.5%	27.3%	11.8%	22.2%
Unpaid employment in family business	15.7%	43.3%	9.1%	55.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Distribution of informal employment in Egypt (in both cities and rural areas)</b>				
Informal paid employment	60%	39.1%	62%	25%
Employer	14.2%	4.8%	16.4%	7.3%
Self-employer, not employer	12.6%	27.1%	13.6%	21.3%
Unpaid employment in family business	13.2%	29%	7.4%	46.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Even though the informal economy hosts most of the country's job opportunities, the distribution of these jobs for men and women varies greatly; so is the case for those who work in cities and rural areas. For instance, the informal economy is almost three times more likely to provide men with paid employment opportunities than it is to provide women with those opportunities.<sup>193</sup> Women are also six times more likely to work in unpaid employment in family businesses than men; 46.4% of women who work in the informal economy do so as unpaid workers in their family businesses.<sup>194</sup>

Most of women's unpaid market labour is concentrated in rural areas, with 31.3% in coastal rural areas and 51.4% in internal rural areas.<sup>195</sup> The trend of women getting more involved in unpaid domestic labour in rural and internal areas coincides with these areas hosting only 5% of formal private sector jobs, versus big cities hosting 54% of such jobs, knowing that they have approximately the same population.<sup>196</sup> Additionally, internal and rural areas lack infrastructure and safe transportation networks allowing women to access employment opportunities in nearby cities and towns.<sup>197</sup> For instance, 16% of women living within a 40-kilometer radius of big cities work in the formal private sector, while only 3% of those living outside this radius do the same.<sup>198</sup>

192 ibid (2015).

193 Antari, S. and Dsouqi, N. (2015). Women's Unpaid Market Labour within the Family in the Informal Egyptian Labour Market. *New Woman Foundation*

194 ibid. (2015)

195 ibid. (2015)

196 ibid. (2015)

197 ibid. (2015)

198 ibid. (2015)

An analysis of employment data in Egypt shows that 86.3% of women who work without pay for a family business are married, while 9% of those have never been married. This shows that most of those who work in a family business do so in businesses owned by their husband's family.<sup>199</sup>

Married women's employment status varies depending on the different types of employer. For instance, as mentioned previously, women's employment in the public sector tends to be less affected by their marital status. While 94% of female survey respondents who were working in the public sector before marriage kept their jobs after marriage, only 56% who worked in the private sector did the same. The public sector's appeal is also due to it applying the labour law and thus securing women's maternity leave, versus a private sector where the labour regulations remain largely unapplied.<sup>200,201</sup>

*Even though women's work within the household sometimes keeps them out of the paid labour force, women who are employed do not work less in the household. The Egyptian labour market survey shows that women work on average for 30.25 hours a week in household and care labour, compared to an average of 4.19 hours for men. A study on household labour in Egypt valued women's unpaid domestic labour between 307.6 and 455 billion Egyptian pounds in 2012; this amounted to a 25% of the country's GDP.*

*Antari, S. (2015)*

The Egyptian market labour study distributed respondents among five socio-economic categories; the more economically disadvantaged surveyed women are, the more likely it is that they are engaged in unpaid market work. While 33.6% of surveyed women engaging in unpaid market work are from the most disadvantaged category, only 2.1% are from the most advantaged background.<sup>202</sup> This discrepancy can be explained by the fact that a woman's main role is perceived to be in non-market domestic work, and her engagement in market labour would be out of need. Additionally, as women are more economically advantaged, they have more access to paid employment opportunities that would generate more income than supporting their husbands or fathers in family market labour.<sup>203</sup> Furthermore, 63% of surveyed women engaging in unpaid market work are illiterate while only 1.1% have university degrees.<sup>204</sup>

*In addition to women's work in their family's agricultural activities, women's work in the agricultural sector is exchanged between families within villages. Women from one family support another family during their harvest peak period in return for women from the other family doing the same. This system, known as the 'zamala system' expands the realm of women's unpaid work in families working in agriculture in rural areas.*

*Zamala system within Egyptian rural areas, Antari, S. (2015)*

Even though the availability of care services and supporting infrastructures and technologies are well-established as factors affecting women's unpaid work, the reviewed studies did not specifically address this link, nor did they address the government's, private sector's and community's contributions to redistributing or reducing care work. This is mainly due to the fact that most of the studies rely on panel survey data, which does not particularly address these questions.

199 Ibid (2015)

200 Hendy, R. (2015).

201 Assaad, R. (2015). Women's participation in paid employment in Egypt is a matter of policy not simply ideology. *Egypt Network for Integrated Development*. Policy Brief 22

202 Antari, S. and Dsouqi, N. (2015). Women's Unpaid Market Labour within the Family in the Informal Egyptian Labour Market. *New Woman Foundation*

203 Ibid (2015)

204 Ibid (2015)

The differential in unpaid work between urban and rural areas was highlighted in the literature,<sup>205</sup>  
<sup>206</sup> but the link to the lack of infrastructure and care services and technologies in these areas was rarely made. Nonetheless, an exception was noted: the lack of infrastructure and safe transportation networks in internal and rural areas was highlighted as hindering women's access to employment in nearby cities and towns, thus limiting their paid employment opportunities.

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205 Antari, S. and Dsouqi, N. (2015). Women's Unpaid Market Labour within the Family in the Informal Egyptian Labour Market. *New Woman Foundation*

206 Assaad, R. (2015). Women's participation in paid employment in Egypt is a matter of policy not simply ideology. *Egypt Network for Integrated Development*. Policy Brief 22

## THE CASE OF JORDAN

# WHAT EVIDENCE LINKS WOMEN, UNPAID CARE WORK AND ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT?

## UNPAID CARE WORK NEGATIVELY AFFECTS WOMEN'S EQUAL ACCESS TO THE LABOUR FORCE

Existing surveys demonstrate how unpaid care work has a disproportionate weight in women's decision-making over their participation in the formal labour force in Jordan.

A 2015 national study of the Higher Population Council<sup>1</sup> aiming at defining the reasons behind women's withdrawal from the labour market confirmed that **women usually quit because of a number of reasons. Most of these reasons are related to their familial responsibilities and their social roles within the family.** The study showed that (34%) of these women left their jobs because of some familial situations that they refused to disclose, (11%) left to take care of their children, (9%) left for marriage, (7%) were dispensed by their companies, (6%) because of being mistreated by the employer, (6%) because of decreased salaries, and (5%) because of travelling. The results of the sample survey revealed also that (78%) of the withdrawing women were married, (86%) were working in the private sector compared to (9%) in the public sector, and (44%) had low salaries (less than 200 JOD/month). The survey also showed that a percentage (54%) were depending on their families to take care of their children during their absence compared to 22% who depended on nurseries.

Three years later, a global study of the International Labour Organization (ILO) that focused on care work presented an even more striking picture. According to its findings, **unpaid care work is the most reported significant reason for women's inactivity in the labour force in Jordan, with 77.4% of women citing this compared with 3.7% men,**<sup>2</sup> and compared with 73.3% of Arab women and only 0.9 % of Arab men.<sup>3</sup> The same study confirms this pattern by looking at the extent to which the presence of dependents in the home, such as young children, is used as an indicator for unpaid care work and leads to a 'higher labour force participation penalty'<sup>4</sup> for unpaid carers, mostly women. In Jordan, such a penalty means that women living with children aged 0–5 years have the lowest employment rate (11.7%<sup>5</sup>), compared with fathers (78.9%<sup>6</sup>); non-fathers (59.9%<sup>7</sup>); and non-mothers (15.3%<sup>8</sup>).<sup>9</sup> According to the study, other reasons for being outside the labour force in Jordan are personal issues such as being in education, sick, or disabled (20.0% women compared with 57.0% men); other sources of income (0.6% women compared with 29.4% men); reasons related to the labour market (1.9% women compared with 4.3% men); and other reasons (0.1% women and 5.6% men).<sup>10</sup>

Furthermore, studies have shown that **family and men play a major role in women's decision-making process about their career ambitions and the type as well location of job they will accept.** Chamlou, Muzi and Ahmed (2011)<sup>11</sup> indicated that many women withdrew from the labour market at the time of marriage, as a result of perceived difficulties in balancing employment with household responsibilities, mostly from the private sector which is generally perceived to be less hospitable to women than the public sector.<sup>12</sup> While in the World Bank study (2018) 'Understanding How Gender Norms in MENA Impact Female Employment Outcomes', both men and women agreed that men (husbands but also fathers) are the key influencers and ultimate decision makers in the

household, including deciding for women on whether to accept a job offer or not.<sup>13</sup> Interestingly, the 2018 World Bank study underlines a substantial public misconception of women's engagement with the labour market in Jordan: according to the conducted survey, a majority of people in Jordan, both women and men, believe that 70% of working-age women actually work, which is very far from the real female labour force participation rate of 14%. Building on this finding, the study therefore underlines that **when it comes to the barriers to women's work, societal expectations matter less than intra-household barriers and family pressure or perceived conflict between domestic and professional responsibilities**. Mirroring societal beliefs on women's work, the same study highlights that '60% of non-working women actually want to work'.<sup>14</sup>

## IMPACTS OF UNPAID CARE WORK ON THE QUALITY OF EMPLOYMENT FOR PAY OR PROFIT

When women in Jordan do work for pay or profit, the question remains as to how unpaid care work directly or indirectly affects the forms of engagement with the formal labour market in the country, with **one important caveat**.

Despite the many efforts directed toward enhancing women's role in society, there has been **little actual progress in women's economic participation**. A gender paradox remains a feature in Jordan, a puzzle between progress in human development indicators and extremely low economic participation for women that represented only 14 to 17.7% of the total labour force in Jordan in 2017.<sup>15</sup> Jordan is one of the countries that are still behind in women's economic empowerment and in filling the gender gap. On the international level, for example, and according to the last Gender Gap Report issued by the Global Economic Forum (2018), Jordan came in 138<sup>th</sup> place out of a total of 149 countries covered by the report in terms of education, health, economic empowerment, and political participation indicators. Jordan did not achieve more than 0.375 in filling the gender gap on the economic participation and opportunity indicator, with a rank of 144 of 149 on the same indicator. Women's participation in the labour force has been within the same range for many years. Female representation as business owners and self-employed is still weak; almost non-existent in the councils of chambers of commerce and slightly increased in the councils of the chambers of industry by 8.7.<sup>16</sup> Women also prefer the public sector to the private sector as they account for 48% of the workers in the public sector and are present in the sectors of health, education, communication and management. They do not get great benefit from new job opportunities, as the majority are in the private sector and in sectors where women do not usually exist.<sup>17</sup>

Many studies and reports have consistently highlighted how social and cultural norms restrict the types as well as the location of work considered to be appropriate for women in Jordan. **Again, even in work for pay or profit, the 'care' factor tends to predominate in women's engagement with the labour market**. A USAID (2012) study pointed out that the majority of employed women in Jordan work in the education, health – both part of the care sector<sup>18</sup> – or public administration sectors because of 'a perception that these jobs are more appropriate for females.' It is considered inappropriate for women in Jordan to work in the tourism industry, in construction,<sup>19</sup> or in domestic work.<sup>20</sup> While Kawar (2000) considered that the debate on what is appropriate and inappropriate starts early in education when families encourage their daughters to pursue studies that do not challenge traditional female gender roles.<sup>21</sup> Miles (2002) also highlighted the cultural constraints on female mobility and strategies in finding a job.<sup>22</sup>

**How do women who actively engage with the labour market negotiate and navigate these constraints?** The following sub-sections review the data and findings available on the impact of unpaid care work on the quality of women's economic participation.

## ACCESS TO WAGED AND SALARIED WORK VS. OWN-ACCOUNT/SELF-EMPLOYMENT AND OTHER PRECARIOUS FORMS OF PAID WORK

At a global level, the 2018 ILO study on care work emphasizes how, even for working women, the volume of unpaid care work remains 'one of the main obstacles to women moving into better jobs,'<sup>23</sup> comparing in particular women's access to salaried work versus other, potentially more precarious forms such as self-employment. **Globally**, the share of female waged and salaried workers is lower among women with unpaid care duties at home, at 62.2%, than among women non-carers at 67.8%. The **Arab States** region follows a similar pattern with a significant gap: among women working for pay or profit, 49.4% of those who have unpaid care work at home are in waged or salaried employment, compared with some 74.6% of women non-carers.<sup>24</sup> **In Jordan**, the situation is totally different: 96.4% of women carers are in waged and salaried work, compared to 97.3% of women non-carers. This evidence might seem troubling, however the 'salaried vs. self-employment work' dichotomy can be misleading when taken on its own in the Jordanian context: the apparent quality of work status remains to be seen through the lens of the very low rate of women's participation in the labour market, of the limited proportion of private sector employment in Jordan in general,<sup>25</sup> and of the disproportionate challenges women face in accessing private business opportunities.<sup>26</sup> With this paradoxical background in mind, areas of further research might lie in exploring unpaid care work and women's career paths in sectors and jobs that are actually available to them - and the recourse to and impact(s) of different forms of employment such as the number of working hours, flexible mechanisms and social protection, career promotion and access to decision-making positions, gender pay gaps, etc.

## DOES INFORMATION ABOUT INFORMAL WORK SHED MORE LIGHT ON UNPAID CARE WORK AND WOMEN'S WORK FOR PAY OR PROFIT IN JORDAN?

As underlined in the global ILO study, when engaging in work for pay or profit, women and men with care responsibilities are more likely to be employed in informal arrangements than those without care responsibilities. For women, this gap peaks at 19.1% in the Arab States, where 55.8% of female unpaid carers who also have external jobs are in the informal economy, compared with 36.7% of women non-carers.<sup>27</sup> There are currently no data available for this category in Jordan in the 2018 ILO report.<sup>28</sup>

A study by USAID carried out in 2017 on the small and micro-sized projects sector revealed that 5% of the total institutions working in informal labour were home-based.<sup>29</sup> With the support of sponsors, the government is adopting a new system to transform the informal sector into a formal one through simplified and inexpensive procedures, as this measure will provide male and female workers with legal protection and will support them in expansion and growth.<sup>30</sup> Among these programmes, the home-based business licensing legislation might have a specific impact on women. In Jordan, there are no comprehensive and up-to-date data on women working in the informal sector, and although the regulating procedures have been theoretically simplified, women may not still be able to take the step of registration and engagement in administrative and legal procedures, and to enter the tax records. Such updated procedures also require a period of time to be studied and assessed.

The intersection between women's unpaid care work and informal work might nonetheless be of critical importance as the following quote from a woman agricultural worker in Ghor Safi reflects:

*'I wake up my daughter at 1:00 am to prepare her for school and then put her back to sleep when I leave my house at 2:00 am to go to my work in Roushid. The trip is very long and we always commute*

*in the back of a truck. There is no health insurance nor social security. One time, one of my friends was bitten by a snake and there was no first aid for her at all. We receive 10 JOD for working from 4 :00 am to 4:00 pm. When I go home, the money goes to my husband, as for me, I start preparing dinner for my family and cleaning, among other house chores. Life seems unfair for most women in Ghour Al-Safi; why can't we lead a normal life like other people?'*<sup>31</sup>

## THE MISSING PIECE OF THE PUZZLE: UNPACKING UNPAID CARE WORK AND MEASURING WOMEN'S DISPROPORTIONATE SHARE THEREOF

Unpaid care work is often misconceived as the time spent taking care of children, exclusively. In effect, this is often the major challenge faced by many women to access other activities. It has been measured that in Jordan, women spend 221 minutes per day on childcare, compared to 71 minutes spent daily by men.<sup>32</sup> However, it remains critical to point out that women are out of the labour market at a high rate (80.8%), even if they do not have children under the age of five.<sup>33</sup> Therefore, the focus should not be exclusively on mothers with young children. In particular, the ratio of care dependency<sup>34</sup> in Jordan, i.e. the proportion of the population in need of care to the population of potential unpaid care providers, is very high at 69.1%.<sup>35</sup> This includes care for children from 0 to 5 years (at 29.6%), children 6–14 years (37.8%), and older people (at 1.8%, and increasing in an aging society).<sup>36</sup> To these statistics must be added the various household chores. This is what remains to be unpacked, in order to be better tackled through policy, services and technology (to reduce the drudgery of some tasks) and changes in social practices at different levels.

Time-use surveys<sup>37</sup> remain the standard method for measuring the volume of unpaid care work and its patterns and differences within and between households. The time-use survey is not yet in use in Jordan. Nonetheless, the Gender Unit of the Department of Statistics<sup>38</sup> indicates that there is the technical capacity and will to proceed with it. The task however still faces a lack of financial resources (with a cost estimated at around \$150,000), and questions around sampling need to be solved. Various international organizations have expressed their interest and are holding discussions around the matter, to possibly support the Department of Statistics in conducting a time-use survey as soon as possible.<sup>39 40 41</sup> In any event, conducting a time-use survey must be preceded by a campaign of support at the level of both government and the people, which requires the full cooperation of the Jordanian community and the Jordanian family.

Meanwhile, other options might be possible. The methodology for time-use surveys is based on the use of either detailed time diaries or stylized interview questions. These are designed to record how respondents among the working age allocate their 'time to the different activities performed during one or more 24-hour days for a given reference period'.<sup>42</sup> However, labour force surveys are evolving to highlight the linkages between unpaid work (in all its forms) and labour market performance. In this context, short add-on modules on the own-use provision of services, unpaid trainee and volunteer work, based on diary methodologies or retrospective questions, could be attached to labour-force survey questionnaires on a periodic or continuous basis. These could become an effective means for measuring unpaid care work.<sup>43</sup> Therefore, if Jordan has not been able until the present time to conduct a time-use survey, it can still develop a vision for paid and unpaid care work using other sources and methodologies.<sup>44</sup> **Jordan should not wait any longer to pay attention to unpaid care work, on the basis of waiting for a statistical time-use survey, as there are methodologies that give indications about the current reality on the matter.**

## JORDAN IN THE GLOBAL CARE CHAIN: WOMEN, UNPAID CARE WORK AND DOMESTIC WORKERS

### What is the global care chain about?

Global care chains are a series of responsibilities passed on from one woman to another within a patriarchal economic model where the state, employers and most men do not share reproductive work. It starts with an employed woman, in a so-called developed country, who in an attempt to avoid a second shift of unpaid household and care work, hires a migrant woman coming from a country from the Global South to complete the expected household and care work that she is expected to deliver. As a result, the migrant woman is now also unable to complete the expected household and care work in her own family. She then passes on these duties to another member of the family, often the older daughter. The further down the care chain, the less valued it becomes, with the last woman in the chain usually providing the care work for free (Hochschild, 2000; Yates, 2005).<sup>45</sup>

As far as Jordan is concerned, the paradox might endure. At present, there seems to be **no evidence of a correlation between the presence of a domestic worker and women effectively working outside**. The 2018 ILO global study on care work lists Jordan among the countries with a high proportion of domestic workers, three-quarters of whom are foreign-born.<sup>46</sup> In an ILO study (2015): 'Employers' perspectives towards domestic workers in Jordan: A qualitative study', the interview and focus group data revealed a recurring perception of migrant domestic workers as 'a necessary evil'. As indicated above, the 2015 High Population Council survey showed that 54% working women were depending on their families for taking care of their children during their absence, compared to 22% who depended on nurseries. The remaining 24% are still unclear 'others', but the role of domestic workers might be important. However, in his 2016 sociological examination of the relation between foreign domestic workers and the economic participation of Jordanian women, Shteivi finds that less than half of women with a domestic worker at home report being actually in employment (44.4%), while employment comes only third in the most cited reasons for hiring domestic workers, behind unpaid care work-related factors.<sup>47</sup> Hiring a domestic worker in Jordan remains expensive for many families, and the study underlines how 'Jordanian families that employ foreign domestic workers tend to be middle and upper class.'<sup>48</sup>

For the purpose of this research, a number of experts<sup>49</sup> have been asked why Jordan does not sign the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No.189).<sup>50,51</sup> Is there a connection between the C189 and unpaid care work? One of the answers is that there may not be any interest from civil society in these conventions although there are efforts from the ILO in promoting the C189 in particular. Nor do these experts believe there is a link between unpaid care work and the domestic workers issues in Jordan. They also believe that Jordan must be aware of its ability to comply with the terms of the conventions it signs. The government does not put responsibilities on the country if not prepared for that. On the other hand, these Conventions are technical instruments, not of a priority level, which must be signed and ratified. Nonetheless, the working conditions of domestic workers raises another dimension of the question, requiring a full study on its own. The information reviewed here merely hints at the critical importance of further exploring the conditions of migrant domestic workers as related to the investments in the care sector in general, the (under)valuing of care work, and the correlations with Jordanian women's engagement with work for pay or profit and their expected role in society.

# HOW IS THE ISSUE OF UNPAID CARE WORK ADDRESSED IN JORDAN?

## LIMITED POLICY IMPROVEMENTS DO NOT AIM TO TRANSFORM GENDER ROLES

**Although Jordan recognizes the different factors, including unpaid care work, to understand why women's participation in the labour market is still low, policies and programmes aimed at addressing this problem in relation to the care economy have been insufficient.**

In all Jordanian national strategies and policies, including women's strategy, there has been an explicit attempt to increase the rates of female participation in the labour market by: (i) expanding the options available to enter the workforce by removing the regulatory obstacles, improving the workplace environment, and enhancing the opportunities in private and non-traditional sectors; (ii) providing flexible options such as part-time jobs and work from home;<sup>52</sup> (iii) focusing on micro-enterprise programmes.

Furthermore, when addressing the question of women's unpaid care work, the national strategies focus almost exclusively on the situation of mothers with young children. Thus, the Employment Strategy 2011-2020<sup>53</sup> highlights programmes such as: expansion of pre-school kindergartens, establishment of nursery sites, and revision of legislation.<sup>54</sup> Focusing on newly married women who have babies is justified by the fact that figures and studies have shown for years that women withdraw from the labour market after having their first baby. Hence, the policy of having a maternity leave paid by the Social Security Corporation came to reduce the burden on the private sector and encourage women to stay in the labour market. This policy may have encouraged the private sector not to hesitate to hire females for this reason, but as for the roles waiting for women at home, the policy has not offered any solutions.

There should nonetheless be a clear emphasis on the fact that 'care' is not limited to married women who have children under the age of five, since this constricted concept should no longer be considered. According to statistical data, the percentage of women responsible for children in the age group 6-14 is the highest in Jordan. Policies and programmes should take into account the support needed by families with individuals in need of care, whether they are children, disabled, or elderly.

Besides, in 'Jordan 2025', the national vision and strategy that documents Jordan's long-term national vision, strategies and policies that correspond to the basic principles of sustainability, institutionalization, excellence, competitiveness, and meritocracy,<sup>207</sup> as well as the executive programme 2016-2018, focuses on micro-enterprise programmes, especially from the home, considering that the mobility of women is limited and the emphasis is on the role of women and their family responsibilities.<sup>55</sup> However, the National Strategy for Women in Jordan (2013-2017) concentrates on work from home and the informal sector. While attempting to accommodate the question of care work as a matter of the time given by women for family members, policies and programmes that motivate women to work from home and give flexible working hours may have a significant impact on an immediate practical level. Nevertheless, they may also increase the physical, social, and psychological burdens on women as these policies do not usually require men to bear these responsibilities beside their wives or sisters.

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207 Jordan 2025: A national vision and strategy, <http://www.greengrowthknowledge.org/sites/default/files/downloads/policy-database/JORDAN%29%20Jordan%202025%20Part%20I.pdf>

**In brief, these are all policies that did not go very deep in their interventions, in order not to have any contradiction with the traditionally expected role of women at home.** It is obvious that the national strategies and policies have just dealt with unpaid care work from the practical gender needs perspective, by which we mean that practical gender needs do not challenge (although they arise out of) gender divisions of labour and women's subordinate position in society. These needs are a response to immediate perceived necessity, identified within a specific context. They are practical in nature and often stem from inadequacies in living conditions. These needs are necessary and non-dispensable for women but may not make the required change on the mid- and long-term.

## LIMITED IMPROVEMENTS IN THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK SEND CONFLICTING SIGNALS ON WOMEN AND WORK

### International standards and obligations

Jordan has ratified, with reservations, most of the international conventions and commitments on human and women's rights. The Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is the most popular convention on the national level in emphasizing the rights of women. It is the focus of attention for women activists; those working on women-related issues, and even for the most extreme groups in terms of women's issues.

Although the government has indicated its intention not to withdraw the remaining reservations (articles 9 and 15) within a number of political and religious justifications,<sup>56</sup> there is still a lot the government should do at all the levels of the other articles listed in the Convention. In the Jordanian government's response to the inquiry of the CEDAW expert committee in its meeting about the sixth Jordanian report on the prevalence of stereotypes and the impact of customs and traditions on the actions taken to eliminate discrimination against women; the Jordanian National Commission for Women and the government confirmed that despite the measures taken and the procedures which have played an important role in increasing the number of women in public life, in the government, parliament, and the local councils, the stereotypes, customs and traditions still reinforce the representation of women in domestic roles. Providing support to women in the workplace is one of the proposed solutions to address this matter.<sup>57</sup> *'Societal attitudes were still not changing and women were still expected to play a central role at home; the Commission was therefore looking to create support for women at work.'*<sup>58</sup>

On the other hand, article 14 of CEDAW is the most explicit reference to the role of women in informal and unpaid forms of work, especially rural women, in the care economy. The article states that: *'State Parties shall take into account the particular problems faced by rural women and the significant roles which rural women play in the economic survival of their families, including their work in the non-monetised sectors of the economy and shall take all appropriate measures to ensure the application of the provisions of the present Convention to women in rural areas.'*<sup>59</sup> In Jordan, reports on rural women still need a lot of data and clarifications. With every cycle, the CEDAW committee for reviewing reports presents a number of enquiries on rural women's matters. In its discussions, the review committee does not explicitly focus on Jordanian rural women's role in family care, but rather on the general health and economic situation compared to women in urban settings.<sup>60</sup> Article 5a, on the other hand, provides the conceptual rooting of addressing the enduring harmful stereotyping of women (and men) and their restrictions in gender-based roles, such as women's reproductive role, but also tackles the redistribution of childcare as a societal good. The article states that: *'State Parties shall take all appropriate measures: (a) to modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women, with a view to achieving the elimination of prejudices, customary and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for men and women, and (b) to ensure that family education includes a proper understanding of*

*maternity as a social function and the recognition of the common responsibility of men and women in the upbringing and development of their children, it being understood that the interest of the children is the primordial consideration in all cases.*<sup>61</sup> State parties rarely introduce reservations against Article 5 (Jordan has none), and the obligation created by this provision to promote comprehensive transformative equality has been signalled as an 'underexploited potential'.<sup>62</sup>

Interest in international conventions and women's issues is not limited to CEDAW; Jordan has not ratified a number of international conventions.<sup>63</sup> We focus here on four conventions of the International Labour Organization that might be significantly related to unpaid care work, the most important being C156: Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention.<sup>64</sup> This Convention applies to 'men and women workers with responsibilities in relation to their family who clearly need their care or support, where such responsibilities restrict their possibilities of preparing for, entering, participating in or advancing in economic activity.' The convention also aims at creating effective equality of opportunity and treatment for men and women workers. The Convention requires all ratifying parties to comply, in their policies, with the objectives, procedures, and measures that enable those with familial responsibilities to practice their rights in work, freedom of choice, their needs for employment and social security, and the provision of community services and facilities.<sup>65</sup>

There are other indirect conventions related to the unpaid care work and not ratified by Jordan: Labour Statistics Convention, 1985 (No. 160)<sup>66</sup> - associated with statistical data on the work, Home Work Convention, 1996 (No.177)<sup>67</sup> - related to the (unpaid or paid) care workers at home, and the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No.189).<sup>68,69</sup>

## **The national legal framework**

In this section, the research tries to directly discuss the legislation and regulations that show the vision of the legislator and policy-maker towards unpaid care work. There are several legislative and legal provisions governing work in the public sector within the framework of the civil service system, as well as in the private sector under the Jordanian Labour Law. The legal provisions acknowledge that there are some unpaid tasks and work within the family, but these provisions need further revision and improvements.

### **The public sector**

For example, Articles (98) and (108) of the Civil Service System draw no distinction between men and women as far as the nature of the actual responsibilities placed on them within the family is concerned. This system has given both women and men equally the right to take an unpaid leave of up to three years to take care of one of their parents or a family member. However, the reason for approving this leave are limited to healthcare. This right is not only given to permanent employees but has also been extended to those with temporary contracts and workers within a specific project. The leave period for this category has been reduced to no longer than three months, and the purposes were extended to taking care of the spouse, one of the family members, one of the parents, or for an emergency.<sup>70</sup> In any event, there is need to assess whether and how men avail of these options of unpaid leave.

Among other legal provisions, support for men's participation in family care responsibilities allows the leave newly given to fathers when their wives give birth. However, this leave does not have any practical value as it does not exceed two days; thus presenting no significant success. Although these provisions seem to be theoretically consistent with the efforts and calls for more involvement of men in family care for other members, in practice they may not contribute to this. Available statistics, although inadequate, indicate that men generally have minimal participation in providing care for a parent or a family member.

Conversely, Article (108) of the Civil Service System allows women employees to take unpaid leave for two years after the end of their maternity leave to take care of their infants. Thus, although the system respects the family responsibilities of women, in particular married and nursing mothers, and although it allows them to take leave not allowed for others, it still does not seem to be fair when their leave ends and they come back to work. Women return to work with the same job title and salary, but in reality they lose their main job, and consequently lose any training, qualifications, and development opportunities within their original work frame. They might be even transferred to other departments because their positions have already been occupied by others. This means women returning to work need a long time to adapt and settle back into their job and may be delayed in gaining any promotion or development in their career and professional path.

It is undeniable that the legislation organizing work in the public sector serves a large segment of women in assuming their familial responsibilities, at least by keeping their jobs in the public sector. However, the legislation emphasizes that only women bear the price of these responsibilities in Jordanian society at the expense of their work, salary, and promotion. There is no actual governmental role in sharing family responsibilities with women; on the contrary, the public sector sacrifices many competencies with years of giving without having any policy or solution for this issue. Furthermore, the Civil Service System has also approved the idea of providing nurseries in Ministries and government institutions. However, the decision has remained optional and no mandatory provision has been drawn up in this regard. Even when this service is available, it is not free. Female or male employees have to pay for it from their own salaries from 35 JODs to 80 JODs.

It is noteworthy that the situation of women working in the public sector (with some reservations at the application level) is better than that in the private sector, from the perspective of Jordanian women. Women in Jordan are more inclined to work in the public sector. Conversely, the private sector has recently witnessed some legislative improvements, though still limited and gradual.

## **The private sector**

According to Article (72) of the Labour Law, 'The employer who hires a minimum of twenty married female employees should provide a suitable place under the custody of a qualified person to care for the employees' children of less than four years of age, provided that the number is not less than ten children,'<sup>71</sup> which eventually discriminates against both women and men in fixing gender roles. The amendment that might be approved shortly by the House of Representatives reads as follows: 'Article (72) - paragraph (a): The Employer who hires in one place a number of workers who have a total of no less than 15 children of less than five years of age should provide a suitable place under the custody of a qualified person to care for the employees' children. Different employers may share one place in the same geographical area. (b): The Minister may determine the suitable alternatives if it becomes apparent that the employer cannot create the appropriate place in the institution or its surroundings within the instructions issued for this purpose.'<sup>72</sup>

Thus, this law will primarily serve children and both male and female employees, but such amendments also open the door to many debates about burdens that the laws put on the private sector; although international legislation does not require the employer to provide more than one appropriate space for children with strict conditions.

On the other hand, the (unconstitutional)<sup>73</sup> flexible work system<sup>74</sup> recently adopted in Jordan has been a significant advancement of the laws that recognize the role of women in family care, aiming at increasing their economic participation. However, it is still too early to assess this system and the culture of flexible work in Jordanian society. Although the system was one of the necessities for change, the real challenge begins with implementing, monitoring, and linking it with the social security and social protection systems that society will provide to women who engage in flexible work patterns.

Finally, it is difficult to discuss here all the other Jordanian laws and legislation that affect women, but there is a critical article that allows women to add special conditions to the marriage contract, referenced in article (37) of the Personal Status Law.<sup>75</sup> Based on Islamic rulings, this law allows women to add the condition of working outside home after marriage. This is a good trend that can save their rights to work or proceed with their education, as emphasized by Dr. Khalid Suliman,<sup>76</sup> an expert in women's studies from an Islamic perspective, interviewed in the context of this study. According to Dr. Suleiman, the practical application in the real world disrupts this trend. In Arab society, women usually hesitate to raise such issues or to set preconditions on the fiancé, fearing conflict and break-up. In addition, the fiancé may theoretically agree to such a case, if a woman dares to ask before marriage, but he may change his mind and retreat from his acceptance after marriage. Because of the absence of an official body to mandate him to comply, the wife may find herself obligated either to obey or to ask for a divorce.

In other words, we can say that the legislation related to women practically tries to exploit religious rulings to impose and reinforce masculine attitudes that entrench men's dominance over women and keep the stereotype model of 'man as breadwinner and woman as house-keeper'. For legislation derived from religion to be fair and applicable, it should be applied in a complete, comprehensive, serious, obligatory manner, away from selectivity or from being under the mercy of men who do not understand or wish to apply it, or who just choose to apply what serves their own interests. It is also noteworthy that according to Dr. Suliman, Islam does not force women to perform household chores; it is rather considered a kind of courtesy, grace, and charity.

## ENTRENCHED GENDER NORMS PERPETUATE HOUSEHOLD AND SOCIETAL EXPECTATIONS OF WOMEN'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR UNPAID CARE WORK

Unpaid care work cannot be discussed without addressing gender roles, gender stereotypes, division of labour between men and women, and the status given to the roles assigned to each.

### **Gender norms in the home and (the lack of distribution of) unpaid care work**

Some sociological studies in Jordan have identified the growing gap between women's multiple roles in a modern society and the enduring stereotyping and constraints they face in the home and society. Rula Al Sawalqa explores the issue of 'emotional burnout'<sup>77</sup> among working wives in Jordan. In her analysis, the risk is mostly due to the 'ongoing conflict' among women's different roles, between 'the stubbornness of society in accepting the image of the working women in the public sphere, and outside the household' and women's attempted engagement with paid work, in an economic context that stresses the need for women's economic participation. The risk of emotional burnout also presents intergenerational and relational dimensions: Al Sawalqa underlines how intra-family negotiations (with relatives and in-laws) for childcare that married and working Jordanian women need to undertake create additional layers of tension on their shoulders.

Examining the dynamics of care and gender norms from the lens of the presence of domestic care workers, Musa Shteivi finds that for surveyed women the option of redistributing unpaid care work with husbands comes far behind redistributing it with children as alternatives to hiring foreign domestic workers. His analysis shows that 'While greater social and economic participation for women is facilitated outside of the home, their traditional role is perpetuated therein; rather than causing a reassignment of tasks, responsibilities are merely transferred to foreign domestic workers with the long-run effect of delaying the progressive alteration of the male dominant status quo.'<sup>78</sup>

## **From the household to societal expectations: recreating social norms around women's responsibility for unpaid care work**

Social institutions are the main means of instructing and teaching the expected roles of both males and females: through parents, relatives, kindergartens, educators, games, and even kids' stories. The circle extends to schools, academic curricula, teachers, media, and religious and youth centres. Such institutions have direct and indirect messages about what society expects from males and females, based on its customs and traditions. Schools, represented by the academic curricula, hold the main responsibility for forming students' awareness of the models and stereotypes associated with women and men and their expected roles in the society. Shteivi's study (2003),<sup>79</sup> the first on the level of the Jordanian Kingdom in analyzing school books in the elementary grades from a gender perspective, considered that gender stereotypes reinforced and strengthen the traditional image and the cultural and social roles expected from both males and females. The study showed that there was an obvious gender bias in school books for males, as most of the roles were masculine with a very limited presence of feminine ones. In most of the school books, feminine roles are limited to the family, where mothers and wives are the main roles, while masculine roles are focused in general on men as leaders, managers, politicians, and authors. Most of the roles given to females are generally consistent with the traditional image of a female as she might be a teacher, nurse, secretary or any other traditional position. It also indicates that the characteristics and expectations related to gender roles reflect a clear stereotyping whereby men have the qualities of 'rationality, leadership, management and creativity' while females are characterized by the qualities of 'compassion, gentleness and kindness' which is all expected from their roles in care, whether at the family or professional level.

Nonetheless, Shteivi's study pointed out that many modern and positive roles for females sometimes mentioned in the curriculum praise the role of women in history, development, and the need for their effective participation in all aspects of life, though this is still not comprehensive. On the contrary, this often comes in a contradicting manner which further distorts women's roles. Finally, the study emphasizes the importance of women's issues, political, economic, and social rights, and the necessity for a systematic and regular change in the curricula and school books, to eliminate gender bias.

Along the same lines, Mayyadah Abu Jaber (2014) conducted a gender analysis of school curricula, focusing directly on so-called 'womenomics'.<sup>80</sup> The study revealed the role played by the curriculum in the reproduction of cultural and ideological messages about women and the aspiration for their economic empowerment. The results of the curriculum analysis were very similar to what Shteivi's study had presented 20 years earlier. There is a clear absence of women who carry out important productive tasks compared to those with reproductive tasks; women's flexibility is limited, and there is a clear preference that they stay at home. Curricula tend to present men as more organized than women and in leadership positions. The study added another dimension that the curricula prepare women more for marriage than entering the labour market. Vocational jobs are not preferred for women, even when stereotyped as feminine (e.g. chefs and waiters). Finally, the study indicated that the curricula show working women as unable to meet their family's needs, expectations, and responsibilities.

As is the case with school curricula, in vocational training, the culture of gender-based discrimination is reinforced, and the vocational training programmes are divided into socially accepted for females and others accepted for males. A study of Khaled Suleiman and Khaled Al Qudah (2013) aimed at analysing the programmes and organizational structure of the vocational training sector, in a way that highlights the forms of inequality between the two genders in terms of enrolment and employment in that sector. The number of trainees enrolled in the various programmes of the Vocational Training Corporation, since its establishment in 1976 until the end of 2013, reached a total of 30,000 male and female trainees, of which only 20.4% were females and who fell within the 'unskilled worker' criteria,

meaning that they were not competent or ready for the labour market. As a clarifying example, when discussing the vocational training programmes related to females, we directly and without giving it deep thought consider activities such as hairdressing, flower coordination, cooking and sewing. This is because society has programmed us to assign certain fields for females and others for males, with constraints that are very hard to cross in many cases. Therefore, with the lack of adequate gender awareness, those responsible for the vocational training sector are expected to tend to design policies and programmes in a manner that is consistent with the stereotypes they hold about the 'appropriate' roles for both males and females.

Among the influential social institutions that can play a significant role in making a change in society are the traditional and modern communications media. The Jordanian media organization 'Tiber' found in its 2018 gender study<sup>81</sup> that the gender gap is very severe in the Jordanian media, in both public and private sectors, and even in publications and the Internet. Among substantial other evidence, the study showed that most domestic programmes, such as cooking, family, childcare, and so forth are all linked with women only.

### **What are the effects of such stereotyping on the receiver's end?**

With optimistic vision in demonstrating an improvement in attitudes towards gender roles in Jordan, Shteiwi (2015)<sup>82</sup> evaluated attitudes towards gender roles on the basis of 10 variables: (a) a woman can become the prime minister or president of a Muslim state, (b) a married woman can work outside the home, (c) in general, men are better at political leadership than women, (d) university education for males is more important than university education for females, (e) men and women should have equal work opportunities, (f) it is permissible for a woman to travel abroad by herself, (g) a woman should not be denied her inheritance, (h) women's share of inheritance should be equal to that of men, (i) women can assume judicial positions, and (j) women can become ministers. The study pointed out that attitudes of female respondents were more progressive than attitudes of male respondents, the 35-44 age group showed a significant drop in support for women's participation in the public and economic spheres. Similarly, attitudes supportive of gender equality began to decrease at 55 and reached a mean close to that of the 35-44 age group at 65. The education factor does not show a consistent pattern in terms of gender equality. Illogically, attitudes become more traditional at higher educational levels (master's degree and above) than at the elementary level, and those who are unemployed showed more progressive attitudes towards less traditional gender roles than those who are employed. The results concluded that efforts in Jordan are leading to socio-cultural shifts with regard to the gender role effects on the household division of labour, women's economic and political participation, and social status.

However, a recent 2018 World Bank study points to gaps between women's and men's representations on gender roles and appropriate place and duties for women in relation to unpaid care work, i.e. women tend to underestimate men's opposition to their changing roles. What the study identifies as 'the most strongly reinforced social norm' remains the disapproval of women coming back home after 5 pm (rather than women working outside the home), in view of their household duties. Such disapproval is shared by 70% of surveyed men, while only 42% of women 'believe their counterparts will disapprove'. Similarly, '42% of men believe that women prefer to stay at home to take care of children and household, versus 37% of women.'<sup>83</sup>

The same study also reflects on the corollary impact of social norms in terms of missing opportunities to tackle barriers to women's economic participation through policy and services: 'without restrictive social norms in issues related to work, there would be more opportunities for child care services, reduced discrimination, creation of new private sector jobs, etc.'<sup>84</sup>

## LIMITED SERVICES AND CARE SECTOR OPPORTUNITIES FAIL TO SUPPORT FAMILIES

In Jordan, the political landscape on gender equality goes towards achieving practical gender needs rather than strategic gender interests. Even with the provision of the minimum gender practical needs, the available data indicate that there are breaches in social policies and a lack in the available community services that support women's work and family needs.

The need to provide nurseries or a dedicated space for children's care in the workplace has been addressed better than some other needs to some extent, due to the national programmes, as mentioned before, in the National Employment Strategy as well the National Strategy for Early Childhood Development. For instance, there is a project devoted to supporting and activating the establishment of nurseries in the private sector to encourage women to participate in the labour market. This programme is supervised by the National Council for Family Affairs,<sup>85</sup> and aims to establish 80 nurseries<sup>86</sup> with the help of a number of companies to found and cover 50% of the salaries of the workers in these nurseries for 12 months.<sup>87</sup> In a study conducted by Sadaqa in 2016 and focusing on the telecommunications sector, it was found that for women workers, having a nursery is considered as more essential than maternity leave, working hours, and even equal wages. The study also revealed that Jordanian women's contribution in the labour market would increase 3.25 times if a nursery was available.<sup>88</sup>

The question of how to finance childcare services in the workplace remains in practice a complicated matter, summarized in a press report supported by Journalists for Human Rights (JHR) (2018).<sup>89</sup> Some consider that the issue of nurseries is a burden on the already exhausted private sector, especially since 90% of the Jordanian private sector is in small companies. 'Nurseries are the responsibility of the society and not of employees and employers, and if we wanted to increase the percentage of women's economic participation, we should all help, complying with the international standards that state in many agreements that "In no case shall the employer alone bear any financial burden on a woman's rights such as maternity leaves or nurseries."<sup>90</sup> Therefore, maternity insurance was implemented by the Social Security Corporation, in addition to the programme of the National Council for Family Affairs, to support the programmes of workers' childcare. The report proceeds with discussing the complex relation between the Ministry of Social Development and the Ministry of Labour, as the former sets conditions that hinder the licensing process of nurseries and day care centres in the private sector. Although the Ministry of Social Development has allocated new instructions regulating the provision of childcare in the workplace, different from those for the private profit-making nurseries, the conditions still deal with institutional nurseries as profit-making nurseries. In contrast, nurseries in workplaces - when they exist - still charge their employees up to 100 JOD. If the Sadaqa study showed that the employees were ready to pay JOD 51-100 for having day care in the workplace, in the JHR report, Hamada Abu Nijmeh, counsellor for work policies and director on Workers House institution, indicates that, 'From a legal perspective, employers are not entitled to receive any amount for providing a day care.' Abu Nijmeh adds, 'The Ministry of Labour has not received any complaint from the workers on this issue, based on mutual agreement between employer and employee.'<sup>91</sup>

In addition, an initiative called 'Sadaqa - Towards a women friendly work environment' raises awareness in public opinion through studies, awareness, and advocacy on the importance of having day care in the workplace or nearby. Ms Reem Aslan, cofounder and partner in Sadaqa initiative, explained that Sadaqa aims at changing stereotypes by including men and women, so that the employer becomes obligated to provide a nursery regardless of the employees' sex. 'Men's participation is very important because the task of raising up the children is not the responsibility of women only, but of both.'<sup>92</sup>

**On the other hand, policies addressing the issue of decreased economic participation of women are not well linked to other familial responsibilities that women disproportionately hold in case of having an elderly, sick, or disabled family member.**

There is first a lack of information available about other individuals who need care. For instance, when we discuss educational, health, and support services for Jordanians and Syrians with disabilities, researchers initially face some statistical data difficulties in determining the percentage of people with disabilities; it can be considered 13% as assumed by The Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. In addition, an estimate from 2018 suggests that 30% of Syrian refugees in Jordan have specific physical or intellectual needs. According to Stephen Thompson's study (2018),<sup>93</sup> there is also some confusion in the numbers related to children's enrolment in education and disabled persons' enrolment in health services until they attain social protection. What is important to us in this study is to highlight that the confusion of numbers hinders the development of correct policies on the needs of persons with disabilities and, as a result, the need to reduce the burden on the family, especially women who bear the biggest burden of caring for those in need of care in the family.

Based on Thompson's study,<sup>94</sup> 'An estimate from 2017 suggests that the percentage of disabled students in school was 0.13% although the details of this statistic are not clear. In 2014, it was estimated that 35.3% of persons with disabilities in Jordan are illiterate, compared to 11% of the total population. A greater percentage of females, 40%, were illiterate compared to males, 32%. Educational attainment favoured males at all levels'. In reference to Social Health Insurance, 'In 2017, it was estimated that a third of Jordanians with disabilities were not covered. Also, despite many medical centres now being physically accessible with specially trained staff, challenges around transportation to the centres persist.' While Data of social protection pointed out that the Ministry for Social Development administers support to 12,000 people with disabilities, accounting for 12% of the National Aid Fund in 2017.<sup>95</sup>

**Any neglect in the policies, represented by the government, in providing people with disabilities with education, health, and protection services means increasing both inequalities among care recipients and the burden on the family to provide for such care.**

The education policy in public schools may deny some children free education because no schools are qualified to receive them, as is the case for children with Downs Syndrome, which means adding financial, psychological, and time burdens on the families with children whose disabilities deprive them of an education.<sup>96</sup>

Within the demographic transition in Jordan, with the improvement in the health situation and the increase of life expectancy at birth that reached 72.8 years for men and 74.2<sup>97</sup> years for women, it became essential to include the elderly (60 years and above) in the plans, policies, and financial budgeting to provide them with health, psychological, social, and economic care services. When fathers, mothers, and relatives become old, women become responsible for taking care of them, which prevents their engagement in paid work outside the house. Respectable and affordable institutions should be available to take care of elderly people in a human and professional manner. Data about the economic and health situation of elderly people are still inadequate, and social care still appears as limited to their families who bear the whole burden of looking after them. The Ministry of Social Development has allowed for the establishment of care homes for the elderly, and there are currently ten homes, six of which belong to charity associations and four to the private sector. However, there is a deficit in the financial allocations in the budgets of the organizations concerned with the elderly, a lack of relevant departments in some ministries, and some ambiguity in the tasks of these departments - if any - limited databases, neglect of many organizations to classify data according to age groups, scarcity of studies and research on aging issues, lack in the institutions that have reflected the issues of the elderly within their strategies, and the development of appropriate performance indicators linked to the Jordanian National Strategy for the Elderly.<sup>98</sup>

Another challenge that indirectly affects the dynamics around the provision of unpaid care work and women's opportunities to work outside the home is the lack of public transport – especially considering the constraint to return home before 5 pm. Due to the limited data availability, little is known about gender and mobility challenges in Jordan. However, a new survey with 500 women from 11 governorates conducted by Sadaqa (2019) found that “55% of women who use public transportation say that public transport negatively impacts their lives and causes them constant delays in reaching their places of work and study, and has driven them at times to drop out of work or studying all together.” The study also found that “47% of women in Jordan have refused a job offer due to the lack of transportation.”<sup>99</sup>

## PROGRAMMING HAS YET TO AIM FOR AND AMPLIFY TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACHES TO UNPAID CARE WORK

The level of awareness on unpaid care work as issue for standalone programming or to strategically tackle the issue is still primitive at all levels in Jordan. However, this does not mean that there are no projects and initiatives to assist women by providing options to enter and stay in the labour market, though there are no policies and programmes that reflect the idea of recognizing, reducing, redistributing, and focusing on donor sponsored projects.

### Programming

Forty projects and programmes<sup>100</sup> targeting women and gender in the first place and children and youth in the second place were reviewed.

On the one hand, in summary, there are no direct and specialized projects in unpaid care work in the studied projects. Income generation activities through ‘cash for work’, ‘micro-credit’ and ‘female entrepreneurs from informal economy to formal sector’ modalities are the most supported – combined with holistic support to enable women's access to livelihoods – to meet the needs of refugees in camp settings as well as in local communities. In addition, review of regulations and improvement of working conditions, such as flexible working hours and childcare services, are the most considered.

On the other hand, project and programme evaluations indicate that projects targeting the imbalance in the presence of women in the labour market tend to perpetuate the stereotypes associated with the role and position of both men and women in society and need to be more sensitive to gender inequalities.

At a more grassroots and community level, and while often lacking visibility and support, there are some initiatives that aim at reaching the idea of the care economy, by making a change in the stereotypical roles of spouses, parents, and mothers in the family. The 'Girls Leadership'<sup>101</sup> initiative that was called for by Try Centre and sponsored by the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives aimed at holding a contest for the students of UNRWA schools about 'the role of the father in the family and in the life of his daughters.' The initiative came out with ideas, artworks and literature different from the traditional stereotypes of fathers at home. These works were to reinforce the idea of changing the stereotypical roles of men and women and the girls' interest that their parents have a real role in family responsibilities that do not in fact undervalue them.<sup>102</sup> Within the same framework, the Swedish Embassy launched a special contest for Jordanian fathers to share their photos that reflect their presence with their children. The contest stipulated that the pictures should be inside the house and related to one of the following tasks and activities: milk preparation and feeding, food preparation, cleaning, changing clothes, combing hair, reading, homework, preparing for bedtime, cooking, washing and hanging clothes, washing the dishes, watering plants and playing musical instruments.<sup>103</sup> In addition, Habaybna platform<sup>104</sup> is an initiative that prompts the experiences of mothers and fathers in dealing with their disabled children. This initiative has given a role, weight,

and value to the role of parents together in bearing the responsibility of dealing with their disabled children. These simple community projects tend to reflect a growing - and very organic - interest in changing the roles of men and women in familial responsibilities and the redistribution of such tasks among both sexes. These simple initiatives may have positive impacts; however, they do not cover large geographical areas and are not based on plans, policies, and sufficient financing.

From an advocacy perspective, a review of reports of a number of implemented projects in Jordan and in refugee camps shows that the topic of the care economy and unpaid care work, as a critical dimension of women's lives, has become more systematically visible. As an example, a recent report of the Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development<sup>105</sup> makes an explicit reference to feminist economic principles and provides different recommendations on addressing unpaid care work, particularly when working with women living in poverty, with the example of women living in camps, underlining the lack in social services provided to elderly people, children, and people with disabilities. Another example comes from Oxfam's case study on the opportunities of Syrian women in the Al Zatari camp to undertake training in vocational and life skills and then find permanent jobs in the Jordanian market:<sup>106</sup> according to the Syrian women involved in the case study, the major and most important reason of their inability to engage or stay in paid work was the numerous family responsibilities placed on women. The small percentage who were able and happy to experience work in factories said that it was with the support provided by their relatives and friends. The project showed that women in camps could not work in the so-called non-official economy compared to those who lived outside the camp, and that the activities of the project would not have been implemented without the help of other women's interventions.

## Research around unpaid care work

The Women's Studies Programme may be classified among the initiatives concerned with the care economy, even from an academic and knowledge perspective, and this is an important point. The presence of the Centre for Women Studies in the University of Jordan, the first and largest public university in Jordan, doubles the responsibility placed on this academic institution, in terms of paying more attention to the research on unpaid care work, its dimensions, and consequences. Despite addressing the concept within the courses usually taught, based on Marxist and liberal feminist theories together with other theories that discuss the reproductive and family role of women as one of the causes of their persecution, there are still no studies that go beyond just repeating the arguments of those theories, without studying the subject on the ground. In the Women and Business course, there are key topics including measurement of income and Gross Domestic Product, formal and informal output, consumption, savings, decisions of women's work, contribution of the labour force, the division of labour, and the appreciation of the work of women as a mother and a housewife. University professors at the Centre for Women's Studies<sup>107</sup> stated that in almost every subject there is some discussion on unpaid work and division of labour, such as the feminist theory, Women and Development, and some others. However, there may not be specialised theses or dissertations particularly devoted to this subject, and the topics of division of labour and gender roles may be covered by a number of studies in fragmented manner. As for the role of academics in policy-making, there may be a gap between what is academic knowledge-related and the real mechanisms of policy-making.

An optimistic study by the Educational Psychology Department linked the variable of mothers' paid work outside their homes and the level of fathers' participation in household tasks on the one hand, with realizing the concept of parents' happy life on the other. The results indicated that there were different trends and behaviours in the participation in domestic work among fathers, as long as women had paid work outside the house. Although this study provided statistical figures and did not mention directly what is meant by unpaid care work, it is a different study at the level of stereotypes of studies in Jordan, where the researcher is a man who linked the concept of happiness with the man's roles in the family.<sup>108</sup>

## THE CASE OF LEBANON

INDICATOR	LEBANON
Rank on the Global Gender Gap Report (2016)	135 (out of 144), 2016
Economic Participation and Opportunity	133 (out of 144), 2016
Educational attainment	108 (out of 144), 2016
Labour force participation	133 (out of 144), 2016
Wage equality for similar work	88 (out of 144), 2016
Legislators, senior officials and managers	118
Professional workers	76
Health and survival	102 (out of 144), 2016
Political empowerment	143 (out of 144), 2016
Law mandates non-discrimination in hiring women	No
Law mandates equal pay	Yes <sup>208</sup>
Length of maternity leave	70 days
Provider of maternity leave benefits	Employer
Government supports or provides childcare	Yes
Government provides child allowance to parents	No
Mention of non-discrimination clause in the constitution	Yes

\*Source: World Economic Forum, *Global Gender Gap Index, 2016*, Source (2): The world Bank, *World Development indicators (2017)*

Traditional patriarchy is a main ideology and structure regulating social and cultural life in Lebanon.<sup>209</sup> Traditional patriarchy limits women to their 'expected role' at home, engaging in activities related to the household and family. According to the Gender Gap Index, Lebanon ranks third to last in the MENA region (135).<sup>210</sup> The World Economic Forum (2016) states that Lebanon's Global Index has been decreasing since 2010.<sup>211</sup> Women's access to opportunities and networks has long been challenged by the patriarchal structures that hinder their autonomy and freedom of choice,<sup>212</sup> ultimately challenging women's participation in the formal labour market and their full emancipation.

### REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Lebanon, unlike other countries in the MENA region, has a unique socio-political context, where the personal status code is drafted and overseen by the confessional system of governance that is mostly male-dominated.<sup>213</sup> Affairs related to women's civic rights, family matters and gender relations are regulated and relegated to the religious authorities, in a system that is based on the representation of sects and their respective power over their subjects. Literature suggests that keeping family matters under the jurisdiction of religious courts diminishes the constitution's role of granting equal rights to all citizens.<sup>214</sup>

208 Iqbal Doughan, 'Working Women in Lebanon', *Al Raida*, Volume XXIII, Nos. 111-112, Fall/winter 2005-2006

209 Beyond Reform and Development (2017), 'Patriarchy and Sectarianism, A gendered trap', 2017, *Hivos Peoples Unlimited*

210 K4D, 'Gender Equality and women's empowerment in Lebanon', University of Birmingham, 2017

211 World Economic Forum, *Gender Gap Index, Lebanon 2017*

212 Beyond Reform and Development (2017)

213 K4D, 'Gender Equality and women's empowerment in Lebanon', University of Birmingham, 2017

214 K4D, 'Gender Equality and women's empowerment in Lebanon', University of Birmingham, 2017

'According to the report by CRTDA in 2012, during wartime, many Lebanese families were forced to leave their homes. In the absence of men, women assumed all family responsibilities including the responsibility of caring for children and elderly people. They faced the loss of livelihoods, income, status, family and social network support because of the absence of their husbands. Once in that situation, many women became more aware of the legal inequalities that women face and go through.' Delphine Tailer, 'The Legal Framework and challenges to women's economic empowerment', CRTD-A, Oxfam Quebec, October 2010

In Lebanon, discriminatory laws in the Personal Status Law put women at a disadvantage in issues related to marriage, divorce, custody and nationality.<sup>215</sup> Currently, the existing Labour Law that was ratified in 1946, includes a chapter (chapter 8) on 'Employing Women and Children'. There are provisions in the same chapter that seek to protect the female worker, for example, Article 52 which forbids the employer from dismissing or threatening to dismiss a female employee on maternity leave.<sup>216</sup> Women in Lebanon are allowed 7 fully paid weeks of maternity leave. According to Al-Raida,<sup>217</sup> recent amendments to the law have been added to promote the protection of pregnant working women, whereby the employer cannot issue a dismissal warning to a pregnant woman between the beginning of the pregnancy and her return from her maternity leave. Anti-harassment policies in the workplace are yet to be passed in Parliament; until then, women are still unprotected from perpetrators of violence and harassment at work.<sup>218</sup>

Married women pay more tax on their income than men because they are treated as single.

*Delphine Tailer, 'The Legal Framework and challenges to women's economic empowerment', CRTD-A, Oxfam Quebec, October 2010*

Women are paid 27% less than their male colleagues for the same type of work – while there is a law that requires equal pay between men and women.

*Delphine Tailer, 'The Legal Framework and challenges to women's economic empowerment', CRTD-A, Oxfam Quebec, October 2010*

When looking at unpaid work in Lebanon, it is important to highlight that informal labour (including care work conducted by women for their families or by domestic workers hired to conduct the work for the families of women) is not regulated or protected by the Labour Law.<sup>219</sup> Additionally, there are no laws and policies that support women in the labour force, and this has resulted in discrimination in taxation, provision of social benefits, medical services especially in the non-formal sector and in the workplace.<sup>220</sup>

Looking at labour law in Lebanon, only 44.5% of employed women, and 35% of employed men are covered by one of the three national social security schemes available.<sup>221</sup> Additionally, according to the World Bank,<sup>222</sup> women are denied sick leave 11 times more frequently than men. Additionally, vacations are often denied to single women without young children.<sup>223</sup>

215 Freedom House, 'Women's Rights in the MENA', 2010

216 Arlete Juraysati, 'Eligibility of Working Married Lebanese Women for Social benefits', Al-Raida, Volume xxiii, Nos 111-112, Fall/Winter 2005-2006

217 Iqbal Doughan, 'Working Women in Lebanon', Al Raida, Volume XXIII, Nos. 111-112, Fall/Winter 2005-2006

218 Iqbal Doughan, 'Working Women in Lebanon', Al Raida, Volume XXIII, Nos. 111-112, Fall/Winter 2005-2006

219 Beyond Reform and Development (2017), 'Patriarchy and Sectarianism, A gendered trap', 2017, *Hivos Peoples Unlimited*

220 Avis WR (2017), *Gender equality and women's empowerment in Lebanon*, K4D Knowledge, evidence and learning for development.

221 Delphine Tailer, 'The Legal Framework and challenges to women's economic empowerment', CRTD-A, Oxfam Quebec, October 2010

222 World Bank, Study on the place of women in the economy, 2009

223 World Bank, Study on the place of women in the economy, 2009

## SOCIO-CULTURAL NORMS

Three patriarchal structures are at the core of all discriminatory practices against women in Lebanon today: the family (and community), the sect, and the state.<sup>224,225</sup>

In Lebanese culture – but also generally speaking – women are expected to fulfil the roles of the mother, the wife, the child bearer, and the person caring for children and the elderly. They are also responsible for maintaining social relationships, building homes, and supporting the male breadwinners.<sup>226</sup> In collectivist cultures like Lebanon, the family is seen as the basic unit of society, and as such, the act of an individual can impact how society views the entire family.<sup>227,228</sup> In fact, Lebanese culture is one that includes - without being limited to - the following characteristics:<sup>229</sup>

'Rural women in Lebanon are involved in 'muneh', the preservation and conserving of food, which enables them to cut their household budgets and save money. The products, when there is a surplus, can be sold, highlighting the narrow line between work that supports the household in kind and that which generates a cash income'.

CRTDA (2013)

The interests of the family are expected to supersede those of the individual and loyalty

Wealthy individuals are expected to financially assist less fortunate family members by providing job opportunities or sharing assets

The act of an individual can impact the perception of the entire family by others

Members of a family should protect the reputation of the family

Women are sometimes seen as particularly vulnerable targets that need to be protected

Women are more likely to bring shame on a family than men

The mother's role is largely to fulfil domestic duties and care for the children

Social norms in Lebanon discourage women from pursuing professional careers, as family structures, kinship ties, sectarian favouritism, and unequal access to opportunities and networks all intersect and marginalize women from finding employment opportunities.<sup>230</sup> That being said, even when women do find jobs, they are expected to perform like men: employers usually prefer women who are single out of fear of married women getting pregnant and taking maternity leave.<sup>231</sup> The latest numbers (2010) show that almost 30% of employed women are married compared to 51% of employed men, while 68% of female employees are single, compared to 47% of employed single

224 Patriarchy, as defined by Merriam Webster is a social system in which males hold primary power and predominate in role of political leadership and social privilege: in short, it is a system that values masculinity over femininity

225 Heinrich Boll Stiftung, 'Women's political participation in Lebanon', September, 2013.

226 Beyond Reform and Development (2017), 'Patriarchy and Sectarianism, A gendered trap', 2017, *Hivos Peoples Unlimited*

227 The Cultural Atlas, 'Collectivism', retrieved online on 09 May 2018.

228 Delphine Tailer (2010)

229 The Cultural Atlas Definition: Collectivist cultures are group-centric. A 'group' is a faction of people one shares an interest or identifying trait or characteristic with (e.g. religion, ethnicity, gender, age, education).

230 Delphine Tailer, 'The Legal Framework and challenges to women's economic empowerment', CRTD-A, Oxfam Quebec, October 2010

231 Beyond Reform and Development (2017), 'Patriarchy and Sectarianism, A gendered trap', 2017, *Hivos Peoples Unlimited*

men.<sup>232</sup> In its report, CRTDA suggests that women often end up withdrawing from the labour market and leaving their professional careers to please their families and fulfil the role that is expected of them.<sup>233</sup>

In addition to the strong academic research evidence that the social and cultural traditional gender roles define women within the private sphere, society's expectations from women also weigh on their ability and freedom to manage their own time and movement.<sup>234</sup>

Lebanon, being home to several sects and confessions, has a culture that seeks to preserve traditions and norms.<sup>235</sup> Almost all religions today base women's work in the household following religious scripts, for example:

- IN ISLAM: The Qiwama is found in the Quran (Surat Al-Nissa V34) and states that 'The man has primacy and ascendancy over the woman in relation to his obligation to provide for her. Husbands are obliged to keep their wives, and the women's obligation is to be faithful, obey their husbands, and look after their needs',
- IN CHRISTIANITY: in (1 Corinthians, 11 verse 3), 'But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God'

According to IWSAW's gender profile, The Lebanon Investment in Microfinance Programme (2009-2015) facilitated 14,000 loans, among which, 6000 went to women-owned businesses, and of the 3000 new jobs created, 1900 were assumed by women.

With norms and cultural traditions based on religious texts and leadership, and laws and regulations designed and managed by religious clergy or confessional representatives, it is expected to see the women at the end of the power ladder within the household as well as before the law.<sup>236</sup>

## SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

In general, the Lebanese economic situation has been witnessing a decrease in growth mostly due to the political and security situation in Lebanon and the region.<sup>237</sup> Today, banking, tourism and other services are at the core of the economy, while previously, the agricultural sector was the sector with the biggest income-generating potential.<sup>238</sup> Unfortunately, consistent and scientific labour market data are rare and, in most cases, outdated. The labour market in general is male-dominated (67.8% of all workers are male) while women's participation is one of the lowest in the world.<sup>239</sup> It is important to note that while this section includes a number of data on the labour market, including unemployment rates, different sources of data are contradictory and outdated.<sup>240</sup> Research and available literature suggest that the Lebanese formal labour market is complex due to the nature of the society that encompasses it, such as corruption, lack of transparency in public sector employment and the influence of sectarian powers on recruitment.<sup>241</sup> The World Bank estimates that 36.4% of GDP in Lebanon is from the informal sector, and 66.9% of the workforce in the formal labour market does not contribute to the social security system.<sup>242</sup> The National Social Security Fund provides health insurance, family allowances to formal workers in the private sector and end-of-service pension.<sup>243</sup> In its report on the challenges in the labour market, the European Training foundation (2015) characterizes the Lebanese labour market by:

<sup>232</sup> Delphine Tailer, 'The Legal Framework and challenges to women's economic empowerment', CRTD-A, Oxfam Quebec, October 2010

<sup>233</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>234</sup> Ridge, Charlotte Lee. «Women and gender in local government.» PhD (Doctor of Philosophy) thesis, University of Iowa, 2016235 Beyond Reform and Development (2017), 'Patriarchy and Sectarianism, A gendered trap', 2017, *Hivos Peoples Unlimited*

<sup>236</sup> Beyond Reform and Development (2017), 'Patriarchy and Sectarianism, A gendered trap', 2017, *Hivos Peoples Unlimited*

<sup>237</sup> European Training Foundation, 'Labour Market and employment policy in Lebanon,' (2015)

<sup>238</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>239</sup> ETF calculation based on CAS online labour force survey 2009 data.

<sup>240</sup> European Training Foundation, 'Labour Market and employment policy in Lebanon,' (2015)

<sup>241</sup> European Training Foundation, 'Labour Market and employment policy in Lebanon,' (2015)

<sup>242</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>243</sup> *ibid.*

- Low activity and employment rates,
- Low contribution of women to the economy,
- Large informal sector,
- High influx of foreign workers, and
- A large number of skilled people seeking and obtaining jobs abroad.

In Lebanon, 56.2% of the employed population does not have access to social security.

*Angel-Urdinola et al. (2012), 'Micro-Determinants of Informal Employment in the Middle East and North African Region'*

According to the World Bank, Lebanon has a rate of 23.187% of women's labour participation. There are no recent national

studies highlighting data about women's unpaid work, so there is no clarity on women's contribution to the economy through their household labour.

Women in Lebanon spend an estimated average of 14 hours a day on agricultural and domestic tasks.<sup>244</sup> The agricultural sector represents 6.9% of the GDP,<sup>245</sup> and it employs 7.2% of the total workforce and 4.6% of the female workforce.<sup>246</sup> But this information does not include the number or rates of workers in an informal setting. At the same time, women constitute 34% of the total permanent family workforce in agriculture and unpaid work without recognition and social or legal protection.<sup>247</sup> Today, the contribution of women to the Lebanese agricultural sector is decreasing, and the initial Rural Development Strategy that was developed by the government in 1983 to tackle the needs of rural women was never fully implemented.<sup>248</sup>

When it comes to the informal sector, the World Bank (2009) suggests that 90% of Lebanese businesses belong to the informal sector and are micro-enterprises,<sup>249</sup> 61% of economically active people in Lebanon work in the informal economy (as self-employed or as employees).<sup>250</sup> These employees' pay is often low, they do not receive social benefits, and their employment status is often temporary.<sup>251</sup>

In a study conducted by the International Labour Organization's regional office for the Arab States in 2008, 57.8% of women work in the informal sector without economic, social, or legal security or protection.<sup>252</sup> In their study, CRTD-A suggests that women employed in the informal sector are vulnerable to unsafe and poor working conditions, as well as violence and exposure to diseases.<sup>253</sup>

The literature suggests that working women tend to be young and single, and most active between the ages of 20 to 29, after which, their contribution to the labour market starts to decline as they marry and become mothers.<sup>254</sup> According to the ILO, women's unemployment rate (estimated at 18% compared to 9% among men) is in part due to their reproductive responsibility, which means that more women are likely to leave their jobs to bear children.<sup>255</sup> When women find formal employment, they would be doing two jobs: one at home, and one in the formal labour market.<sup>256</sup> This has consequences for the female worker such as a) physical tiredness, 2) postponing work at home leading to feelings of guilt, and 3) increased resentment towards the patriarch and kinship ties.<sup>257</sup>

244 CRTDA, 'Women's work in Lebanon: making the invisible visible', Oxfam Novib, January 2013

245 World Bank (2009), Lebanon at a glance

246 Delphine Tailer, 'The Legal Framework and challenges to women's economic empowerment', CRTD-A, Oxfam Quebec, October 2010

247 Delphine Tailer, 'The Legal Framework and challenges to women's economic empowerment', CRTD-A, Oxfam Quebec, October 2010

248 *ibid.*

249 World Bank, 'MNA knowledge and learning fast brief: gender-based differences among entrepreneurs and workers in Lebanon', April 2009

250 Delphine Tailer, 'The Legal Framework and challenges to women's economic empowerment', CRTD-A, Oxfam Quebec, October 2010

251 *ibid.*

252 CRTDA, 'Women's work in Lebanon: making the invisible visible', Oxfam Novib, January 2013

253 Delphine Tailer, 'The Legal Framework and challenges to women's economic empowerment', CRTD-A, Oxfam Quebec, October 2010

254 Delphine Tailer, 'The Legal Framework and challenges to women's economic empowerment', CRTD-A, Oxfam Quebec, October 2010

255 ILO, 'Towards Decent work in Lebanon: Issues and Challenges in Light of the Syrian Refugee Crisis', 2015

256 CRTDA, 'Women's work in Lebanon: making the invisible visible', Oxfam Novib, January 2013

257 *ibid.*

Additionally, when women leave the labour market, they face new types of challenges on their return: the demands have changed and the number of people seeking jobs has increased, in addition to prolonged job search times.<sup>258</sup> Lebanese women find limited employment opportunities and when they do find an opportunity, they are usually paid less than men.<sup>259</sup>

Finally, when it comes to businesses run by women, it is suggested that those businesses have better working conditions, as follows:<sup>260</sup>

WOMEN-RUN BUSINESSES	MEN-RUN BUSINESSES
50% of women-run businesses offer family health insurance <sup>261</sup>	Compared to 37% of men-run businesses <sup>262</sup>
0.5% of leave applications made by women have been denied <sup>263</sup>	6% of women were refused annual leave <sup>264</sup>
80% of women were granted their maternity leave	72% of women were granted their maternity leave
47% female workforce <sup>265</sup>	34% female workforce <sup>266</sup>

Some facts and figures about the economic situation of women in Lebanon:

- 14.4% of households in Lebanon are headed by women,<sup>267</sup>
- Only 18.4% of women who head households have jobs,<sup>268</sup>
- 71.4% of all women-headed households in Lebanon are at the risk of extreme poverty,<sup>269</sup>
- Women in Lebanon are economically active mostly between the ages of 20 and 29,<sup>270</sup>
- Almost 1 in 4 Lebanese households has a maid,<sup>271</sup>
- 29% of employed women are married, compared to 51% of employed married men,<sup>272</sup> (while 68% of female employees are single, compared to 47% of employed men who are single),

'According to a cross-sectional survey of 2,797 households in three communities in Lebanon, a clear division of household labour was apparent, with more than 70 percent reporting that the wife performed in-house chores such as cooking and washing clothes and dishes'

*Gender politics in Lebanon and the limits of legal reformism, Lebanon Support*

258 ILO, 'Towards Decent work in Lebanon: Issues and Challenges in Light of the Syrian Refugee Crisis', 2015

259 Torres Tailfer, (2012) op. cit.

260 Delphine Tailer, 'The Legal Framework and challenges to women's economic empowerment', CRTD-A, Oxfam Quebec, October 2010

261 World Bank, 'MNA knowledge and learning fast brief: gender-based differences among entrepreneurs and workers in Lebanon', April 2009

262 ibid.

263 Delphine Tailer, 'The Legal Framework and challenges to women's economic empowerment', CRTD-A, Oxfam Quebec, October 2010

264 ibid.

265 World Bank, 'MNA knowledge and learning fast brief: gender-based differences among entrepreneurs and workers in Lebanon', April 2009

266 ibid.

267 UNFPA, MOSA, 'Female headship in Lebanon, vulnerability assessment of female heads of households: the July 2006 war on Lebanon', 2007.

268 European Training Foundation, 'Labour Market and employment policy in Lebanon,' (2015)

269 Delphine Tailer, 'The Legal Framework and challenges to women's economic empowerment', CRTD-A, Oxfam Quebec, October 2010

270 ibid.

271 Ray Jureidini, 'An exploratory study of psychoanalytic and social factors in the abuse of migrant domestic workers by female employers in Lebanon' Kafa, (2011)

272 ibid.

- According to a study conducted by UNDP on household living conditions in 2007, women are mostly active in the service sector and least in construction, business and telecommunications in comparison with their male counterparts,
- Women hold about 8% of small and medium-sized enterprises,<sup>273</sup>
- All five categories of permanent employment in the public sector have women on board; however the percentages are striking as: 10% of category one employees are female, and 24.1% of category two, and 36.3% of category three, 38.3% of category four and 19.8% of category five.<sup>274</sup> (8 female staff compared to 71 male staff in category one, 57 female staff and 179 male staff, 778 female staff and 1,361 male staff, and 2042 female staff and 3280 male staff, and finally 161 female staff and 652 male staff in category five, respectively),
- In rural areas, only 1.3% of healthcare providers are female, compared to 30.7% of the agriculture sector, and 7.3% in education,<sup>275</sup>
- At least 50% of female-owned firms are managed by their owners,<sup>276</sup>
- The majority of the female labour force is found in the private sector,<sup>277</sup>
- 40% of working women hold a university degree,<sup>278</sup>
- Small and medium-sized enterprises account for the majority of businesses in Lebanon (90%),<sup>279</sup>
- The public sector in Lebanon employs 30% of wage employees,<sup>280</sup>
- 55% of young job-seekers resort to personal or family connections in search for employment.<sup>281</sup>

The value of the labour performed in the household is not economically valued or remunerated in Lebanon, and women today are generally expected to work in exchange for wage or financial remuneration because of the challenging economic situation in the country.<sup>282</sup>

Finally, while the country is witnessing challenging security, political and economic times, women, like most vulnerable groups, suffer from lack of employment opportunities as well as poor working conditions in the informal sector. Labour law does not protect workers in the informal sector (that accounts for unpaid household labour). Today, there are no available national data on women's employment status or their contribution to household activities. Information about the informal sector is not updated, and with the new factors influencing the labour market (influx of Syrian refugees, low investment rates, etc.) there are no current studies discussing the influence of these new factors on women's unpaid and paid labour.

273 ILO, UNDP, SIDA, 'Enterprises in Lebanon: A post conflict impact assessment 2006 – 2007: one year after', 2007

274 National Commission for Lebanese Women, National Yearly Report, CEDAW, 2014

275 National Commission for Lebanese Women, National Yearly Report, CEDAW, 2014

276 World Bank (2013) <A Country Gender Assessment: Economic Participation, Agency and Access to Justice in Jordan', World Bank: Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Department Middle East and North Africa.

277 WikiGender, 'Women's access to education in the MENA region', retrieved online on May 11, 2018

278 ILO, 'Towards Decent work in Lebanon: Issues and Challenges in Light of the Syrian Refugee Crisis', 2015

279 European Training Foundation, 'Labour Market and employment policy in Lebanon,' (2015)

280 World Bank, 'Lebanon Economic Monitor: a sluggish economy in a highly Volatile environment', 2014

281 European Training Foundation, 'Labour Market and employment policy in Lebanon,' (2015)

282 CRTDA, 'Women's work in Lebanon: making the invisible visible', Oxfam Novib, January 2013

## THE CASE OF TUNISIA

INDICATOR	TUNISIA
Rank on the Global Gender Gap Report (2018)	119 (out of 149)
Economic Participation and Opportunity	135 (out of 147)
Educational attainment	108 (out of 146)
Labour force participation	137 (out of 147)
Wage equality for similar work	78 (out of 147)
Legislators, senior officials and managers	127 (out of 147)
Professional and technical workers	104 (out of 147)
Health and survival	105 (out of 126)
Political empowerment	55 (out of 149)
Law mandates non-discrimination in hiring women <sup>283</sup>	Yes
Law mandates equal pay	No in the private sector/yes in the public sector <sup>284</sup>
Length of maternity leave	2 months, nearly amended to 3 months (paternity leave: 2 days, nearly amended to 15 days)
Provider of maternity leave benefits	Government
Government supports or provides childcare	Yes
Government provides child allowance to parents	Yes
Mention of non-discrimination clause in the constitution	Yes
In 2018, unemployment rates for women (22.9%) are nearly twice as high as for men (12.5%)	
In 2018, unemployment rates for tertiary-educated women (39.9%) are almost twice as high as for tertiary-educated men (20.7%)	
In 2018, the Human Development Index in Tunisia is considered “high”, and the country is ranked 4 <sup>th</sup> in Africa and 95 <sup>th</sup> in the world <sup>285</sup>	
In 2017, women represent 66% of the tertiary educated population, but they represent only 26% of the labour force. 11.7% of entrepreneurs are women	

\*Sources: World Economic Forum (2019), Global Gender Gap Index 2018, Institut National des Statistiques (2015), Recensement Général de la population et de l'Habitat 2014, Institut National des Statistiques (2019), Prévisions démographiques, UNDP (2019), IDH report 2018, Tunisian Government (2015), Constitution de la République Tunisienne, Journal Officiel de la République Tunisienne, 20 avril 2015, Tunis.

The gender scene in Tunisia seems more progressive when compared to other MENA countries. Today, the country ranks second after the Occupied Palestinian Territories of all MENA countries on the gender gap index.<sup>286</sup> But compared to the rest of the world, Tunisia ranks only 119 on 149 in 2018, (The situation was a little better in 2011, as the country was ranking 107 on 134 in 2010 and 108 on 135 in 2011). That means that there is still a need to push for the feminist agenda.

283 Rim Ben Ayed Mouelhi, Mohammad Goaeid, 'Women in the Tunisian Labour Market', The Economic Research Forum, November, 2017.

284 Law No. 83-112, Journal Officiel de la République Tunisienne n°82, 1983, Tunis, pp. 3214-3225

285 HDI was 0.53 in 1990, 0.72 in 2011 and reached 0.73 in 2018

286 Global Gender Gap Report 2018. World Economic Forum

Tunisia's situation on gender equality in the social, political and economic realms has been influenced by important current and historical political milestones. Those include Tunisian independence from the French colonial era in 1956, the country's reform-intensive period following 2011's revolution, followed by the takeover of government by a conservative coalition of political parties, and then a consensual technocrats' government of national unity, which was dissolved in 2014 with new parliamentary elections.<sup>287</sup>

In 2011, Tunisia became the only country in the MENA region to have withdrawn all of its reservations to the Convention of Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).<sup>288</sup> But the country still holds a general declaration according to which the government cannot take any administrative or legislative decision contrary to the first chapter of the Tunisian Constitution, which states that 'Tunisia is a free, independent, sovereign state; its religion is Islam, its language is Arabic, and its system is republican.'

Research on budget-time conducted in 2006 by the Centre de Recherches et d'Etudes sur la Femme (CREDIF) showed an unequal distribution of domestic and family work among men and women inside the household. Thus, men spend almost three times more time than women at work while women spend eight times more time than men in performing domestic work, caring for children and dependents of the family (elders).<sup>289</sup>

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287 Victoria Chambers and Claire Cummings. (2014). Building Momentum: Women's Empowerment in Tunisia. Overseas Development Institute (ODI).

288 Law No. 2011-103, 24 Octobre 2011, Journal Officiel de la République Tunisienne, Tunis. Refer also to Victoria Chambers and Claire Cummings. (2014). Building Momentum: Women's Empowerment in Tunisia and Overseas Development Institute (ODI), and Amroussia, N., Goicolea, I., Hernandez, A., (2016)

289 Centre de Recherches et d'Etudes sur la Femme, Budget temps des Femmes et des Hommes 2005 – 2006, CREDIF, Tunis, 2006, p. 47

## REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Following the establishment of the Personal Status Code in 1956,<sup>290</sup> reforms were progressively included at the policy level to promote gender equality. These included school obligation for both sexes,<sup>291</sup> new regulations to institutionalize monogamous marriages,<sup>292</sup> women's right to file for divorce<sup>293</sup> while also making it harder for men to obtain divorce,<sup>294</sup> and to set the minimum age of marriage for women at 18 years with women's consent. Abortion in Tunisia became legal in 1973 with no requirement for women to get their male kin's approval.<sup>295,296</sup> All childbirth and abortions are covered by the government.<sup>297,298</sup> The right to use birth control has become legal since 1961.<sup>299</sup>

However, the Personal Status Code still recognizes the husband as the head of the household, who is expected to pay a dowry to his partner and is obligated to provide for her needs.<sup>300</sup> For that reason, in 1993, reforms were set to end women's duty to obey their husbands and introduce the concept of the joint family lead by both spouses.<sup>301</sup>

In 1993, women also obtained the right to pass on their citizenship to their offspring.<sup>302</sup> The Penal Code was amended in 2004 to recognize harassment as a crime.<sup>303</sup> In 2008, women were granted the right to receive conjugal residence in case of divorce (if their children are of lower age) and imprisoned mothers were allowed an extended room to take care of their young children while in prison.<sup>304</sup> More recently, Tunisian women obtained the right to marry non-Muslim men.<sup>305</sup>

## INFRASTRUCTURE

National bodies have been created to promote gender equality in Tunisia. In 1973, the Ministry of Health created the ONFP (Office National de la Famille et de la Population) to regulate demographic growth, but since 1994 its mission has been more oriented towards reproductive, sexual and maternal health.

The National Women and Development Commission was established in 1991 and aimed at including discussions around women's issues at the level of national development plans,<sup>306</sup> followed by the establishment in 1983 of the Ministry of Women, Family, Children and Elderly affairs<sup>307</sup> and its National Council of Women and the Family.<sup>308</sup>

290 Code du Statut Personnel (1956), Tunis

291 In 2018, there is an equally high rate of enrollment to school for both boys (95.7%) and girls (96.1%)

292 Tunisia and Turkey are the only two Muslim countries forbidding polygamy

293 Generally the Ulemas (experts in Islamic Law) did not completely deny women this right and in theory, a woman could call upon the Qadi to put an end to the conjugal bond. However, Islamic law required so many conditions and such high standards of evidence that it was difficult in practice for a woman to establish her case. AWID, 'Marriage and Divorce in Tunisia', Sep. 2010

294 As prior to those legal changes, men were able to divorce at any time upon a simple declaration before two notaries without any kind of trial. *ibid* (September 2010)337 Grosso, "Extraordinary Ethics," 22.

295 Amroussia, N., Goicolea, I., Hernandez, A., (2016) 'Reproductive Health Policy in Tunisia, Women's right to reproductive health and gender empowerment', *Health and Human Rights Journal*, December 2016, 18(2): pp 183 - 194

296 Selma Hajri et al. (2015). This is Real Misery: Experiences of Women Denied Legal Abortion in Tunisia. *PLoS ONE* 10(12): e0145338.

297 Amroussia, N., Goicolea, I., Hernandez, A., (2016) 'Reproductive Health Policy in Tunisia, Women's right to reproductive health and gender empowerment', *Health and Human Rights Journal*, December 2016, 18(2): pp 183 - 194

298 EU 2012, 10; Postdoctoral Researcher 29 Oct. 2014

299 GataaR. Experiences in Addressing Population and Reproductive Health Challenges. New York: United Nations Development Programme; 2011. 'Women's empowerment and reproductive health,' pp. 221–227. Tunisian Penal Code (2013).

300 AWID, 'Marriage and Divorce in Tunisia', Sep. 2010

301 *ibid*.

302 Law No. 93-74 amending some articles of the Personal Status Code, Tunis, 12 July 1993

303 Loi n° 2004-73 du 2 août 2004, modifiant et complétant le code pénal concernant la répression des atteintes aux bonnes mœurs et du harcèlement sexuel

304 The World Bank, 'Civil Rights, Independent Tunisia: Gender followup in Tunisia', March 2010

305 Circular dated 14 September 2017 canceling Law n°216 dated 5 November 1976

306 Victoria Chambers and Claire Cummings. (2014). Building Momentum: Women's Empowerment in Tunisia. Overseas Development Institute (ODI).

307 As the name suggests, this ministry is not exclusively dedicated to women

308 Women and Work in Tunisia. (2013). European Training Foundation (ETF)

The ministry changed its name and became the 'Ministry of Women, Family and Childhood' (MFFE). It is a small ministry and has one of the smallest budgets of the government. In fact, its budget was only 56.2 million US dollars in 2019 (27.7 million US dollars in 2013), compared to 1650 million US dollars for the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research<sup>309</sup>

MFFE has established a 'violence against women and girls' strategy<sup>310</sup> which aims at reducing all kinds of violence against women, not only physical, but also sexual, economic, and psychological violence. MFFE has also settled a national strategy for the economic and social empowerment of rural women. This strategy aims at empowering the 1.8 million women living in the rural areas of the country<sup>311</sup> through food self-sufficiency, reduction of maternal mortality, better access to public services (water) and a greater participation in economic and citizen life.

In 1994, the participation of Tunisia in the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) allowed the transition from demographic concerns to reproductive, sexual and maternal health as a priority.<sup>312</sup>

The new constitution of 2014 also declares that men and women have equal rights and duties.<sup>313</sup> July 2017 was an important milestone in the history of Tunisian women, with the passing of the Organic law No. 2017-58 dated 11 August 2017, eliminating violence against women. An important feature of this law repeals a clause from article 227 of the Tunisian Penal Code that allows a rapist to marry the survivor in exchange for impunity,<sup>314</sup> but also brought number of advancements.<sup>315</sup>

The literature suggests that policies to protect women in Tunisia and grant them their full economic and political emancipation are still lagging.<sup>316</sup> For instance, the maternity leave policy in Tunisia provides working women with a total of 30 days to care for their newborns in exchange for a discounted remuneration of 67% of their original pay, while the recommended parental leave is 14 weeks.<sup>317</sup> Paternal leave is only 2 days, which suggests that taking care of babies is still considered as an exclusive women's duty. Parental leave is about to be increased by law to 3 months for mothers and 15 days for fathers, with still a large gap between men and women. The final text of the draft law was adopted by the council of ministers on 8 March 2019, and is scheduled to be presented to Parliament.

All women employed in a public or private institution benefit from maternal leave, but they must have a signed contract and be regularly registered to a social security system (Centre National de Sécurité Sociale-CNSS for the public sector or Centre National de Retraite et de Prévoyance Sociale for the private). A reduction of the informal employment sector should make the maternal leave system more comprehensive. Another example is inheritance law, which under Islamic Law allows male heirs to receive at least twice the share of the female heirs, and a surviving husband is allowed to inherit a quarter or half from his spouse depending on whether or not they have children.<sup>318</sup> Although a national dialogue has been opened around the project of gender equality in inheritance, with the

309 République Tunisienne, Loi de finances 2019

310 The strategy was adopted in 2008 and has been implemented since 2012

311 In 2018, urbanization rate is 67% in Tunisia

312 Office National de la Famille et de la Population. Rapport d'activité 2009. Tunis: Office National de la Famille et de la Population, 2010.

313 Tunisian constitution, JORT, Tunis, 2014, articles 34, 46

314 Oxford Human Rights Hub, 'Tunisia's Revolutionary Steps: New Law Protecting Women Against Violence', September 2017

315 The new Violence against Women Law adopts a broad definition of violence. In addition to physical violence, the law recognizes other forms of violence against women and girls, including economic, sexual, political and psychological. It also provides for new protection mechanisms that will enable survivors to access the necessary services and legal and psychological assistance. Furthermore, the law eliminates impunity for perpetrators of violence, for example, by amending the article 227 of the penal code, which pardoned a perpetrator of a sexual act with a minor when the perpetrator married his victim.  
UN women <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/8/news-tunisia-law-on-ending-violence-against-women>

316 AWID, 'Marriage and Divorce in Tunisia', Sep. 2010

317 the duration which has been globally proven to reduce the risks of mothers leaving their jobs entirely. For more information: Gaëlle Ferrant, Luca Maria Pesandi, & Keiko Nowacka (2014). Unpaid Care Work: The Missing Link in the Analysis of Gender Gaps in Labour Outcomes. OECD Development Center

318 Alessandra Bajec. (13 March 2018). Tunisian Women March to Demand Equal Inheritance. Women's Advancement Deeply.

support of the President of the Republic, strong political and social resistance is still preventing any change in inheritance regulation. The main argument opposed is linked to religion (reference made in the Sharia'a law used as one of the principles governing inheritance law in Tunisia).

The literature suggests that today, women's rights in Tunisia (including their sexual and reproductive rights) are still at the forefront of the most debated topics in the new republic.<sup>319</sup>

Although a law has been recently adopted<sup>320</sup> on violence against women and girls,<sup>321</sup> it is still widespread in Tunisia,<sup>322</sup> in the privacy of households but also in public spaces<sup>323</sup> (public transport, workplaces, etc.). Most incidents tend to go unreported for many reasons, such as the fear of women of losing their jobs<sup>324</sup> or to avoid social judgment that the harassment happened in response to the woman's own provocation, through physical appearance for example.<sup>325</sup> Paradoxically, when a woman is harassed in a public space, it is often considered that this is the fault of the woman, who is not sufficiently discreet. This is another factor contributing to lack of access of women to the workforce, and their own calculation of the advantage of doing unpaid work as opposed to venturing into a world where they are at risk of harassment.

Concretely, unpaid care work is not directly mentioned in any law, not even in the new Organic Law No. 2017-58, 11 August 2017, relative to the elimination of violence against women. But we can consider that unpaid care work sits at the intersection of the different feminist agenda issues. For example, it affects economic justice, women's political participation, and could be part of economic violence against women as it reduces the possibilities for women to have access to an independent income.

In 2018, the level of women in the employed population was still low: only 27.9% (2,579,300 men vs 923,400 women).<sup>326</sup>

On the political side, women have benefited from regulations in favour of gender equity. For example, the parity in electoral lists brought more than 36% women to the ARP (Assemblée des Représentants du Peuple, Tunisian parliament) and 47% to municipal councils.<sup>327</sup> Finally, the Organic Law on Budget and the Law on local councils introduced the concept of gender-sensitive budgeting.<sup>328</sup>

## SOCIO-CULTURAL NORMS

Even though the policy framework in Tunisia is thought to be protective of women's rights, patriarchal values and norms still prevail.<sup>329</sup> The unfair distribution of unpaid work in Tunisia is linked to the economic, political, and socio-cultural barriers either implied by existing policies or the absence thereof, or explicitly experienced by women through informal social interactions and expectations.

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319 Amroussia, N., Goicolea, I., Hernandez, A., (2016)

320 Organic Law n° 2017-58, 11 August 2017, relative to the elimination of violence towards women, Journal Officiel de la République Tunisienne, Tunis.

321 Organic Law n° 2017-58, 11 August 2017, relative to the elimination of violence towards women, Journal Officiel de la République Tunisienne, Tunis.

322 Saskia van Veen, Salma Jrad, Soufia Galand, 'YOUNG COUPLES IN GOOD TIMES AND IN BAD: Social norms that perpetuate violence against women and girls among young Tunisians in peri-urban areas', Oxfam, July 2017.

323 Veen Saskia, Van Jrad Salma, Galand Soufia (2017), Young couples in good times and in bad: social norms that perpetuate violence against women and girls among young Tunisian in per-urban areas, Oxfam

324 Centre de Recherches et d'Etudes sur la Femme, Les violences fondées sur le genre dans l'espace public en Tunisie, CREDIF, Tunis, 2016

325 Carin Benninger-Budel & Joanna Bourke-Martignoni. (2002). Violence Against Women in Tunisia. Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, World Organization Against Torture (OMCT).

326 INS (2018)

327 Instance Supérieure Indépendante pour les Elections (2018)

328 Code des collectivités locales, Tunis, 2018, article 123

329 AWID, 'Marriage and Divorce in Tunisia', Sep 2010

From an economic and political perspective, women in Tunisia have won a large fight in policy reform, bringing them closer to accessing their rights to full participation at both levels.<sup>330</sup> The presumably positive effects of those reforms have been restricted by long standing cultural perceptions of gender roles. Top-down effects of policies in Tunisia have achieved a significant step towards the gradual breakdown of those stereotypes.<sup>331</sup>

The National Institute for Statistics (INS) in Tunisia has conducted several studies over the years on different issues from a gender perspective (including access to education, access to labour opportunity as well as time-use surveys) with the support of the Ministry of Women, Family and Childhood.<sup>332</sup> Most of these studies show gender equity concerning education, and an increasing participation of women to economic life, through employment in the formal or informal sectors.

In 2006, a study underlined that Tunisian women spend 5 hours and 16 minutes a day on house work while men spend only 39 minutes of their daily time on it. This study also shows that women are still considered responsible for cleaning, cooking or taking care of babies, while gardening, plumbing or taking out the trash are considered as male activities inside households.<sup>333</sup> In fact, the unequal time spent on housework between men and women is linked to childbearing in Tunisian families.

In 2017, girls spent 6.4 hours per week on housework, while boys spent only 4.9 hours to help their parents inside the household.<sup>334</sup> Even if the gap between girls and boys is not high, it means that women are raised with a higher responsibility expected for the household. Socialization practices and physiological differences linked to childbearing work together to maximize returns to women's specialization in household work and men's specialization in market work.<sup>335</sup>

A study conducted on the perceptions of Tunisians towards working women by the Tunisian Institute of Statistics showed that women's participation in the labour market is publicly perceived as a means to support household income in case the husband's income is insufficient, or to provide for her family in case the husband is absent.<sup>336</sup> Surveyed women and men showed a tendency to ignore other potential perceptions also presented by the study, including the perception of women's participation in the labour market as a basic right, or as a means of self-accomplishment.<sup>337</sup>

Another perception study conducted in 2012<sup>338</sup> by NDI confirmed that the majority of women and men were comfortable attributing different roles according to gender, and a common statement among researched participants was that men and women have different mental and physical capacities. Despite the amendments on the Personal Status Code, women in Tunisia are culturally expected to be in charge of duties in the private sphere, including family and household work.<sup>339</sup> According to the British sociologist Catherine Hamouda, there are three social categories of women: 'career women' exclusively engaged in the labour market, and 'housewives' with no other perspectives than unpaid care work. And, in between these two extremes, there is a third type of women who have the possibility of building a career but prefer giving the priority to raising their children.<sup>340</sup> It seems that many Tunisian women belong to this third category.<sup>341</sup>

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330 European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, (2015).

331 European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, (2015)

332 European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 'Enhancing women's voice, agency and participation in the economy', April 2015.

333 Institut National des Statistiques, Enquête Budget des Femmes et des Hommes en Tunisie, Tunis, INS, 2006, pp. 22-23

334 Institut National des Statistiques, Enquête Nationale sur le Travail des Enfants en Tunisie, Tunis, INS, 2017, pp. 22-23

335 Sayer Liana C. (2010), «Trends in housework», in *Dividing the domestic. Men, women and household work in cross-national perspective*, Stanford University Press, p. 23

336 Dorra Mahfoudh (2017). *Les Femmes Tunisiennes dans le Travail et le Mouvement Syndical*, Freidrich Ebert Stiftung.

337 Dorra Mahfoudh (2017).

338 Gabriella Borovsky, & Asma Ben Yahia. (2012). *Women's political participation in Tunisia after the Revolution*. National Democratic Institute for International Affairs.

339 Gabriella Borovsky & Asma Ben Yahia. (2012).

340 Hakim Catherine (2000), *Work life-style choices in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: Preference theory*, Oxford, Oxford University Press

341 Bouhdiba Sofiane (2018), *Six millions de femmes*, L'Harmattan, Paris, pp. 64-65 ; see also Gribaa Boutheina & Depaoli Giorgia (2014), *Profil Genre de la Tunisie 2014*, Union européenne, Tunis

According to the Institute for National Statistics, the traditional, discriminatory, social constructs according to which young girls must engage in unpaid care work could be challenged by a greater involvement of the state in raising parents' awareness of a more equitable vision of the distribution of household activities among children in the family home.<sup>342</sup>

## SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

The Tunisian economy is characterized today by a slow economic growth and a high unemployment rate. Women's unemployment rate has decreased since it peaked in 2011 (27.4%) to 22.9% in 2018 (compared to 12.5% unemployment rate among men).<sup>343</sup> A comparison of men's and women's unemployment rates shows that women are twice as likely to be unemployed as men.<sup>344</sup> We find the same gap between graduate men (unemployment rate 20.7%) and women (39.9%).

After the 2011 revolution, women in Tunisia were largely demotivated from finding jobs. This is directly linked to the general economic regression whereby women's voice, agency, and unemployment rates increased, and the first to carry the unemployment burden are women (even more women from rural areas), due to their social positioning as caregivers rather than financial providers.<sup>345</sup>

Gender stereotypes and social stigmatization have reinforced the unfair distribution of unpaid and paid work at the expense of women's access to paid work and citizenship rights.<sup>346</sup> This is also reflected in the minimal roles assumed by women in the private sector,<sup>347</sup> where the total number of firms that are either managed or co-owned by women in Tunisia adds up to less than 2% of the total number of firms.<sup>348</sup>

Women also tend to self-filter vocational job opportunities though they have been twice as available as non-vocational jobs in Tunisia during the past two years. Such stereotypes challenge women's access to vocational jobs where men are favoured. According to the Institut Arabe Des Chefs d'Entreprises (IACE), breaking this stereotype could have opened up around 145,000 jobs in 2018.<sup>349</sup> A longitudinal study conducted in Tunis and Sfax in 2018 showed that husbands whose mothers were working are more likely to participate to house work, in order to make it easier for their wives to work outside the household.<sup>350</sup>

A group of Tunisian activists have been working on a strategy to involve more women in the work of syndicates and thus the more accurate representation of woman's demands for fairer policies, and the engagement of the private sector in abiding by women-empowering policies; thus a fairer distribution of productive human resources in the country.<sup>351,352</sup>

Today, there are more than 120 associations working to promote women's rights,<sup>353</sup> and some of them are advocating for more gender justice through a reduction of unpaid care work and a fairer distribution of domestic tasks inside households. The most active associations in this area are Association Tunisienne des Femmes Démocrates (ATFD), Aswat Nissa, Voix d'Eve, Voix de Femmes, Union Nationale des Femmes Tunisiennes (UNFT). These associations did not work directly on the \_\_\_\_\_

342 Institut National des Statistiques, Enquête Nationale sur le Travail des Enfants en Tunisie, Tunis, INS, 2017, pp. 22-23; see also Mahfoudh Dorra (2000), Etude sur la socialisation de l'enfant dans la famille tunisienne, Ministère des affaires de la femme et de la famille, Tunis.

343 Institute for National Statistics, 2018/2015.

344 International Labour Organization, ILOSTAT, Annual Indicators, Share of youth not in employment and not in education, 2016 345 Simon Atkinson. (11 December 2013). Revolution brings no hopes for Tunisia's women. BBC News, Business. Tunis.

346 World Bank, Enterprise Surveys database, 2016

347 World Bank, Enterprise Surveys database, 2016

348 World Bank, Enterprise Surveys database, 2016

349 Ibtissem Jamen. (19 December, 2017). Tunisian Women Break Employment Stereotypes. Al Fanar Media.

350 Bouhdiba Sofiane (2018), Six millions de femmes, L'Harmattan, Paris, p. 67.; for the methodology, see Fernández (R.), Fogli (A.) et Olivetti (C.), 'Mothers and Sons: Preference Formation and Female Labour Force Dynamics', in The Quarterly Journal of Economics, Volume 119 (4), 1 November 2004, pp. 1249-1299

351 Dorra Mahfoudh (2017).

352 Percentage of the workforce employed in agriculture in rural areas. Women's and Youth Empowerment in Rural Tunisia. (May 2018). International Labour Office.

353 www.jamaity.org

issue of unpaid work (there are no associations that have done so in Tunisia), but they are concerned by the fact that unpaid work is preventing women from participating actively in economic, political and citizen life. Aswat Nissa, for example, has conducted a study showing the link between the burden of unpaid work and the access of women to the highest political positions.<sup>354</sup>

Women engaged in unpaid care work might do so at the expense of their time to participate actively in the economic and political life of the country. In particular, domestic activities (e.g. cleaning, cooking, taking care of children and/or elders) are time-consuming and prevent women from participating in political and trade union meetings, even during weekends and public holidays. From a certain point of view, unpaid care work represents a barrier for women wishing to engage in politics.<sup>355</sup> Unpaid care work has the same negative effects on women's careers in trade unions.<sup>356</sup> In addition, unpaid care work is a low-skilled activity and does not provide women with the required experience and networks that could help them to successfully build a professional career.

According to the Global Gender Gap Index 2018, Tunisia ranks 78 out of 147 countries in terms of gender equal pay.<sup>357</sup> A 2016 survey conducted by the Arab Institute of Business Executives (IACE) among a sample of 300 private companies,<sup>358</sup> revealed that the wage gap between women and men was 14.6%. The equal pay day is thus on 22 February, which means that a Tunisian woman must continue to work until 22 February 2017 to earn the equivalent of an annual salary of a man who would have worked until 31 December 2016 (two additional months of work to have the same wage). Lastly, a study has highlighted the link between tax evasion and reduced funding of public services, sustainable infrastructure, and social protection, which are the main drivers of gender equality.<sup>359</sup>

## The case of rural women

Rural women represent 32.3% of the total female population.<sup>360</sup> Many feminist associations have outlined the hard living conditions of these women, who spend a great part of their day in unpaid care work.<sup>361</sup> Most women living in the Tunisian rural areas also engage in unpaid family labour. This is due to the fact that farming generates activities without remuneration.<sup>362,363</sup> Even though unpaid family labour is indirectly remunerated through the family income channels, the literature suggests that its real danger lies in the fact that it is work which is not accounted for but is rather taken for granted.<sup>364</sup> In addition, rural women are in charge of bringing water to households, a typical rural non-remunerated task; it is hard because it means walking for hours, being exposed to heat in summer and cold in winter.

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354 Aswat Nissa (2018), *Les bonnes pratiques en matière de l'intégration du genre dans les partis politiques*, Heinrich Boll Stiftung, Tunis

355 Aswat Nissa (2018), *Les bonnes pratiques en matière de l'intégration du genre dans les partis politiques*, Heinrich Boll Stiftung, Tunis, p. 9

356 Mahfoudh Dorra (1988). *La syndicalisation des femmes en Tunisie*, in *Les femmes et la modernité*, Peuples méditerranéens, Tunis, pp. 44-45

357 World Economic Forum (2019), *The Global Gender Gap Report 2018*, WEF, Geneva

358 Institut Arabe des Chefs d'Entreprises (2016), IACE, Tunis

359 Christian Gonzales, Sonali Jain-Chandra, Kalpana Kochhar, Monique Newiak, Tlek Zeinullayev, *Catalyst for Change: Empowering Women and Tackling Income Inequality*, IMF, New York, October 2015

360 Institut National des Statistiques (2015), *Recensement Général de la population et de l'Habitat 2014*, INS, Tunis

361 Observatoire Asma Fanni pour l'égalité des chances et la citoyenneté des femmes (2014), *Enquête sur les conditions de travail des femmes en milieu rural*, ATFD, Tunis

362 Ezzaddean El Safi. (2 November 2016). *Tunisia's Negligence of Small Farmers Is Creating a Food Crisis*. Open Society Found - tions.

363 Fact sheet: Tunisia – Women, agriculture and rural development. (1994). Food and Agriculture Organization.

364 Gaelle Ferrant, Luca Maria Pesandi, & Keiko Nowacka (2014). *Unpaid Care Work: The Missing Link in the Analysis of Gender Gaps in Labour Outcomes*. OECD Development Centre.

Concretely, in the poorest rural families, there is a tradition of taking young girls out of the school system in order to send them to work in the fields to pick fruit, harvest olives, etc.),<sup>365</sup> a type of work poorly paid or unpaid. Even if this activity is paid, it is considered as a 'maouna'<sup>366</sup> and is not regulated by labour rules.<sup>367</sup> Rural girls exposed to school drop-out are more likely to be inactive and spend more time to unpaid work, when growing up.

Women in Tunisia spend an average of 7.2 hours on paid and unpaid work per day, as opposed to 5.9 hours per day for men,<sup>368</sup> with approximately an average of 5 hours per day being spent by women on activities that are not accounted for in the traditional labour market.<sup>369</sup>

Among all Tunisian women, only 26.420% are either formally employed or actively searching for a job.<sup>370</sup> This economic participation rate remains very low as compared to 70% of men in the country. Furthermore, 6.5% of the female labour force is found to be contributing as family workers as relatives of self-employed individuals, without formally qualifying as a partner in the company due to the lower commitment to the establishment.<sup>371</sup> This percentage, when compared with that of men (only 3.3%), is suggested to be another expression of traditional patriarchal family roles whereby women are less likely to be engaged in formal labour due to their culturally perceived role as caregivers.

A 2013 study on the Tunisian barriers to entry to the labour market shows data on the young entrants to the labour market and the types of challenges faced in light of their different educational and contextual backgrounds.<sup>372</sup> Findings from the study show that women coming from cities as opposed to women raised in rural areas, as well as those with higher levels of education, are less likely to be involved in unpaid work.<sup>373</sup>

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365 Ministère de la Femme, de la Famille et de l'Enfance, UNWomen (2015), Etude sur le travail des femmes en milieu rural et leur accès à la protection sociale, Tunis

366 Traditional help to family members or neighbours

367 Bouhdiba Sofiane (2018), Six millions de femmes, L'Harmattan, Paris

368 En Tunisie, la femme travaille 7,2 h/jour contre 5,9 h/jour pour l'homme. Webdo.tn. 22 Juin 2016.

369 Jean-Yves Moisseron, Pauline Chabbert, et al. (2017). L'accès et le maintien des femmes à l'emploi de qualité au Maroc, en Tunisie et en Turquie. Agence Française de Développement (AFD).

370 Institut National des Statistiques (2018) International Labour Organization, ILOSTAT, (2016)

371 *ibid.*

372 Michele Mansuy, & Patrick Werquin. (2015). Labour Market Entry in Tunisia: The Gender Gap. Work4Youth; Publication series No. 31. Youth Employment Programme: Employment Policy Department, International Labour Office.

373 Michele Mansuy, & Patrick Werquin. (2015).

# RESPONDING TO UNPAID WORK

The need to respond to unpaid work arose from increasing evidence that heavy and unequal unpaid work is a barrier to gender equality and human rights.<sup>374</sup> As a result, the 3Rs framework was developed by Diane Elson, and has been widely adopted when it comes to addressing women's unpaid work. The 3Rs framework categorizes unpaid work interventions under recognition, reduction and redistribution.<sup>375,376</sup> Oxfam, the Institute of Development Studies and ActionAid then added a fourth category: the representation of carers in decision-making.<sup>377</sup> Therefore, interventions in the area of unpaid work aim to:

1. Gain recognition of unpaid work and its contribution to the household and economy;
2. Reduce heavy unpaid work, particularly for less economically privileged women;
3. Redistribute care responsibilities more equitably between men and women but also between the household, the community, the market and the state;
4. Enhance the representation of carers in decision-making spaces at the communal, local and national levels.

## RECOGNITION

Women's unpaid work is highly invisible to policy-makers, researchers and programmatic interventions. The invisibility and undervaluing of women's unpaid work is largely due to the unavailability of time-use data and to the exclusion of unpaid work from conventional macro-economic models.<sup>378</sup> In order to reduce the burden of heavy and unequal unpaid work, it is important to start by measuring unpaid work and understanding factors that affect it, including gender-based roles and responsibilities, household dynamics and factors determining women's time, mobility and agency.

Even though methods have been developed to value unpaid work in satellite accounts, as discussed previously, the resulting data is rarely used in designing economic policy.<sup>379</sup> For instance, unpaid work measurement is far from being mainstreamed. The invisibility of unpaid work hinders its recognition as a core issue in developing policies and designing development interventions across different sectors.<sup>380</sup>

Moreover, the availability of data about women's unpaid work does not guarantee a recognition of this work at a social and communal level. Social perceptions normalize women's unpaid work, thus prohibiting a critical public discourse about it. Consequently, recognition of unpaid work requires awareness-raising and capacity building for the community, as well as for policy makers.

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374 Maestre M. and Thorper J. (2017). Unpaid Care Work – Facilitating Change Towards Women's Economic Empowerment When Market Systems Care. Institute of Development Studies and Oxfam

375 Elson, D. (2008). The Three R's of unpaid work: recognition, reduction and redistribution'. Expert Group Meeting on Unpaid Work, Economic Development and Human Well-Being, United Nations Development Programme in New York

376 Chopra, D. (2015), Unpaid Care Work: Time to 'Recognise, Reduce and Redistribute'. Available at: <https://www.scribd.com/document/268697119/Unpaid-Care-Work-Time-to-Recognize-Reduce-andRedistribute-by-Deepta-Chopra>

377 Parvez Butt, A., Remme, J., Rost, L., & KoissyKpein, S. A. (2018). Exploring the Need for GenderEquitable Fiscal Policies for a H - man Economy: Evidence from Uganda and Zimbabwe. Oxfam.

378 Narayan, L. (2017). Contextualising Unpaid Care Work and Women Empowerment. International Journal of Applied Research, 3(7), 654-659

379 Elson, D. (2016). Equity and Development through a Gender Lens. Presentation at the Leontief Prize Award Ceremony

380 Dewan, R. (2017). Invisible Work, Invisible Workers. The Sub-Economies of Unpaid Work and Paid Work - Action Research on Women's Unpaid Labour. Action Aid

Consequently, several core actions were identified in recognizing women's unpaid work:<sup>381</sup>

- i. Understanding the nature, characteristics and trends in unpaid work through conducting research, including collecting time-use data and researching factors affecting unpaid work. Examples of relevant statistical indicators include girls' dropout rate, access to health facilities, and electrification rates<sup>382</sup>
- ii. Valuing unpaid work and creating satellite accounts to show how unpaid work variations affect the economy<sup>383</sup>
- iii. Raising awareness on unpaid work, through promoting the appreciation of carers and their work, and challenging traditional gender norms in educational curricula and in the media
- iv. Capturing unpaid care work in gender-responsive budget initiatives and encouraging development actors to address unpaid work in their programming.

Assisting and supporting unpaid workers: an example is paid maternity leave, as instituting maternity leave recognizes a woman's care responsibilities and offers her income and job security while she performs care work. Another form of support is to offer unpaid workers training and knowledge concerning their work, to reduce drudgery.<sup>384</sup>

## REDUCTION

Unpaid care work often requires difficult and time-consuming tasks, knowing that it is possible to reduce the time and effort required to perform those tasks.<sup>385</sup> Investment in labour-saving technologies, infrastructure and services within the household or at the national and communal levels can reduce women's unpaid work.<sup>386</sup> For example, a household investment in clean cooking stoves, washing machines and vacuum cleaners would reduce the required time to perform domestic tasks. Similarly, a reliable infrastructure that provides clean water, sanitation and electricity would reduce the time that women spend on unpaid activities such as fetching water or washing clothes. Additionally, public services such as childcare or health services reduce time spent on unpaid care activities.

The effectiveness of reduction strategies greatly depends on their accessibility. Public investment in infrastructure and services should rely on time-use data, as the inequality between men and women's engagement in unpaid work intersects with class and urban/rural inequalities.<sup>387</sup> For instance, if public childcare is available but unaffordable to low-income women, its contribution to reducing unpaid work would be minimal.

Providing care services transfers production from unpaid to paid workers, in the public or private sectors.<sup>388</sup> In this case, economies of scale might reduce the total amount of required work.<sup>389</sup> However, it is important to note that service provision aiming at reducing women's unpaid work often creates low-quality low-paid jobs in the care economy, and that women often are employed to perform these jobs.<sup>390</sup>

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381 Narayan, L. (2017). Contextualising Unpaid Care Work and Women Empowerment. *International Journal of Applied Research*, 3(7), 654-659 401 Chopra, D. (2015).

382 Sida (2010) Quick Guide to What and How: Unpaid Care Work. OECD Women's Economic Empowerment Series

383 Ferrant, G., Pesando, L. and Nowacka, K. (2014). Unpaid Care Work: The missing link in the analysis of gender gaps in labour outcomes. OECD Development Centre

384 Dewan, R. (2017).

385 Chopra, D. (2015).

386 Elson, D. (2016).

387 Ibid. (2016).

388 Ibid. (2016).

389 Ibid. (2016).

390 Ibid. (2016).

Consequently, a number of core actions were identified in reducing women's unpaid work:<sup>391</sup>

- i. Improving task productivity, through making technology available to unpaid workers and training women to use it
- ii. Expanding access to key infrastructure, such as providing electricity, safe transportation means and clean and safe water to households<sup>412</sup>
- iii. Maintaining and expanding core public services, such as childcare and healthcare services.

## REDISTRIBUTION

Unpaid work is unequally distributed; it undermines women's and girls' rights, limits their capabilities and restricts their opportunities and choices. Given that eliminating unpaid work is neither feasible nor desirable, there is a need to redistribute unpaid work more equitably among actors in the household, community, market and government.

A fair redistribution of unpaid domestic and care work would require men to perform more of the activities that are traditionally done by women. The development process in most countries has focused much more on increasing female labour participation in paid work than on increasing male participation in unpaid domestic and care work.<sup>392</sup> Approaches to redistribution of unpaid work often start at the household level, as they try to redistribute domestic and care work fairly among household members. It is important to note that redistribution is not restricted to the household; for example, a fairer redistribution of childcare work happens when employers provide family-friendly workspaces for parents, when communities create community nurseries, or when the government subsidizes childcare for low-income mothers.<sup>393</sup>

Regardless of reduction and redistribution strategies, domestic and care work will always be needed within the household. Given that patriarchal norms always result in women performing the majority of this work, advocacy is suggested as way to catalyze gender norms change.<sup>394</sup> For instance, women in the MENA region undertake 80 to 90 percent of unpaid care work.<sup>395</sup>

Consequently, several core actions were identified in redistributing women's unpaid work:<sup>396</sup>

- i. Designing policy interventions that are favorable to burden-sharing; as an example, instituting paternal leave encourages fathers to contribute to care work.<sup>397</sup> These kind of policies send a message to employers and to new parents that gender equality and parental care are socially valued.<sup>398</sup>
- ii. Expanding access to healthcare and childcare and ensuring a high quality of care services, especially since access to paid care services is highly unequal.<sup>399</sup>
- iii. Promoting the elimination of gender wage gaps, reducing the hours of paid work for both men and women,<sup>400</sup> and establishing flexible working arrangements,<sup>401</sup> to allow for men and women to combine employment and caregiving.<sup>402</sup>

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391 Narayan, L. (2017). Contextualising Unpaid Care Work and Women Empowerment. *International Journal of Applied Research*, 3(7), 654-659 <sup>412</sup> Dewan, R. (2017). <sup>413</sup> Chopra, D. (2015).

392 Elson, D. (2016).

393 Dewan, R. (2017).

394 Ibid. (2017).

395 Woetzel, Jonathan. The Power of Parity: How Advancing Women's Equality can Add \$12 trillion to Global Growth. eSocial Sciences.

396 Narayan, L. (2017).

397 Razavi, S. (2016). Redistributing unpaid care and sustaining quality care services: A prerequisite for gender equality. UN Women

398 Haas, L., & Rostgaard, T. (2011). Fathers' rights to paid parental leave in the Nordic countries: consequences for the gendered division of leave. *Community, Work & Family*, 14(2), 177-195.

399 Razavi, S. (2016).

400 Elson, D. (2016).

401 Razavi, S. (2016).

402 Ibid. (2016)

- iv. Paying child-related welfare benefits to carers, whether men or women.
- v. Raising awareness and conducting advocacy campaigns to counter discriminatory perceptions and norms.

## **REPRESENTATION OF CARERS IN DECISION MAKING**

Solutions to unpaid work should integrate women's voices, as women recognize the value of their unpaid work and represent their demands for change.<sup>403</sup> Women's empowerment requires that they represent themselves through individual and collective action.<sup>404</sup> Unpaid workers' self-representation would improve their negotiating powers in making decisions related to unpaid work.<sup>405</sup>

Consequently, several core actions were identified in representing carers in decision making:

- i. Benefiting from women's social capital, through establishing support networks and advocacy groups for unpaid women workers;
- ii. Setting quotas for women and leadership and decision-making positions at the communal, local and national levels.

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403 ActionAid (2013). Unpaid Care Work Resource Guide

404 Ibid (2013).

405 Maestre M. and Thorper J. (2017). 428 Ibid (2017).

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

## GAPS IN THE LITERATURE

An intersectional approach to the identification of unpaid work trends and their implications for women necessitates the analysis of care work from various perspectives, along with the use of contextualized methodologies which could inform specific systems and structures. Although the literature on unpaid care work is abundant and taps into those various perspectives, there is need for more contextualization and specification in the research, empirically and theoretically. The challenge to this is the scarcity of context-specific data, particularly related to MENA countries and the MENA region. However, some systems-thinking approaches are beginning to emerge and propose context-specific and intensive processes of identifying root causes of unfair unpaid care work trends while clarifying potential entry points of active intervention. This type of active and fast-paced research is one of the literature fields to be explored and further exploited, having as advantages context and time-specific results, and as a disadvantage the missing in-depth theoretical and empirical investigation which is usually explored in academic research.

## RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are designed to invite researchers to find answers that could guide programme designers, policy makers and government institutions when seeking to delve into the perception and the value of women's work. Based on the literature review, the MENA region is the world's region with the lowest number of publications in the field of labour markets.<sup>406</sup> The previous chapters highlight the need to collect and gather more data around women's informal, formal and unpaid work participation, as well as their time-use patterns. Some of the research questions that haven't been answered in literature (or are outdated) are:

<b>ON THE IMPLICATIONS OF FEMALE PARTICIPATION IN PAID LABOUR</b>	Industries and jobs that have been created to cater for the unpaid work that women do in the household
	Figures and statistics about women's contribution to the economy by participating in the labour market
	Typology of industries and types of services created that come as a direct result to women's participation in the paid labour market
	What is the cost for governments to provide social care services to families in support for women's participation in formal labour markets?
<b>ON THE CHARACTERISTICS OF FEMALE EMPLOYMENT</b>	Data and figures on informal employment of women compared to men in non-agricultural employment
	Data and figures on informal employment of women compared to men in agricultural employment
<b>ON THE TYPOLOGY AND CHARACTERISTICS OF HOUSEHOLD LABOUR</b>	Typology of tasks that women carry out in the household and time women spend doing these tasks
	Characteristics of individuals and households who undertake unpaid work
	Differences in gender-based division of labour based on class, geography, and cultural/religious norms and beliefs
	Time-use surveys to understand and recognize the tasks and time women put into unpaid work in the household

406 See Angel, Urdinola, Hilger, and Irwins, 2010

<b>ON THE REGULATORY FRAMEWORK</b>	What are all the provisions, articles and chapters in the legal and regulatory framework that directly and indirectly hinder women’s participation in the economy?
<b>ON GENDER NORMS AND UNPAID WORK</b>	What are the specific milestones (political and economic) in each country that contributed to the current (slow) progress in the gender-based division of labour?
	What are the perceptions of women who do not wish to bear children or form a family?
	What kind of decisions and authority do women have inside the household?
<b>ON ACCESSIBILITY AND PROVISION OF SERVICES</b>	Is there a link between women’s power at home and their power in public?
	What are the care services provided by the state and the market to support the redistribution of unpaid work?
	<p>What are the needs of women in each country (and region: rural/urban)?</p> <p>An assessment of basic needs and requirements for redistributing unpaid work</p>

## ANNEX A – MEASURING UNPAID WORK

This section presents an overview of the existing tools and methods used to measure unpaid work. The private nature of unpaid work led it to be ignored by most scientists, particularly economists, who seldom look into the quantification of unpaid work and its effect on economic interactions.<sup>407</sup> Scholarly discussions on unpaid work were initiated in the sixties and took thirty years to become a topic at the United Nation's Social Summit (Copenhagen, March 1995) and the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, September 1995), where the integration of unpaid work in national statistical and economic accounts was largely advocated.<sup>408</sup> Conventional views on women's unpaid work started being challenged by a body of literature aiming to count women's unpaid work in statistics, accounting for it in economic models and taking it into consideration in policy-making. The need to measure unpaid work stems from the idea that if unpaid work remains unmeasured and unaccounted for in national accounts, it would be challenging to design and write policies seeking to value and/or change the way we understand unpaid work.

Understanding unpaid work entails research projects that do not only study unpaid work but also look at the above-mentioned factors that affect it. Some of the common questions that unpaid work research studies should be able to answer are:<sup>409</sup>

- What roles do men and women have in households and in the community?
- How do the different roles that men and women have interact with the market system?
- Who has access to and control over resources, services and infrastructure?
- How do attitudes, values, and norms affect the gender distribution of roles?
- Who performs care work?
- Where is care work performed?
- What services and infrastructure are available to support care workers?
- Who pays for the cost of providing care?
- When is care work required?

In answering the above research questions, a multitude of quantitative, qualitative, participatory, visual and action-oriented methodologies are used. These include:<sup>410</sup>

- Quantitative time surveys
- Valuation of unpaid work
- Participatory action methodologies
- Care diamond map

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407 Joke Swiebel (1999). Unpaid Work and Policy Making: Towards a broader perspective of work and employment. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

408 Joke Swiebel (1999).

409 Mar Maestre and Jodie Thorpe, (2016). Understanding Unpaid Care Work to Empower Women in Market Systems Approaches, The BEAM Exchange, accessed from <https://www.beamexchange.org>. © 2016 The BEAM Exchange

410 Mar Maestre and Jodie Thorpe, (2016). Understanding Unpaid Care Work to Empower Women in Market Systems Approaches, The BEAM Exchange, accessed from <https://www.beamexchange.org>. © 2016 The BEAM Exchange

It is important to note that the above model only includes measurement of unpaid care work, and it excludes other forms of unpaid work, notably when it takes place on family farms or in family enterprises and entails productive activities.<sup>411</sup> Additionally, the tools below only measure unpaid work, rather than the factors affecting it.

## QUANTITATIVE TIME SURVEYS

When seeking to measure labour, traditional economics looks at the hours spent at work, the level of productivity, and the financial remuneration in exchange for the individual's work.<sup>412</sup> Similarly, time measurement is used to quantify other tasks that are important in individuals' daily lives and wellbeing, most of which are domestic, such as household chores and care for children and the elderly.

Consequently, time-user surveys (TUS) are commonly used as a measurement tool for unpaid work. The method relies on statistical observation of a person's activities over a certain period of time to establish time-use patterns.<sup>413</sup> This method allows for the quantification and a detailed gender-based description of paid and unpaid activities. Even though TUS are becoming more common in national statistical systems,<sup>414</sup> they are still far from being mainstreamed in household surveys, as they are seen to be time-consuming. For instance, the World Bank includes time-use as an 'optional' topic in its handbook for designing household survey questionnaire.<sup>415</sup> Additionally, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) stated that unpaid work is not measured in countries' GDP as it is difficult to value.<sup>416</sup>

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411 *ibid.*

412 Miranda, V. (2011), 'Cooking, Caring and Volunteering: Unpaid Work Around the World', OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers, No. 116, OECD Publishing. 437 Miranda, V. (2011)

413 Mar Maestre and Jodie Thorpe, (2016). Understanding Unpaid Care Work to Empower Women in Market Systems Approaches, The BEAM Exchange, accessed from <https://www.beamexchange.org>. © 2016 The BEAM Exchange

414 Unpaid care work connection 2009

415 Exploring The Need for Gender-Equitable Fiscal Policies For A Human Economy Evidence From Uganda And Zimbabwe

416 Exploring The Need for Gender-Equitable Fiscal Policies For A Human Economy Evidence From Uganda And Zimbabwe

Below are three examples of quantitative time-use tools:<sup>417</sup>

TOOL	DESCRIPTION	METHODOLOGY	VALUE	LIMITATIONS
Household care survey (HCS)	Survey measuring and monitoring: Time-use by gender and age, Access to services and infrastructure, Attitudes and norms	Quantitative household questionnaire	Baseline data to monitor changes after interventions  Evidence for advocacy on government and business to provide care services	Needs a few months to be completed Needs professional consultants Expensive Excludes unpaid work in the informal sector
ActionAid Diary, and other time-use surveys	Survey measuring time-use by gender, socioeconomic status and geographical location	Quantitative, participatory and uses visuals	Measure for time-use differentials on paid and unpaid activities, as well as leisure	Time-consuming  Complicated to administer Does not usually account for multi-tasking
			Diagnosis for time consuming tasks	Has variable categories
Time-use Visualization Instrument	Participatory visual instrument that captures time-use and simulates discussions	Quantitative & qualitative, participatory, uses visuals	Helps participants recall activities, and visualize emotions and simultaneity  Can be used in individuals' interviews or with groups in workshops	Time-consuming  Requires facilitation  Discussions within the session are not recorded on the instrument

Time-use surveys have not always accurately captured interpersonal care that is performed simultaneously with other activities, or that entails the carer being on call. Given that many women multi-task, especially when performing care work, time-use surveys often underestimated the time that is spent on unpaid work.<sup>418</sup> For example, women would often only report attending customers at a store even if they are supervising their children at the same time. As a result, Oxfam started to measure in its Household Care Survey the 'hours of care responsibility' by asking respondents not only to report their hours of direct care, where they dedicate their time to one care activity, but also to estimate their 'care responsibility hours', which measure the time when they look after children and dependent adults while doing other activities. This approach allows for a better understanding of the level of multitasking done by women in care provision, and of the high time demand for care responsibilities.

417 Mar Maestre and Jodie Thorpe, (2016). Understanding Unpaid Care Work to Empower Women in Market Systems Approaches, The BEAM Exchange, accessed from <https://www.beamexchange.org>. © 2016 The BEAM Exchange

418 Mar Maestre and Jodie Thorpe, (2016).

## VALUATION OF UNPAID WORK

Since 1993, the UN Systems of National Accounts (SNA)<sup>419</sup> suggests measuring and including unpaid economic work in the GDP estimates as satellite accounts, and highlights a number of challenges to measuring and valuing unpaid work.<sup>420</sup> Valuing unpaid work uses two main approaches. The output approach estimates the market price of final unpaid work products to value that work. The input approach measures hours of care work and assigns a price to these hours using a comparable wage rate based on opportunity cost method or market replacement cost method. The opportunity cost method estimates the value of lost salary for women when they engage in unpaid work. The replacement cost method estimates the replacement cost of women's unpaid work, by comparing it to market-based alternatives, such as the cost of childcare or hiring a cleaner.<sup>421</sup> Therefore, the cost differs based on the person engaged in unpaid work rather than the type of unpaid work done.<sup>422,423</sup> GDP satellite accounts estimates allow a comparison of the value of unpaid work to that of the country's economy.

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419 The System of National Accounts (SNA) is the internationally agreed standard set of recommendations on how to compile measures of economic activity, [www.unstats.un.org](http://www.unstats.un.org)

420 European Commission, International Monetary Fund, Organization for Economic Co-operation and development, United Nations, World Bank, 'System of National Accounts 2008'.

421 Mar Maestre and Jodie Thorpe, (2016).

422 Anila Shariah, (2014). Magnitude and Determinants of unpaid work in a local setting: Implications on human wellbeing. Mahatma Gandhi University. Chap 3

423 Zilanawala (2013) constructs an empirical measure of time poverty as an indirect measurement of unpaid work. She considers time poverty to be a direct result of high unpaid work load.

## PARTICIPATORY ACTION METHODOLOGIES

Qualitative participatory methodologies allow for a deeper understanding of women’s unpaid work and for creating discussions around response options.<sup>424</sup> Below are examples of such participatory action methodologies.<sup>425</sup>

TOOL	DESCRIPTION	METHODOLOGY	VALUE	LIMITATIONS
Rapid Care Analysis	Exercises for the rapid assessment of unpaid care work in households and communities	Qualitative action research consisting of a 1-day focus group with women and men	Shows the interaction between women’s unpaid care work and their capacity for participating in programmes Results in practical proposals Leads to tangible short-term change Generates recognition in the communities	Non-rigorous time-use estimates Small sample size Static assessment that does not measure change
Gender Action Learning System	Community-led empowerment methodology to inspire women and men to take action	Qualitative participatory action research using visual methods	Data are based on communities’ priorities Addresses social norms and gender-based roles	Long-term approach that only works with a small group of people

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424 Mar Maestre and Jodie Thorpe, (2016). Understanding Unpaid Care Work to Empower Women in Market Systems Approaches, The BEAM Exchange, accessed from <https://www.beamexchange.org>. © 2016 The BEAM Exchange

425 Mar Maestre and Jodie Thorpe, (2016). Understanding Unpaid Care Work to Empower Women in Market Systems Approaches, The BEAM Exchange, accessed from <https://www.beamexchange.org>. © 2016 The BEAM Exchange

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