

Care work and care jobs for the future of decent work

Key findings and messages

Asia and the Pacific

Demand for care work is constant with a shift from childcare to older persons care

- In 2015, 1.1 billion people were in need of care (992 million children under the age of 15, and 110 million older persons).
- By 2030, the number of care recipients is predicted to remain at 1.1 billion (944 million children under the age of 15, and 163 million older persons). The additional 53 million older persons represent more than half of the predicted global increase in the number of older persons (100 million).
- Asia and the Pacific is predicted to experience the world's highest increase in older person dependency ratios, from 3.7 per cent in 2015 to 4.9 per cent in 2030 (i.e. for every 100 potential unpaid carers there will be almost 5 people aged at or above their healthy life expectancy at 60 years to be cared for).
- In 2030, Japan is predicted to register an older person dependency ratio of 12.0 per cent, the third highest in the world. While the same value for China and India, will be, respectively, 6.4 per cent and 4.0 per cent.

Reasons for increasing demand for care workers

- Households have become smaller. In 2018, 44.4 per cent of people in the working age live in nuclear families in Asia and the Pacific.
- In 2018, 3.2 per cent of working-age people in this region live in single-headed households. 74.2 per cent of these households are headed by women, who shoulder both the financial and care responsibilities.
- This result is driven by China (representing 35.9 per cent of the regional working-age population) where 64.0 per cent of the population aged over 15 living in single-headed households has a woman head, the third lowest estimate in the world. The same value for India is 83.8 per cent.
- In Asia and the Pacific, 31.2 per cent of the working-age population is living in extended households, the second highest value across regions.

Unpaid care work is vital to human well-being and economies but remains invisible and unrecognized

- In 2013, land-marking international labour statistic standards set out that unpaid care is work.
- Unpaid carers meet the large majority of care needs across the world.
- In 2018, 8.9 billion hours are spent in unpaid care work every day in Asia and the Pacific. This is equivalent to 1.1 billion people working eight hours per day with no remuneration.

- Were such services to be valued on the basis of an hourly minimum wage, they would range between 3.5 per cent of the GDP in India and 41.3 per cent of the GDP in Australia (see figure 1 Annex for detailed country data).

Women perform the large majority of unpaid care work

- Across Asia and the Pacific, women perform 80 per cent of the total of hours of unpaid care work, namely on average 4.1 times more time than men. The time spent by women in unpaid care work increases with the presence of young children.
- In Asia and the Pacific, men perform the lowest share of unpaid care work of all regions (1 hour and 4 minutes), with 28 minutes in Pakistan (or 8.0 per cent of men’s total working time) and only 31 minutes in India (7.9 per cent). The regional average for women is 4 hours and 22 minutes.
- When both work for pay or profit and unpaid care work are accounted together, the working day is on average longer for women (7 hours and 43 minutes) than it is for men (6 hours and 57 minutes). This makes women consistently time poorer than men.
- Men’s contribution to unpaid care work has increased over the past 20 years in 3 countries in this region, namely Australia (1.4 minutes per day), Japan (0.3 minutes per day) and New Zealand (0.5 minutes per day).
- Men’s contribution to unpaid care work has decreased over the past 20 year in Republic of Korea (-1.3 minutes per day), Mongolia (-1.0 minutes per day) and Thailand (-4.0 minutes per day) (see Figure 2 annex).

Engagement in unpaid care work adversely affects women’s employment prospects

- Unpaid care work constitutes the main barrier to women’s participation in labour markets, while a more equal sharing of unpaid care work between men and women is associated with higher levels of women’s labour force participation.
- In 2018, 49.5 per cent of women in the working age declared that are either unavailable for employment or not seeking a job due to unpaid care work. This rate is the second highest after the Arab States. Men in the same conditions are only 7.1 per cent.
- Women living with children less than 6 years of age have the lowest employment rates (41.3 per cent) compared not only with fathers (89.3 per cent), and non-fathers (79.8 per cent), but also with non-mothers (47.9 per cent) of children aged 0–5 years.
- In Asia and the Pacific, there is a “motherhood employment penalty” for women living with young children. This contrasts with a “fatherhood employment premium”, with fathers reporting the highest employment-to-population ratios throughout the world.
- The “parenthood employment gap” in this region (namely, the difference between the employment-to-population ratio for fathers and that for mothers of children aged 0–5) is 48 per cent, which is the second highest across regions.
- In Asia and the Pacific, the motherhood employment penalty, measured as the gap between the employment-to-population ratio for women living with and women living without children aged 0–5, is found to be highest in Thailand (14.3 percentage points). While the same value for China is 8.3 percentage and 6.6 percentage points in India.
- Asia and the Pacific displays the largest regional disparity between the labour force status of rural and urban women living with dependants. In this region, rural women carers are around 6 percentage points more likely to be outside the labour force compared with urban

women carers. This is determined mainly by China where 71.6 per cent of urban women carers are employed as opposed to 44.4 per cent of rural women carers. China is the country where women living in rural areas are most penalized.

Unpaid care work is hampering women's job quality

- Unpaid care work is one of the main obstacles to women moving into better quality jobs. It affects the number of hours spent by women in work for pay or profit, impacting their earnings.
- In Asia and the Pacific, employed mothers of young children work shorter hours for pay or profit than adult men and non-mothers of children aged 0–5 years. In particular, women with 3 or more children under 6 years, work 6 hours less than women without children under 6 years, 7 hours and 42 minutes less than men without children below 6 and 6 hours and 30 minutes less than men in the same situation (with 3 or more children below 6).
- Women with care responsibilities are also more likely to be self-employed or contributing family workers, to work in the informal economy and to be less likely to contribute to social security than other women and men.

Care work is a significant source of employment globally, particularly for women

- 166 million (93 million women and 73 million men) are engaged in care work globally. This represents 8.7 per cent of total employment, or 13.3 per cent of female employment.
- 61 million care workers are employed in education, 32 million in health and social work.
- 36 million are domestic workers, of which 20 million are women. There are 25 million domestic workers in China and half of them are women. Often, these women have low education level and move from rural to urban areas to escape poverty.
- In Asia and the Pacific, the proportions of women among domestic workers are the second lowest globally (57 per cent). The majority of men domestic workers are in Asia and the Pacific (15.5 out of 20.9 million).
- 28 million non-care workers are in care sectors and 9 million care workers work outside care sectors.

Poor job quality for care workers leads to poor quality care work

- This region is characterized by low levels of care employment (around 10 per cent of total employment).
- Not only is the care workforce small, but it is also male-dominated: with the exception of the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam, women care workers are outnumbered by men. Pakistan has the highest proportion of employed in health and social (15 per cent) in the region.
- Care workers are often employed by the households and have therefore less protection: almost the totality of domestic workers are informal in Brunei and Sri Lanka. In China and India the share is around 60 per cent.
- A significant proportion (around 30 per cent) of care workers in health and social work and education are informal.

- In countries where health-care systems are overly reliant on community health workers, the rate of informality in health and social work is higher than that in education, as is the case in India and Myanmar.
- Care workers frequently migrate: Indonesian women tend to migrate to Japan to work as domestic workers, Chinese doctors and teachers are likely to migrate to OECD countries.
- Whether nurses work in the health sector or in long-term care also impacts wages. In New Zealand, nurses in long-term care earn lower wages than those in health-care jobs. In Australia, migrant qualified nurses and midwives work as “assistants in nursing” because their qualifications are not recognized.
- In Asia and the Pacific, women domestic workers work on average 50 hours per week, compared to wage workers who usually work 40 hours per week. The most striking differences are found in Brunei Darussalam and Philippines where women domestic worker work respectively 77 and 64 hours per week while wage workers work 44 and 41 hours per week.

Investment in care policies and care jobs makes sense but still few transformative policies exist:

- In 2016, only 28 per cent of countries in this region met the minimum standards on paid maternity leave set out in the ILO Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183) and 14 countries did not have any statutory leave provision for fathers.
- Only Bhutan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand and Thailand provide tax benefits on childcare expenses.
- Universal access to quality childcare services is far from being realised. In Asia and the Pacific, gross enrolment rates in early childhood education services for children under 3 ranges between 2.4 per cent in Lao People’s Democratic Republic to 65 per cent in the Republic of Korea. Korea is the only country with rates above 50 per cent. In Cambodia and Lao’s the rates are below 10 per cent.
- Republic of Korea stands out as a country with public expenditure on long-term care similar to the most generous European countries with only 5 per cent of people aged 65+ receiving community based long-term care. In New Zealand this share is larger (12 per cent).
- In Asian and Pacific countries, where a strong sense of intergenerational solidarity prevails, around 45 per cent of the population still primarily favours family to provide care.

A high road scenario requires increasing investment in education, health and social work by 2030

- Increasing investments in the care economy in order to implement the high road to care work would result in 278 million jobs (168 million in the care sector and 109 million indirect jobs) in 9 countries in the region by 2030. This is equivalent to additional 182 million jobs compared with 96 million jobs in care sectors in 2015 (an increase of 189 per cent) (see Table 3).
- Meeting the SDGs in education and health so as to close the care deficits would result in total public and private expenditures on care service provision of US\$ 4.5 trillion, an increase of 223 per cent with respect to 2015 levels. Investment in education and health and social work will then correspond to about 9.8 per cent of total projected GDP of the 9 countries in 2030, an increase of 3.4 percentage points with respect to 2015 (see Table 4).
- At a minimum, 11.5 per cent of any additional public spending would be recovered in the short run through fiscal revenues.

- This job creation potential will be driven by additional 39 million jobs in health and social work and 33 million jobs in education compared with 2015 levels. These additional 72 million jobs in the care sectors will in turn generate 109 million indirect jobs.
- If investment in care service provision does not increase by at least 0.5 percentage points of global GDP by 2030 from the current 6.4 per cent of global GDP (as of 2015), deficits in coverage will increase and the working conditions of care workers will deteriorate.

A high road to care work: The key recommendations of the 5R Framework for Decent Care Work

- The high road to care work calls for the provision of good-quality care, benefiting both unpaid carer providers and care recipients, and providing decent work for care workers. The high road is feasible and calls for transformative measures in five main policy areas: care, macroeconomics, labour, social protection and migration.
- Good-quality care employment that promotes the achievement of the SDGs and benefits all involved care workers requires significant investment in both health-care services, social work and education.
- Closing the large coverage gaps in early childhood care and education and in long-term care can become the main driver of the expansion of future employment in care services.
- Financing the expansion of care services requires expanding countries' fiscal space. Investment in quality care services can be a strategic policy intervention to enhance women's economic empowerment through creating decent employment opportunities in care sectors and beyond.
- The policy recommendations and measures needed to achieve the high road to care work should be inspired by a *5R Framework for Decent Care Work*: recognize, reduce and redistribute unpaid care work; reward paid care work, by promoting more and decent work for care workers; and guarantee care workers' representation, social dialogue and collective bargaining.

ANNEX

Figure 1. Value of unpaid care work as a percentage of GDP, US\$ PPP 2011, by sex, latest year

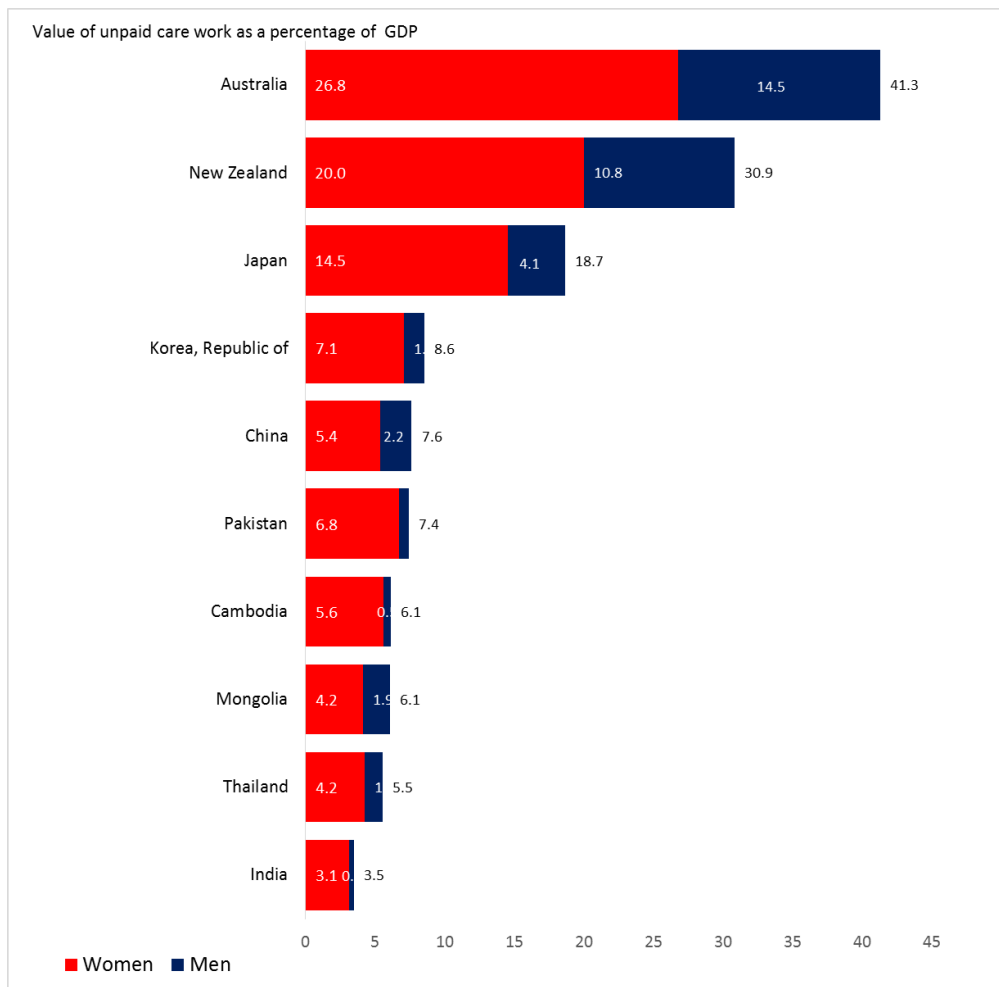


Table 1. Total time spent in unpaid care work and in paid work (minutes per day), by sex, latest year

Country	Women		Men	
	Unpaid work	Paid work	Unpaid work	Paid work
Australia	311	128	172	250
China	237	263	94	360
India	297	160	31	360
Iran, Islamic Republic of	307	40	77	283
Japan	254	165	77	330
Korea, Republic of	188	145	39	246
Mongolia	290	241	139	348
New Zealand	247	143	141	254
Pakistan	287	78	28	322
Taiwan, China	168	221	41	303
Thailand	173	233	56	430

Note: Age group: 15 and older. “–” indicates no data. 67 countries.

Source: Charmes, forthcoming.

Table 2. Total time spent in unpaid care work and in paid work (minutes per day), by sex, latest year

Country	Women						Men					
	1997			2012			1997			2012		
	Unpaid work	Paid work	Total work	Unpaid work	Paid work	Total work	Unpaid work	Paid work	Total work	Unpaid work	Paid work	Total work
Australia	306	165	471	311	172	483	126	268	394	128	250	378
Japan	219	35	254	254	77	331	162	330	492	165	330	495
Korea, Republic of	204	32	236	208	47	255	167	279	446	146	248	394
Mongolia	288	124	412	290	139	429	243	354	597	238	348	586
New Zealand	250	138	388	247	141	388	136	253	389	143	254	397
Thailand	174	49	223	173	56	229	281	372	653	233	430	663

Note: Age group: 15 and older. 1997 is the average year observed in the earliest surveys and 2012 is the average year observed in the latest surveys.

Source: Charmes, forthcoming.

Figure 2. Annual change in minutes per day spent in unpaid care work, by sex, 1997 and 2012

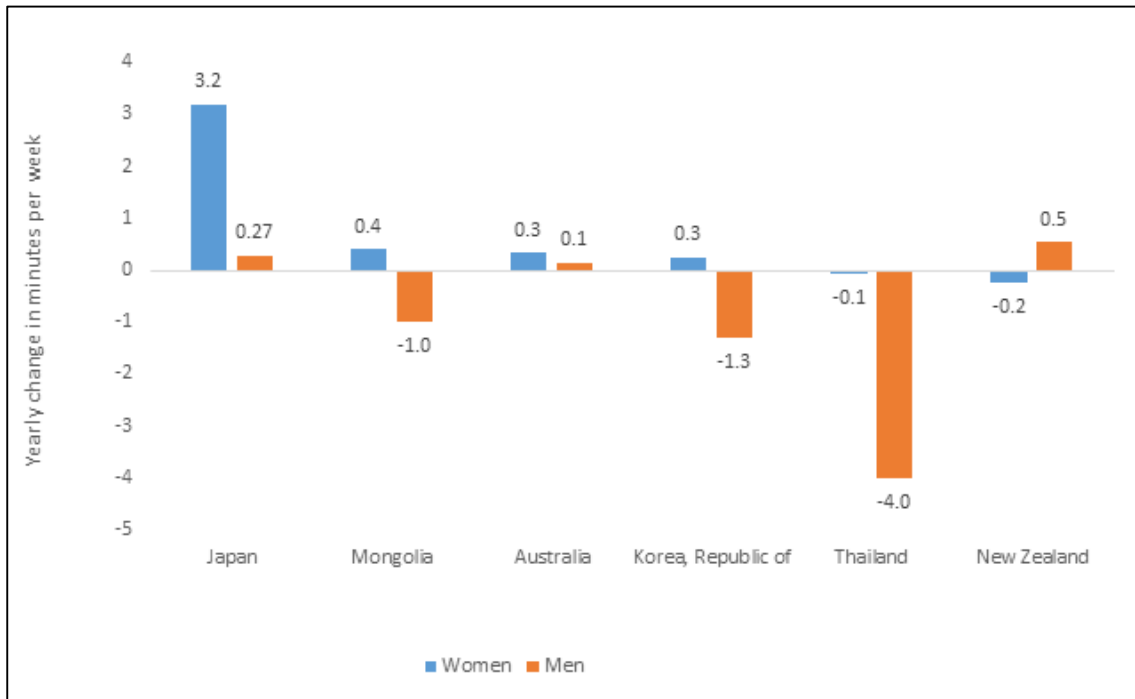


Figure 3. Gross enrolment rates in ECED programmes, 2015

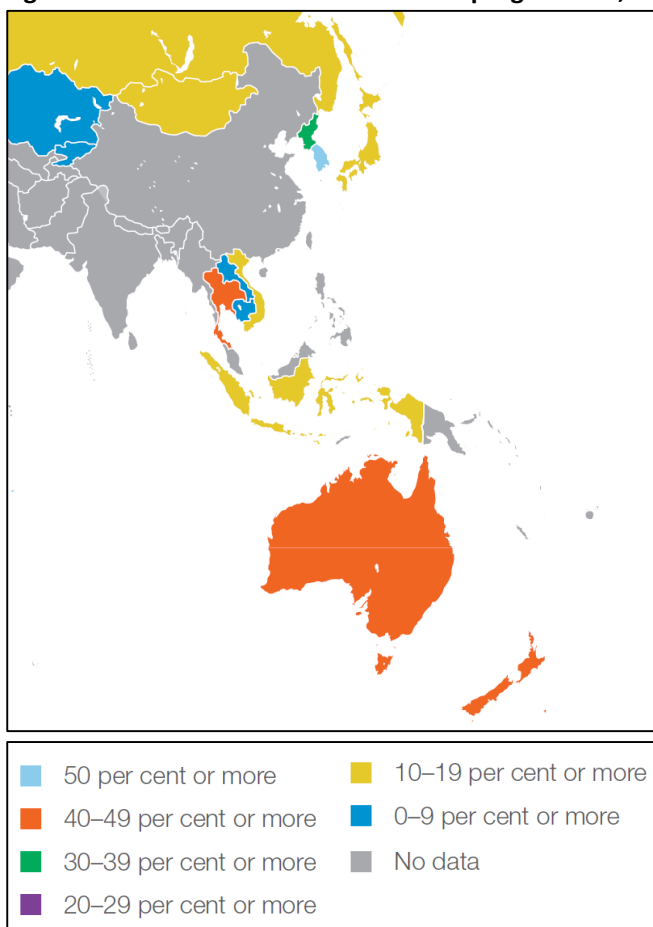


Table 3. Employment generation in education and health and social work in 2015 and 2030 (high road scenario).

Country	2015							2030 High Road									
	Number of jobs (thousands)							Number of jobs (thousands)									
	Education		Health and Social Work		Education and Health and Social Work			Education			Health and Social Wok			Education and Health and Social Work			
	Care workers	Non-care workers	Care workers	Non-care workers	Care workers	Non-care workers	Total	Care workers	Non-care workers	Indirect jobs	Care workers	Non-care workers	Indirect jobs	Care workers	Non-care workers	Indirect jobs	Total
Australia	829	431	1,289	431	2,118	862	2,980	842	292	143	1,849	476	318	2,690	768	461	3,920
Brunei Darussalam	14	2	4	0	18	3	20	16	6	1	8	2	4	24	8	5	37
China	20,813	6,460	12,045	6,460	32,858	12,920	45,778	25,270	7,362	14,925	28,230	8,776	51,728	53,499	16,138	66,653	136,291
India	12,802	1,794	3,249	1,794	16,050	3,589	19,639	30,009	7,029	4,881	14,355	4,283	8,866	44,364	11,312	13,747	69,423
Indonesia	4,877	507	1,000	507	5,877	1,014	6,891	9,593	2,000	10,206	3,526	1,147	5,759	13,119	3,147	15,965	32,231
Japan	1,559	3,354	4,570	3,354	6,129	6,708	12,837	1,891	1,809	291	5,525	1,630	2,560	7,417	3,439	2,851	13,707
Philippines	868	1,042	319	187	1,188	1,229	2,417	1,423	449	3,219	1,656	412	2,873	3,078	862	6,092	10,032
Republic of Korea	1,751	246	649	246	2,400	493	2,893	1,744	880	266	1,543	320	703	3,287	1,200	969	5,456
Vietnam	1,400	934	356	168	1,757	1,101	2,858	1,848	697	1,694	1,731	369	891	3,579	1,066	2,585	7,229
TOTAL	44,913	14,770	23,482	13,148	68,395	27,918	96,313	72,634	20,525	35,626	58,423	17,416	73,702	131,058	37,940	109,328.72	278,327

Table 4. Country-based costs of expansion of care services and tax revenue generation under the high road scenario.

country	2015						2030 High Road											
	Expenditure in 2015 as a % of GDP			Expenditure in million US\$ in 2015			GDP 2015, current USD (millions)	Expenditure in 2030 as a % of GDP			Expenditure in million US\$ in 2030			GDP 2030, current USD (millions)	Tax revenue million USD			
	Education	Health and Social Work	Education and Health and Social Work	Education	Health and Social Work	Education and Health and Social Work		Education	Health and Social Work	Education and Health and Social Work	Education	Health and Social Work	Education and Health and Social Work		Education	Health and Social Work	Total Revenue	
Australia	4%	7%	11%	55,572	92,170	147,742	1,345,383	5%	13%	18%	107,000	260,320	367,320	2,006,289	18,036	42,168	60,204	
Brunei Darussalam	3%	1%	4%	335	143	479	12,930	2%	3%	5%	624	777	1,401	26,227			-	
China	3%	2%	5%	336,902	175,912	512,814	11,064,666	2%	4%	6%	407,000	1,165,000	1,572,000	26,700,000	40,214	147,588	187,802	
India	4%	2%	6%	84,182	32,482	116,665	2,089,865	6%	3%	9%	367,000	204,400	571,400	6,623,876	27,311	19,959	47,270	
Indonesia	2%	0%	2%	15,944	3,283	19,228	861,256	7%	5%	12%	142,000	95,640	237,640	1,904,563	16,044	10,659	26,703	
Japan	4%	6%	10%	174,353	243,993	418,346	4,383,076	5%	20%	25%	257,000	949,000	1,206,000	4,856,635	20,565	103,971	124,536	
Philippines	5%	2%	7%	14,555	5,181	19,736	292,774	11%	9%	20%	82,500	71,150	153,650	783,948	9,370	8,781	18,152	
Republic of Korea	6%	4%	10%	81,794	60,572	142,367	1,382,764	4%	8%	12%	95,300	165,700	261,000	2,127,267	12,022	25,747	37,769	
Vietnam	2%	1%	2%	3,184	1,278	4,461	193,241	10%	9%	19%	45,400	44,310	89,710	477,293	5,267	4,600	9,866	