

PROGRESS OF WOMEN IN THE ARAB STATES 2020: THE ROLE OF THE CARE ECONOMY IN PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY

JORDAN CHAPTER LAUNCH

DECEMBER 8, 2020

CONTEXT

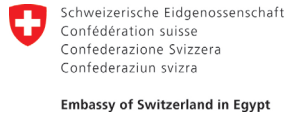
Care is fundamental to our societies and economies. While families are a key site for giving and receiving care, the implications of who provides care and who receives it extend beyond the family sphere (UN Women 2019). The provision of care services and implementation of public policies that could alleviate or redistribute some of the care burden for women and families remain underdeveloped in many countries, including in the Arab States.

The distribution of unpaid care work in Arab States is highly unequal, with much of the responsibility falling on married women. This represents a major obstacle to raising women's labour force participation rates, which are among the lowest in the world. Paid care services can play a major role in redistributing unpaid care work, and be an important source of employment for women (UN Women 2020). Tapping into the potential of the paid care economy – a sector that has received relatively little policy focus in the region – could thus be an important means of supporting women's economic empowerment. Changing demographic trends, such as fertility rates and population aging are also challenging systems of care-provision that rely on women's unpaid labour. Satisfying unmet needs for care for young children, the elderly, ill and disabled will require investments in the development of paid care services throughout the region.

These trends from the Arab States are mirrored in Jordan, where women, particularly married women bear nearly all of the responsibility for unpaid care work including both direct care for children and the elderly, as well as indirect care for the household. Women's time in unpaid care work does not vary by their employment status, such that employed women continue to work a full "double shift" of housework after their paid workday. The paid care sector is a substantial component of the Jordanian economy, constituting over a quarter of public sector employment and a small but growing share of private sector employment. The care sector has a substantial potential for growth and for benefitting the Jordanian economy (UN Women 2020).

The overarching aim of this project is to produce the report "*Progress of Women in the Arab States 2020: the role of the care economy in promoting gender equality*" as well as evidence-based policy recommendations for investment in the care economy in the Arab States as part of a regional companion report to the UN Women's 2019-2020 Progress of the World's Women report "*Families in a changing world: public action for women's rights*".

The regional companion report is built on unique microdata analysis of unpaid care work and paid care sectors, with case studies focusing on four countries of the region. The report provides an overview of the concept of the care economy and the demographic and social



context of care provision in the Arab States, including Egypt, Jordan, the State of Palestine and Tunisia. It reviews the status of key care policies and services related to paid leave, Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) and elder care across the region.

This project is supported by the regional programme “*Promoting Productive Employment and Decent Work for Women in Egypt, Jordan and Palestine*”, which is jointly implemented by UN Women and ILO and generously funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), as well as by the generous contribution of the Swiss Development Cooperation through the Regional companion report to UN Women’s 2019-2020 Progress of the World’s Women report: “*Families in a changing world public action for women’s rights*” project.

REPORT LAUNCH OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the report launch webinar series is to bring together the UN Women representatives, the national partners on care work and care policies, as well as the ERF researchers to present the findings of the report and discuss related policies.

REPORT LAUNCH ORGANIZATION

The report launch will convene December 7-9, 2020 in a webinar series, which includes five sessions that will provide ample time to zoom in to each report chapter, and an opportunity for Q&A.

The webinar to be held on December 8, 2020, 17:00 GMT+2, will focus on Chapter 3 of the report, The Care Economy in Jordan.

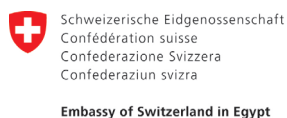
WEBINAR REGISTRATION DETAILS

UN Women and ERF Office invite you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: The Care Economy in Jordan

Time: December 9, 2020 17:00 Amman Time (GMT+2)

[Register here](#)



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8 DECEMBER 2020

WEBINAR MODERATOR: HAZAR ASFOURA	
17:00 – 17:10	Introduction and Opening Remarks Mr. Ziad Sheikh, <i>UN Women Country Representative in Jordan</i>
17:10 – 17:30	The Care Economy in Jordan Dr. Ibrahim Alhwarin, <i>Associate Professor, Al-Hussein Bin Talal University</i>
17:30 – 17:50	Commentary: The road towards recognizing, reducing and redistributing unpaid care work in Jordan Dr. Salma Al Nims, <i>Secretary General, Jordanian National Commission for Women</i> Ms. Sahar Aloul, <i>Co-Founder, SADAQA</i> Mr. Zuhair Al Damiri, <i>Director of Actuarial Studies Directorate, Social Security Corporation</i> Moderated by Ms. Hazar Asfoura, <i>Programme Analyst, UN Women Jordan</i>
17:50 – 18:00	Q&A Moderated by Ms. Hazar Asfoura