

CSW-67 Side event

High-level Interactive Dialogue on Innovation and technological change to advance the care agenda

Concept Note

Date and venue: Wednesday, 15 March, from 8:15 - 9:30 a.m., Conference Room 2- United Nations Headquarters.

Format: Interactive panel discussion with interpretation of English and Spanish. The event will be broadcasted through social media channels.

Conveners: The Government of Mexico, through the National Institute for Women (INMUJERES), the Ministry of Women and Gender Equality of the Government of Chile, the Ministry of Women, Gender and Diversity of the Government of Argentina, the Ford Foundation, UN Women, within the framework of the Global Alliance for Care.

Audience: CSW-67 Delegations, Civil Society, Member States, and the Global Alliance for Care Community.

Objective:

Aligned with the CSW67 priority theme, the Global Alliance for Care will organize a High-level Interactive Discussion on Innovation and Technological Change to Advance the Care Agenda. The event will provide an understanding of how technology and innovation with a human rights and gender equality perspective contribute to accelerate the transition towards a care society, enabling a digital transformation in care services and policies, creating decent care work opportunities, and contributing to advance toward women's economic autonomy.

Context:

Technology-enabled development of care infrastructure and service provisions could facilitate advancing towards a caring society that delivers quality care services and promotes that unpaid care work is shared equally amongst co-responsible actors within and beyond the family. For this, it is critical that governments assign priority to gender equality as defining objective of their policy choices related to care work, creating and enforcing gender-responsive labour market policies and regulations and investing in digital skills.

Experience on the ground demonstrates that technology and innovation can potentially advance the care work agenda and support the well-being of care workers and the persons they care for. Technology can improve care-related infrastructure and the efficiency of care and health services by streamlining processes and enabling remote monitoring. For example, telehealth technology can be used to connect care and health workers with patients, allowing for expedited communication. Some countries and cities have begun using geo-localization to produce maps of care to identify regionally the demand and offer of care services and assess the investment needed to close the demand gap.

Innovative technologies can also support safety and promote independence for people with disabilities and older adults, through mobility assistance, emergency buttons, wearable devices and smart home systems, for example. Moreover, technology can improve the quality-of-care services by providing access to training and support online, including virtual training programs to provide care workers with the skills and knowledge they need to provide higher-quality care.¹

¹ See OECD Policy Responses to Coronavirus (COVID-19), November 2020. [The territorial impact of COVID-19: Managing the crisis across levels of government.](#)

During the COVID-19 pandemic, care cooperatives used technology and innovation to improve services for care recipients and better working conditions for care workers while supporting the transition of care workers from the informal to the formal economy. For example, care cooperatives have responded to the growing social care crisis in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic by building care workers-owned solutions accessible through the digital care work marketplace. Also, domestic workers have used technology, such as apps and audio episodes, to raise awareness of their rights, increase their civic engagement and connect with colleagues.

Nevertheless, technology and innovation can lead to new forms of violence and discrimination against women if not regulated, such as the lack of social protection coverage and care leave policies in digital labour platforms. The recognition and protection of these rights is critical for the well-being of care workers, and for the provision of high-quality care to the individuals and communities they serve. Active support to caregivers from the private, governmental and social sectors, job search support and public employment programs, securing care-related technical training and technical literacy and ensuring certifications, generating care-decent paid jobs and adapting care work to the digital labour market.

Overall, technology and innovation have the potential to contribute significantly to advancing the care work agenda and promoting the well-being of care workers and those they care for, but it is essential that these advancements are guided by human rights and gender and social justice principles, and that they prioritize the needs and perspectives of care workers and care recipients.

The High-Level Interactive Dialogue will provide the opportunity to discuss how innovation and technology are changing the world of work, and the potential to positively transform care arrangements and respond to the needs of women and girls. It will generate policy recommendations to ensure that emerging technologies in the care work protect women and girls' rights and contribute to recognizing, reducing and redistributing unpaid care work, and promoting decent working conditions for care workers.

Guiding questions:

- How does technology and innovation, with a human rights and gender equality perspective, could enable a positive transformation in the care work sphere?
- What the opportunities and challenges for technological innovation to improve the quality-of-care work and thus promote safety, independence and quality of life for children, people with disabilities and older adults?
- How to ensure digital access help raise care workers and care recipients' awareness of their rights, provide spaces to demand them, and promote access to decent jobs?
- How to ensure private care does not monopolize services but transfers the shortfall in the supply of care to the most disadvantaged groups?
- Where is investment most needed to develop technology and innovation to advance the care work agenda?

Agenda:

| High-level Interactive Dialogue on Innovation and technological change to advance the care agenda Moderator: Jemimah Njuki, Chief Economic Empowerment, UN Women | |
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| 8:15-8:30 a.m. | <p>Opening Segment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Nadine Gasman, President of the National Institute of Women (INMUJERES), Government of Mexico ● Asa Regner, Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations and Deputy Executive Director of UN Women ● Sarita Gupta, Vice President, US Programs Of Ford Foundation (TBC) |
| 8:30-8:40 a.m. | <p>Keynote speaker</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lina Abou-Habib, Director of the Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship of the American University of Beirut. |
| 8:40- 9:25 a.m. | <p>Technology and innovation with a human rights and gender equality perspective to advance the care agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Riziki Pemba Juma, Minister of Community Development, Gender, Children and Elderly from Zanzibar, United Republic of Tanzania ● Fabio Velez, Research Officer in the Gender Justice and Development Program, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) ● Rudaba Zehra Nasir, Global Lead, Gender and Economic Inclusion Group, International Finance Corporation ● Claudia Mahler, Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner of Human Rights (OHCHR) ● Martha Lucía Micher Camarena, Senator of the Republic, Mexico ● Lucía Cirmi, Undersecretary of Equality Policies, Ministry of Women, Genders and Diversity of Argentina (TBC) ● Evelyn Mamani, Mayoress of the Community of Camiña, Government of Chile (TBC) ● Representative of the International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF) |
| 9:25- 9:30 a.m. | <p>Closing remarks and Call to Action on behalf of the Global Alliance for Care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Violet Shivutse, Chair Huairou Commission and member of the Global Alliance for Care |

About the Global Alliance for Care:

The [Global Alliance for Care](#) is a collective commitment of the [Generation Equality Forum](#), emanating from the Action Coalition on Justice and Economic Rights. Convened by the Government of Mexico through the National Institute of Women (INMUJERES) and UN Women, the Alliance is a multi-stakeholder platform that promotes the strengthening of the care economy, the transformation of gender roles in care work and the acceleration of economic recovery from the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since its inception in July 2021, the Alliance has positioned itself as a world champion in the care economy. With an ever-growing multi-stakeholder membership that includes 111 [organizations](#) as of February 2023, the Alliance has actively mobilized high-level advocacy opportunities on the multilateral agenda, focusing on the need to recognize care as a right, strengthen the visibility of unpaid care work and placing care work at the center of a sustainable and just economic recovery. Through policy dialogues, workshops and public events at different levels, the Alliance has consistently promoted the principle of co-responsibility to foster comprehensive systems of care and secure financial sustainability. It has generated spaces to allow cross-fertilization and lesson sharing, networking, and institutional support for advancing care policies and practices by stakeholders across sectors. It has also strengthened the voices of civil society articulated around the care economy and created different communication assets and content for dissemination through various channels. Further details on the progress made can be found in this [briefing note](#).