

► Global Care Crisis

There is a growing need for care globally due to population growth, demographic changes, rising rates of disease transmission, social unrest, and conflict. By 2030 the number of care recipients is predicted to reach 2.3 billion, but despite this increasing demand for services, many workers are unpaid or under-paid, with poor working conditions and a lack of social protection. ILO data from 2018 highlights that this includes 381 million workers (249 million women and 132 million men), representing 11.5 per cent of global employment. It is in everyone's best interests to ensure good conditions for care delivery in both its unpaid and paid forms. Transformative care policies and decent work in the care economy are crucial to ensuring a future founded on social justice and gender equality.

► Care Provision through the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE)

As people-centred, principle driven, member-owned businesses, cooperatives and other entities within the [Social and Solidarity Economy \(SSE\)](#)² have emerged as an innovative form of care provision, particularly in the absence of other viable public or private options. ILO Research indicates that SSE entities:¹

- Provide access to [improved wages, working conditions and benefits](#) and reduce employee turnover.
- Often [multipurpose](#) as beneficiaries' care needs are not singular, nor are the services cooperatives provide.
- Often [multi-stakeholder](#) in nature with the participation of workers, beneficiaries and local governments.
- Provide care in various ways throughout the world, though there are regional differences in the types of care provided that are [shaped by local contexts and care needs](#).

► Makola Market

Childcare Centre³

The Makola Market in Accra, Ghana is a workplace for thousands of women informal traders and vendors, many of whom have no viable alternative but to bring their children to work. When government funding for a childcare center ended, vendors and traders came together with childcare workers from the center and representatives from the Ghana Association of Traders to form a Parent-Teacher Association and take joint responsibility for operations. The center now provides care for 140 children, starting at 6am and running until the last child is picked up. A flexible payment system is in place, with subsidies and free spaces for those who cannot afford the monthly fee. Some vendors also provide fresh vegetables and fruit from their own stalls for the children's daily meals.

In light of this, the ILO's Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Branch (GEDI) and its Cooperatives Unit (COOP) are proposing an innovative cross-regional, multi-country programme. It will utilize an established intervention model grounded in the ILO's 5R Framework for Decent Care Work and Social Justice. The programme will pay particular attention to informal women workers, in all their diversity, operating in the care economy to increase their income and improve their rights by starting or expanding a cooperative. Effective monitoring & evaluation techniques will be embedded throughout the programme contributing to group-disaggregated evidence.



¹ ILO. Care work and care jobs for the future of decent work (2018)

² As defined by ILC.110/Resolution II and UNGA Resolution A/77/L.60 "The SSE encompasses enterprises, organizations and other entities that are engaged in economic, social, and environmental activities to serve the collective and/or general interest, which are based on the principles of voluntary cooperation and mutual aid, democratic and/or participatory governance, autonomy and independence, and the primacy of people and social purpose over capital in the distribution and use of surpluses and/or profits as well as assets."

³ ILO. Childcare Solutions for Women Micro and Small Enterprises (2022)

► Intervention Model



The programme will work at three interrelated levels:

1. Macro - Promote a more enabling environment for care provision through the SSE via collaboration, accountability, and policy integration in accordance with the ILO agenda.
2. Meso - Strengthen the institutional infrastructure for development of cooperatives and other SSE entities in the care sector through local partners and service providers (BDS, NGOs, etc.).
3. Micro - Establish and/or strengthen existing SSE providers of care by empowering members of care SSE units via the intervention model.

This programme will contribute to sustainable enterprise development through the recognition and valuing of both paid and unpaid care, in cooperation with internal and external partners. Wherever possible, the project will enact a participatory approach, making use of national expertise and institutions as this will not only maximize cost savings but drive capacity building. A more detailed breakdown of timeline and budget are available, and can be adjusted for scope and coverage following consultations with prospective donors.

⁴ The ILO's 5R framework emphasizes recognizing, reducing and redistributing unpaid housework and care through gender transformative care policy packages; rewarding care workers fairly, while generating sufficient care jobs to meet care needs and promoting decent work, including equal pay for work of equal value and jobs free from violence and harassment, for the paid care workforce in all their diversity; and representing care workers with rights, organization, voice and representation in decision-making, social dialogue and collective bargaining.

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