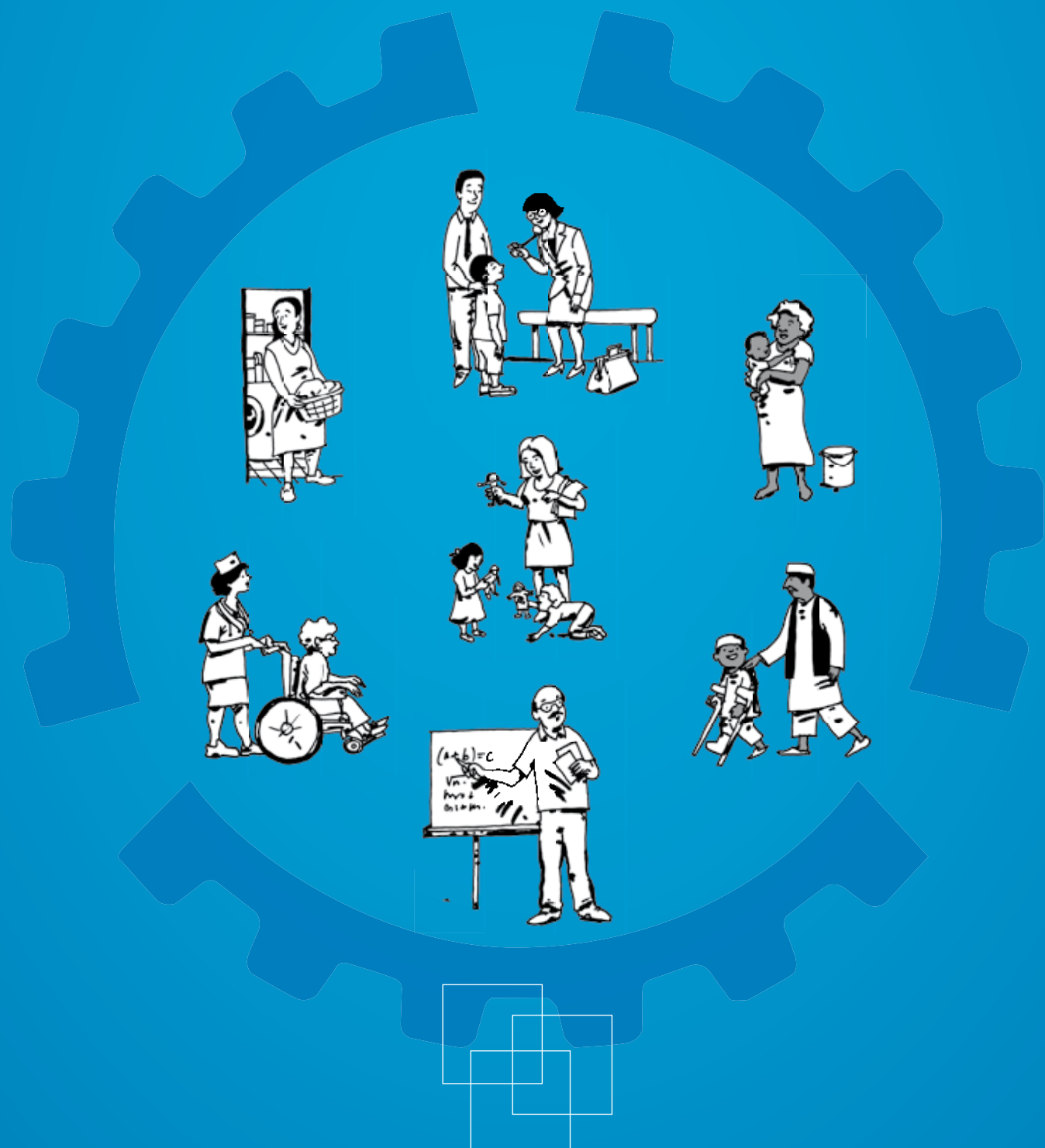




International
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CARE WORK AND CARE JOBS

FOR THE FUTURE OF DECENT WORK



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Care work and care jobs for the future of decent work is an important contribution to the ILO's Women at Work Centenary Initiative and to the process that the ILO is undertaking to guide its work for social justice as it advances into its second centenary. The Women at Work Centenary Initiative began by examining why progress in closing the gender gaps in the world of work had been so slow and what needed to be done for real transformation. The data, research, analysis and surveys all led back to care work.

Care work, both paid and unpaid, is at the heart of humanity and our societies. Economies depend on care work to survive and thrive. Across the world, women and girls are performing more than three-quarters of the total amount of unpaid care work and two-thirds of care workers are women. Demographic, socio-economic and environmental transformations are increasing the demand for care workers, who are often trapped in low quality jobs. If not addressed properly, current deficits in care work and its quality will create a severe and unsustainable global care crisis and further increase gender inequalities in the world of work.

Who is going to provide for the increasing care needs in the future? Under what conditions will both unpaid and paid care work be provided? What policies can be put in place to recognize, reduce and redistribute unpaid care work, create more and decent jobs for care workers, and guarantee care workers' representation, social dialogue and collective bargaining? These are the questions that for the first time are addressed in a comprehensive manner, based on a wealth of research and data.

A high road to care work is within our reach. The report charts a new road map of quality care work – one in which unpaid carers can enjoy the rewards of care provision without paying social and economic penalties; and care workers have access to decent jobs that will set the foundation of quality care services.

The policy environment put forward to achieve good quality care work, grounded in gender equality, is context specific but feasible. In all instances, care, macroeconomic, social protection, labour and migration policies need to be engineered so as to yield positive outcomes both for those in need of care and those who give care, whether for pay or not. It requires the engagement of governments, employers, workers and their organizations as well as representatives of unpaid carers and care recipients. By providing a global picture of the care economy from the angle of the world of work, this report builds a compelling and evidence-based case for placing good quality care work as a priority in national policy agendas. Urgent action is needed to pursue the high road to care work if there is to be a future of work for both women and men that is decent by design.

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CONTENTS

PREFACE	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	xxi
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xxv
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	xxvii
INTRODUCTION	1
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CHAPTER 1. CARE WORK AND CARE JOBS: WHAT THEY ARE AND WHY THEY MATTER	5
1.1 DEFINING CARE WORK AND THE CARE ECONOMY	6
1.1.1 Care work and the new statistical definition of “work”	8
1.1.2 The unpaid care work–paid work–paid care work circle	10
1.1.3 The quality of care work	12
1.2 CARE WORK IN A CHANGING WORLD	13
1.2.1 A transforming world of work	14
1.2.2 Changing demographics and care needs	16
1.3 CARE WORK, THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND DECENT WORK	24
1.4 DECENT CARE WORK: A FRAMEWORK FOR POLICY ACTION	28
Notes	34

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