CARE CONNECT



The Project Officer of Care Connect Indonesia delivers a safeguarding induction to enumerators during their training session. *(Photo: Rachma/Oxfam in Indonesia)*

CARE CONNECT: ACTION FOR CARE WORKERS IN THE PHILIPPINE AND INDONESIA

BASELINE STUDY - INDONESIA

PENABULU FOUNDATION

OXFAM

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List of Acronyms

BKKBN	Badan Kependudukan dan Keluarga Berencana Nasional National Population and Family Planning Board
BPS	Biro Pusat Statistik/ Statistic Indonesia
BPJS Kesehatan	Badan Penyelenggara Jaminan Sosial Kesehatan/Social Security Agency on Health
BPJS Ketenagakerjaan	Badan Penyelenggara Jaminan Sosial Ketenagakerjaan/Social Security Agency on Employment
CAPI	Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing
CSO	Civil Society Organization
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
ILO	International Labor Organization
Kementrian PPA	Kementrian Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Anak/Ministry of Women Empowerment and Child Protection
Kemensos	Kementrian Sosial/Ministry of Sosial Affairs
KII	Key Informant Interview
K3	Keselamatan dan Kesehatan Kerja/ Occupational Health and Safety
LBH APIK	Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Asosiasi Perempuan Indonesia untuk Keadilan/Network of Legal Aid Societies for Women
LFP	Labor Force Participation
MSMEs	Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises
RKP	Rencana Kerja Pemerintah/ Government Workplan
RPJPN	Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Panjang Nasional /National Long-Term Development Plan.
RPJMN	Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Menengah Nasional/Medium-Term Development Plans
RT/RW	Rukun Tetangga/Rukun Warga/ local neighborhood units
RUU PPRT	Rancangan Undang-Undang Perlindungan Pekerja Rumah Tangga/ Domestic Workers Protection Bill
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
THR	Tunjangan Hari Raya (Festive Allowance)
WRO	Women Right's Organization

Glossary

Advocacy	The process of influencing those who make policy decisions, write laws and regulations, and distribute resources that affect people's well-being. Advocacy delivers deliberate messages intended to influence the thoughts, perspectives and actions of people in authority.
Care Economy	The activities and relationships involved in providing care, support, and household work, encompassing both paid and unpaid work.
Care Work	Direct personal care and indirect care activities (housework)
Decent Care Work	The concept of ensuring that care work, both paid and unpaid, is recognized as valuable and that those involved have access to decent working conditions, fair wages, and social protection
Feminist economists	Tool to analyses patriarchy and capitalism as interrelated forms of dominance
Global care chains	The phenomenon which is taking place within the context of globalization, feminization of migration, and the transformation of social welfare states. Chains are formed when women migrate to work in the care sector (domestic work, personal healthcare services, etc.), while transferring care work in their own households in origin and sometimes in destination to other women.
Live in Domestic Workers	A person engaged in housework within an employment relationship and staying in the private home of the employer
Live Out Domestic Workers	A person engaged in housework within an employment relationship and does not stay in the employer house.
Micro, small, and medium enterprises	Businesses owned by individuals, households, or business entities with assets and yearly turnover of not more than Rp500 million
Neoclassical economics	Broad theory that focuses on supply and demand as the driving forces behind production, pricing, and consumption of goods and services.
Paid care work	Care provided as part of a job, such as in healthcare, social work, or domestic worker
Patriarchal systems	a social structure where men hold primary power and dominance over women, often manifested in political, economic, and social spheres
Socialist (and political economy) feminist approach to care work	Feminist approach that puts the domestic work and care work as care-cantered and revalue the care work by developing or advocating the transformative policies that create gender equalities.
Traditional neoclassical and neoliberal economic on care work	the narrative and approach that puts the domestic work and care work in general as the reproductive labor on the profit-centered system to sustain the capitalist system
Unpaid care work	All unpaid services provided by individuals within a household or community for the benefit of its members, including care of persons and domestic work. Common examples include cooking, cleaning, collecting water and fuel, and looking after children, older persons, and persons with illness or disabilities. Voluntary community work that supports personal or household care, such as community kitchens or childcare, is also a form of unpaid care work. Women and girls have disproportionate responsibility for unpaid care and domestic work; globally, they spend three times as much time on this work as do men and boys. Unpaid care work is one of the main barriers preventing women from moving into paid employment and better-quality jobs.

Executive Summary

Introduction

Care work is the invisible backbone of families, communities, and economies. In Indonesia, however, it remains deeply undervalued—both socially and economically—due to entrenched gender norms and patriarchal systems. Women in Indonesia perform nearly three times more unpaid care work than men, limiting their freedom, mobility, and access to economic, political, and social opportunities. Despite its vital role in sustaining the workforce and supporting national productivity, care work—whether paid or unpaid—is still perceived as women's natural duty rather than recognized labor that deserves fair compensation, protection, and dignity.

The Care Connect Project responds to this persistent inequality by positioning care work as a central issue of gender justice. It seeks to improve the working conditions, recognition, and rights of care workers—particularly domestic workers—while also advancing women and girls' participation in economic, educational, political, community, and leisure activities. The project is built around two strategic pillars: (1) enhancing protection and promotion of rights for women in paid care work, and (2) expanding opportunities and autonomy for women and girls in all spheres of life. These pillars are grounded in the understanding that addressing care work holistically—both paid and unpaid—is essential to advancing gender equality.

This baseline study provides the foundation for implementing and monitoring the Care Connect Project. Through a mixed-methods approach—combining surveys with 350 respondents and in-depth qualitative data from 96 informants—the study captures prevailing perceptions, conditions, and systemic gaps in the care economy.

The study adopted a **convergent mixed-methods design**, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches conducted concurrently between December 2024 and February 2025. The quantitative component involved structured surveys with **350 respondents** using **Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI)** across four project sites, targeting domestic workers, unpaid care workers, and household members. Sampling was based on the Slovin formula and relied on snowballing to reach informal and hard-to-reach populations.

The qualitative component included **13 focus group discussions (FGDs)** and **key informant interviews (KIIs)** with a total of **99 informants**, including domestic workers, employers, unpaid care workers, civil society organizations (CSOs), and local/national government representatives. A **desk review** of international conventions, national laws, and care-related policies complemented the field data to contextualize findings within Indonesia's broader institutional and legal framework.

While the study provides a strong foundation for Care Connect, several limitations must be acknowledged:

- **Urban Bias**: Research was conducted exclusively in urban areas, limiting the applicability of findings to rural care contexts, which may have distinct social, cultural, and economic dynamics.
- **Sampling Skew**: A portion of survey respondents were purposively selected from organized worker groups or unions, potentially skewing awareness indicators upward and not fully representing more isolated or unorganized care workers.
- **Restricted Access to Government Data**: Limited availability and transparency of policy documents and administrative data constrained the depth of institutional analysis, particularly regarding regional implementation of care economy initiatives.

Findings

The Context and Policy Landscape of Care works in Indonesia

The baseline study reveals that the prevailing conditions and perceptions surrounding paid and unpaid care work in Indonesia are shaped by entrenched cultural norms and evolving socio-economic realities. Historical traditions continue to influence how domestic work is viewed—as familial duty rather than formal labor. In the present time, this is reflected in the common use of the term *asisten rumah tangga* (household assistant) rather than *pekerja rumah tangga* (domestic workers), which, while intended to convey respect, blurs the line between personal care and professional employment.

This ambiguity has critical implications. While trust and emotional closeness may develop, it often comes at the cost of fair labor standards—manifesting in long hours, wide-ranging tasks, and minimal legal protection, particularly for live-in workers. Many lack formal contracts or access to social protection. As of 2023, only 0.9% of domestic workers were enrolled in BPJS Ketenagakerjaan. They also do not have standardized wages, festive allowance and other benefits.

In the meantime, the burden of unpaid care work remains heavily gendered. Despite rising women labor force participation driven by urbanization and shifting family structures, women continue to bear primary responsibility for household and care duties. Indonesia's labor force participation rate stood at 69.48% in 2023, with persistent gender disparities limiting women's economic mobility and reinforcing dependence on underpaid care work.

Although care work has gained symbolic **recognition** through initiatives such as the National Care Economy Roadmap and references in national development plans (RPJPN and RPJMN), implementation remains weak. Promising reforms—such as paternity leave or expanded childcare services—are largely absent from operational planning like the 2025 Government Work Plan. The legal status of domestic workers remains fragile, with Ministerial Regulation No. 15/2015 offering minimum standards but no enforceable labor rights.

Efforts to **reduce** and **redistribute** care work—particularly for women in low-income urban households—remain limited. Services that could alleviate care burdens, such as public childcare or elder care, are underfunded or discontinued. Informal care workers, including

unpaid family members, are largely excluded from current reforms, while programs like Surabaya's Smart Business for Housewives have ended, cutting off critical support for women-led livelihoods.

Economic **rewards** for care work are also insufficient. More than 40% of domestic workers earn below IDR 2 million -which means below the minimum wages in the survey location and lack contracts or insurance. The proposed Domestic Workers Protection Bill (RUU PPRT) offers an opportunity to establish fair wages, working hours, dispute resolution, and sanctions for abuse. However, legislative progress is hindered by political resistance and class dynamics, with many lawmakers also acting as employers.

Finally, the **representation** of care workers, particularly domestic workers and unpaid care workers remains limited. While civil society groups such as JALA PRT continue to advocate for labor rights, there is no legal guarantee for unionization. Moreover, advocacy linking paid and unpaid care work remains fragmented, and the voices of unpaid care workers—those caring for children, the elderly, and people with disabilities—are still largely absent from policy spaces.

From the study, the transformation of Indonesia's care economy hinges on the successful application of the 5R framework. While policy recognition has improved, implementation gaps, legal ambiguity, and cultural resistance continue to undermine progress. The RUU PPRT remains a critical policy lever to institutionalize recognition, ensure reward, and enable representation, but without strong political will, funding, and cross-class alliances, care work will remain undervalued and unprotected.

In the project locations, these structural and cultural dynamics are especially visible, revealing both the urgency for reform and the resilience of local actors. The way forward lies in connecting grassroots demands to national advocacy platforms, embedding care work into broader social justice and gender equality agendas, and ensuring that those who provide care—whether paid or unpaid—are finally recognized, supported, and empowered.

The Baseline for Outcome Indicator

This baseline study, conducted as part of the Care Connect project, establishes key benchmarks to measure progress toward the project's ultimate, intermediate and immediate outcomes in Indonesia. For the ultimate outcome **enhanced empowerment, socio-economic well-being, and enjoyment of rights for women and girls.** Findings show that progress is underway, yet structural and cultural barriers persist. **Economic mobility** for women remains limited: only 19.6% of domestic workers reported earning additional income beyond their main job in the past three years, with live-out workers (21.5%) showing slightly more flexibility than live-in workers (16.8%). In parallel, just 17.3% of women in household surveys reported job transitions, highlighting persistent challenges in accessing diverse economic pathways.

On **personal development**, 41.8% of domestic workers had accessed some form of capacity-building, and 68.1% of them found the programs helpful or very helpful—especially live-in workers (48.9% rated programs "very helpful"). However, actual enrollment is low, with only 3.9% currently in training, indicating a need to expand access and outreach.

Perception of the broader benefits of care policies remains uneven. Among domestic workers, 68.8% agreed that improved care work policies support the rights of women and girls. Among household respondents, agreement stood at 72.7% for men and 57.7% for women—suggesting a gendered difference in perception and perhaps gaps in how reforms are communicated or experienced across groups.

The study also measures intermediate outcomes: **enhanced protection and promotion of women's rights and needs related to paid care work in Indonesia,** A striking 96.1% of domestic workers affirmed the value of their work to their families, and 66.7% recognized its **broader societal value**. Household data aligned, with 92.1% of respondents rating paid care work as somewhat or very valuable. However, only 50.8% of respondents fully agreed that **care work should be respected equally with other professions**—signaling persistent stigma, especially among adults. Gender-disaggregated data reveals that men are more likely to conditionally support care work, while some women internalize traditional roles (11.5% disagreed with equal respect for care work).

Attitudes toward men in caregiving roles are shifting. While 62.1% of domestic workers believed men can become domestic workers, nearly one-third opposed the idea, citing tradition and perceptions of men incapability. Encouragingly, 94.7% believed men can do household chores, and 96.8% of household respondents agreed men should share caregiving duties. Still, practices lag behind beliefs—nearly one in five women (19.2%) disagreed with equal sharing of caregiving responsibilities, reflecting ingrained gender norms.

In terms of participation, 41.1% of domestic workers were members of organized groups, with live-out workers more likely to join (48.3%) and live-in workers more likely to **hold leadership roles** (26.5%). Among household women, 26.9% held leadership positions. **Autonomy in decision-making** and mobility remains mixed—60.4% of domestic workers agreed they could leave the house without supervision, with youth expressing both higher confidence and vulnerability. In contrast, 92.3% of household women reported freedom to make decisions about personal and external matters.

On rights awareness, 81.1% of domestic workers were familiar with basic labor protections such as fair wages (99.6%), rest days (90.5%), and safe working conditions (88.7%). However, knowledge of broader rights—like protection from abuse (63.6%) and unionizing (59.3%)—was weaker. Awareness of entitlements like decent meals (1.3%) and access to BPJS (0.9%) was alarmingly low, signaling a narrow understanding of rights and highlighting the need for targeted legal literacy efforts.

Employers' knowledge of labor protections remains limited. Among those who had heard of the Ministerial Decree on Domestic Workers, only 45.0% had in-depth knowledge, with women employers showing less familiarity. This gap weakens accountability and fair employment practices.

Domestic workers' confidence in negotiating with employers is notably low: over 70% reported lacking confidence, and only 1.1% felt "very confident." Fear of job loss and retaliation are key barriers. Live-in workers showed slightly more confidence than live-out

workers, possibly due to closer employer relations—but both groups expressed concern over power imbalances and the lack of formal protection.

Civil society organizations (CSOs), particularly WROs and care worker groups, show strong commitment to advancing women's rights. All five surveyed CSOs had plans to support women's leadership in care work, though 20% cited limited capacity to implement these plans. While 100% expressed confidence in delivering gender-transformative programming, only 40% felt very confident engaging with policymakers, revealing the need for enhanced advocacy support and systemic engagement.

Stakeholder support varies widely. Domestic workers perceived their employers as generally supportive (86% expressing some or strong support), while local governments were viewed as unsupportive by nearly 60%. CSO support was rated moderately, with 46.7% of workers perceiving them as engaged and 41.4% expressing skepticism—underscoring the need to deepen grassroots connections and visibility of CSO-led efforts.

Recommendation

Based on the findings elaborate above, the study provides recommendations for three aspects: engagement with government, strengthening domestic workers and domestic workers group, and partnering with employer: The following strategic directions are recommended:

Engaging Government Institutions

The project should actively support national and local governments in strengthening policy and regulatory frameworks that recognize care workers as essential and rights-bearing contributors to society. This includes:

- Facilitating policy dialogue and providing technical assistance to accelerate the passage of the long-overdue Domestic Workers Protection Bill, while ensuring alignment with the broader Care Economy Roadmap. These efforts should also address the highly informal nature of paid domestic work, which contributes to the vulnerability of care workers, by promoting stronger legal recognition, regulatory frameworks, and mechanisms for protection.
- Promoting integration of care economy goals into development planning processes, such as the RPJMN 2025–2029 (if applicable), with a focus on translating strategic targets into implementable programs and budgets, particularly at the subnational level.
- Encouraging the expansion of public care infrastructure and services (e.g., daycare, eldercare) and targeted social assistance (e.g., household utility subsidies), as part of a gender-responsive strategy to reduce unpaid care burdens on women.
- Supporting policy reform and awareness-raising on paternity leave, shared caregiving, and the redistribution of care responsibilities, leveraging global good practices and SDG commitments.

To advance the rights and recognition of paid and unpaid care workers, the project should strengthen collaboration with women's rights organizations (WROs), labor unions, and informal worker collectives. This includes building the capacity of grassroots groups to organize, advocate, and influence policy at both national and local levels.

Targeted support should focus on:

- Enhancing technical and advocacy capacity of domestic workers organizations, especially grassroots groups, to lead collective actions, amplify worker voices, and engage meaningfully in decision-making forums. As baseline data shows that live-out domestic workers, who are more likely to engage in advocacy spaces, also report greater awareness of labor rights and the benefits of care work policies, but awareness of broader labor rights remains low across the board, highlighting an urgent need for tailored rights education and outreach, with for example the education on the rights to unionize and the right to be protected from abuse.
- Capacity building for domestic workers should prioritize rights education and advocacy skills, particularly for live-in workers who are less engaged in public spaces and report lower awareness. Baseline findings indicate that domestic workers relatively have greater awareness of labor rights and the benefits of care work policies. However, overall awareness of broader rights—such as the right to unionize and protection from abuse—remains low across all groups. This gap, combined with a significant lack of confidence in negotiating employment conditions, underscores the urgent need for tailored, accessible training programs that empower domestic workers to assert their rights and engage meaningfully in dialogue with employers.
- Addressing generational gaps in perception and engagement. Despite the small number of youth respondents, striking differences that were found between age groups indicated the need for targeted engagement strategies that resonate with younger constituencies and acknowledge their lived experiences.
- Bridging the divide between paid and unpaid work advocacy. Many programmatic and policy efforts have focused on domestic workers, while unpaid care workers—especially women supporting children, the elderly, and people with disabilities—remain largely invisible. The project should ensure both groups are represented in programming and included in advocacy efforts.
- Promoting economic resilience through livelihood opportunities. Given that live-out workers are more likely to pursue additional income—primarily through home-based production that requires minimal capital and leverages existing skills—the project could provide capacity-building and seed support to worker groups to strengthen entrepreneurial activities, improved/building new livelihood skills and strategy and improve financial independence.
- Strengthen the capacity of civil society organizations (CSOs)—particularly women's rights organizations (WROs) and domestic worker unions—to effectively engage with diverse stakeholders, including government institutions, employers, and community actors. Capacity-building efforts should enhance their confidence and technical skills

in designing and implementing gender-transformative programs that promote gender equality and address systemic inequalities. This might include training on gender analysis, the application of the 5Rs framework, and evidence-based advocacy using data and storytelling. Support should also focus on strengthening organizational governance, financial sustainability, and digital capabilities—such as leveraging online platforms for organizing, advocacy, and mapping care services. In addition, peer learning, cross-organizational collaboration, and South-South (Indonesia -Philippines) exchanges can amplify collective impact, while structured engagement with policymakers, religious leaders, and the media can help broaden public and political support for care work as a development priority.

Partnering with Employers and Employer Associations

The project should develop constructive partnerships with employer associations, private sector actors, and household employers to promote rights-based employment practices. This includes:

- Raising awareness and building knowledge on fair employment standards, respectful communication, and supporting worker well-being. It is equally important to emphasize that the forthcoming Domestic Workers Protection Law is not only designed to safeguard the rights of domestic workers, but also to protect employers—particularly from exploitative recruitment agencies and potential risks associated with unregulated labor arrangements.
- Encouraging investment in worker training and development, especially for live-in workers who face mobility constraints and social isolation.

Introduction

Background

Care work is a fundamental pillar of society, providing the essential services that keep households, workplaces, families, and communities functioning. It comprises both paid and unpaid activities that underpin health, well-being, and economic stability. Despite its indispensable nature, care work remains undervalued and insufficiently supported, largely due to entrenched gender norms and patriarchal values. In Indonesia, for instance, women shoulder roughly three times more unpaid care responsibilities than men—a disparity that restricts their personal freedom and limits their professional and socio-economic advancement.[1]

The undervaluation of care work is not a recent phenomenon; it has persisted for generations across diverse cultures and economies. In Indonesia, deeply ingrained patriarchal systems and rigid gender stereotypes dictate that women are primarily responsible for caregiving. This role encompasses a wide range of activities, from routine household chores to the intensive, hands-on care of children, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities. Often, these essential tasks are performed without any form of remuneration or public recognition, reinforcing a cycle of inequality that significantly hampers women's health, education, and economic prospects. The social expectations placed on women not only limit their personal development but also create systemic barriers that impede broader societal progress.

In response to these enduring challenges, the Care Connect project emerges as a transformative initiative designed to address the systemic inequities in the care work sector. Positioned against a backdrop of social injustice and inequality, the project seeks to elevate the dignity and well-being of women and girls by improving working conditions and empowering care workers.

Central to the project's strategy are two interconnected pillars that form its theory of change. The first pillar focuses on enhancing the protection and promotion of women's rights in paid care work by ensuring that care professionals receive recognition, fair treatment, and essential support, thereby establishing improved labor standards in the care sector. The second pillar aims to broaden opportunities for women and girls in all spheres—economic, educational, political, community, and leisure—thus enhancing their autonomy and overall quality of life. The project is underpinned by several key assumptions: addressing both paid and unpaid care work will boost women's empowerment; strengthening the capacities of care workers, employers, and advocacy groups is critical for sustainable progress; and raising awareness and fostering solidarity among communities will drive broader gender equality in care work.

This report provides a comprehensive introduction to the context, challenges, and transformative potential of care work in Indonesia, establishing a critical foundation for

[1] Prospera, Demographic Institute, University of Indonesia, and Investing in Women, 2023, *Piloting the Measurement of Time Use, Supervisory Care and Women's Agency in Indonesia*, 11 April 2023 (with support from the International Labor Organization, UN Women, and Statistics Indonesia [BPS])

understanding its current state. The evidence-based insights from this study will directly inform the strategic implementation and ongoing monitoring of the Care Connect project.

Objective

The objectives of this baseline research are:

1. To understand the prevailing conditions, practices, and perceptions surrounding both unpaid and paid care domestic work in Indonesia
2. To identify the baseline values and benchmarks for the key indicators that will measure the project's outcomes
3. To identify the current socio-economic, cultural, and political factors in the project locations that are shaping the paid and unpaid care works in Indonesia

Research Questions

The research questions were developed to establish baseline benchmarks and gain contextual understanding. The general research questions are as follows:

- What are the prevailing conditions, practices, and perceptions surrounding both paid and unpaid care work for domestic and other care workers in Indonesia?
- What are the baseline values and benchmarks for the key indicators (below) that will measure the project's outcomes?
- What are the current socio-economic, cultural, and political factors in the project locations that are shaping the paid and unpaid care works in Indonesia?

Methodology

As a feminist study grounded in a gender-transformative framework, this research centered women's experiences to unpack power dynamics and advance social justice, guiding a critical examination of gendered inequalities while ensuring that marginalized voices are both heard and honored. By integrating a decolonial feminist lens, the study will transform data collection into a collaborative learning journey for Care Connect Program partners, with the consultant facilitating reflective dialogue and shared capacity building.

To capture a holistic view of care work in Indonesia, the researcher employed a Mixed Methodology Convergent Parallel that runs quantitative and qualitative strands side by side. The quantitative component established baseline benchmarks through a structured survey administered via Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) to a representative sample of 350 respondents. This sample was calculated using the Slovin formula and proportionally distributed across key regions, employing snowball sampling to reach informal care workers and other hard-to-reach populations. The survey included structured questionnaires designed to capture a range of indicators—from economic pathways and personal development perceptions to the recognition and valuation of care work. The survey was conducted in December 2024.

Simultaneously, from December 2024 to February 2025, qualitative data collect that includes desk reviews, Focus Group Discussions and Key Informant Interview (KII) were conducted. A

total of 96 participants—including 88 women representing domestic workers, employers, unpaid care workers, government officials, and CSOs—contributed their perspectives to deepen our understanding of the care economy's complexities.

Table 1. Data Collection Activities

Activities	Time	Location	Freq,	Women	Men
FGD Employer	November-December 2024	Makassar, Surabaya, Greater Jakarta	6	22	2
FGD Domestic Worker	November-December 2024	Makassar, Surabaya Greater Jakarta	6	24	0
FGD Unpaid Care Workers	1 Desember 2024	Makassar, Surabaya, Greater Jakarta	6	24	0
FGD with CSO	December 2024	Greater Jakarta	1	4	0
KII with Domestic Worker	Desember 2024-January 2025	Makassar, Surabaya, Greater Jakarta	3	3	0
KII Employer	December 2024 - January 2025	Makassar, Surabaya, Greater Jakarta	3	3	0
KII Unpaid Worker	December 2024	Makassar, Surabaya, Greater Jakarta	4	4	0
KII Domestic Workers Union	January 2025	Jakarta	1	1	0
Interview with Government officials/Other Government Body	January-February 2025	Makassar, Surabaya, Greater Jakarta	5	3	6
Total Informant				88	8

The desk review encompasses several international standards and national policy documents, as detailed in table 2.

Table 2. List of International and National Policy Documents Reviewed

International Standards	National Law	Other Regulation & Policies
ILO Convention 183 and Recommendation 191	Law No. 10 of 1974 on Marriage	Government Regulation No. 44 of 2015 on the Implementation of the Work Accident Insurance and Death Insurance Programs

International Standards	National Law	Other Regulation & Policies
Domestic Worker Convention 2011 (No.189)	Law No. 52 of 2009 amending Law No. 10 of 1992 on Population Development and Family Development	Presidential Regulation No. 25 of 2021 on Child-Friendly Regency/City Policy
	Law No. 59 of 2024 on the National Long-Term Development Plan (RPJPN) for 2025-2045	Presidential Regulation No. 12 of 2025 on the National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) for 2025-2029, National Priority 4
	Law No. 4 of 2024 on the Welfare of Mothers and Children	Women Empowerment and Child Protection Ministerial Regulation No. 5 of 2015 on the Provision of Gender-Responsive and Child-Caring Work Facilities
	Law No. 11 of 2020 on Job Creation in conjunction with Law No. 13 of 2003	Women Empowerment and Child Protection Ministerial Regulation No. 12 of 2022 on the Implementation of Child-Friendly Regencies/Cities
	Law No. 11 of 2009 on Social Welfare	Manpower Ministerial Regulation No. 2/2015 on the Protection of Domestic Workers
	Law No. 13 of 1998 on Welfare for Older Person	7 Priorities and Directions of Care Economy Roadmap: Women and Empowerment Ministry
	Bill on Protection of Domestic Workers	Strategic Plan 2020-2024 of the Ministry of Women Empowerment and Child Protection.

Research Limitation

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting its findings:

- Urban Focus Only: The research was conducted exclusively in urban settings, which excludes rural areas. This limitation means that the findings may not fully capture the distinct social, cultural, and economic conditions influencing both paid and unpaid care work in rural regions.
- Sampling Bias: The study's findings on rights awareness are positively skewed, partly because a segment of the respondents was purposively selected from trade unions. This targeted sampling approach may have led to an overrepresentation of individuals with higher levels of rights knowledge, thus not entirely reflecting the broader care worker population.

- Limited Government Data Access: The study encountered challenges in obtaining comprehensive government data. Important documents and policies related to care economy system planning and regional frameworks were not publicly accessible or fully shared by government agencies. As a result, the analysis relied mainly on publicly available desk reviews and potentially limiting the depth of the policy analysis

Literature Review

In this baseline report, the conceptual framework for care work draws on diverse perspectives that challenge traditional economic narratives and the narrow focus of neoclassical economics. Drawing from political economy and socialist feminist thought, care work is redefined as more than merely reproductive labor; it is a socially constructed process embedded in gendered power relations that has historically imposed the burden of both paid and unpaid domestic tasks predominantly on women.[2] Thus, rather than being relegated to the margins as mere "extra" activities, these essential tasks sustain households and underpin the broader capitalist system.

Feminist economists argue that unpaid care work must be recognized as an integral part of the overall economy, particularly given its critical role in perpetuating gender inequality in labor force participation.[3] As scholarly debates have evolved, the focus has shifted to exploring the relationship between women's labor in social reproduction and wage structures, with attention to how the welfare state, private provisioning, and commodification intersect within the care industry. Moving beyond narrow accumulation models of capitalism, social feminists propose a more radical understanding of care—one that reimagines the economy as care-based rather than profit-centered. Although the concept of a solidarity-oriented care economy requires further exploration, it challenges conventional public–private divides and positions care as a foundational economic activity rather than a peripheral concern.

This baseline also incorporates social reproduction theory to critique the systematic undervaluation of care work by linking unpaid and underpaid labor to the exploitative mechanisms of capitalism. According to this perspective, the pervasive gender inequality evident in unpaid care work is not only a product of patriarchal culture but also an implication of a capitalist system that devalues women's contributions, often presenting these contributions as the 'labor of love' with little or no cost to capital.[4] Thus, the prevailing neoliberal framework tends to marginalize and undervalue care work. The market-driven policies have systematically devalued care labor, disproportionately burdening women while neglecting the essential role that care plays in sustaining households and broader economic

[2] Bilff, Gudrun, 1989, Der Haushaltssektor Der volkswirtschaftliche Wert der unbezahlten Arbeit, as cited in Smith, S., Mutz, G. and Erbe, B., 2018, Care economies—feminist contributions and debates in economic theory, article at Österreich Z Soziol (2018) 43:7–18, Springer, p.9

[3] Folbre, N., 2006, *The Invisible Heart: Economics and Family Values*, 2nd edn, New Press, New York, as cited in Smith, S., Mutz, G. and Erbe, B., 2018, Care economies—feminist contributions and debates in economic theory, article at Österreich Z Soziol (2018) 43:7–18, Springer, p.9

[4] See, for example, discussions on the 'labor of love' in feminist economic literature such as: Not a Labour of Love, 2022., Eurozine, available at: https://www.eurozine.com/not-a-labour-of-love/ (accessed 4 April 2025).

systems. While on contrary, care work—both paid and unpaid—is not merely a supplementary activity but a fundamental component of economic and social reproduction[5].

Socialist feminists within the volume advocate for a solidarity that bridges the immediate, everyday practices of care (the "inside" movements) with broader, systemic feminist struggles that challenge capitalist structures. This solidarity is seen as essential for reorienting the economy toward one that is care-centered rather than profit-centered. In this view, care economics should involve not only a revaluation of unpaid care work but also the development of transformative policies—such as redistributive measures, fair remuneration for paid care work, and enhanced representation for care workers—that address deep-seated gender inequalities. Further, socialist feminists advocate for solidarity between "inside" movements, which address immediate care responsibilities, and autonomous feminist struggles that challenge the underlying structures of capitalism.[6] Thus, the need for reorienting the economy toward one that is care-centered rather than profit-centered is essentials. In this view, care economics should involve not only a revaluation of unpaid care work but also the development of transformative policies—such as redistributive measures, fair remuneration for paid care work, and enhanced representation for care workers—that address deep-seated gender inequalities.

Reinforcing these critical perspectives, the definition provided by UN Women situates care work within a broader care economy by clearly distinguishing between paid and unpaid care.[7] The UN Women framework encompasses a wide range of services—from childcare and early education to home-based care for the elderly, disabled, or chronically ill—and links these activities to key policies, such as family leave, social security, and fair wages. In this context of Indonesia, the care works also needs to be look from the social and cultural perspective, examining how kinship values in Indonesia can blur the lines between paid care work and parenting responsibilities, and how these [8]intersections reinforce gender norms that disproportionately burden women with paid, underpaid, and unpaid care responsibilities.

The 5R Framework for Decent Care Work offers a comprehensive approach to evaluating and advancing care workers' rights by addressing five key dimensions. First, **Recognize** calls for the full acknowledgment of both unpaid and paid care work as critical to human well-being and economic sustainability, challenging its historical invisibility. Second, **Reduce** by easing the excessive burden of unpaid care—especially on women—through investments in public services like childcare and eldercare, thereby creating opportunities for increased participation in paid employment. Third, **Redistribution** advocates for a more equitable division of care responsibilities, both within households and across society, by shifting some of the economic costs from families to public and private sectors. Fourth, **Reward** emphasizes the need for fair compensation, decent working conditions, and robust social protections to elevate the quality-of-care work. Finally, **Representation** ensures that care workers have a meaningful

[5] Kováts, Eszter (ed.) 2016, *Solidarity in Struggle: Feminist Perspectives on Neoliberalism in East-Central Europe*, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Budapest, Budapest.
[6] *Ibid.*
[7] UN Women, 2022, A Toolkit On paid and Unpaid Care Work, From 3Rs to 5Rs, UN Women.
[8] See for example, study by Muryanti, Wahyuni, Kinseng, Hubeis, 2015, on Dilemma of the Kinship and Formality Relationship between Employer and Domestic Worker in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, published at Journal Komunitas 7 (2) (2015): 191-214.

voice in policymaking, promoting social dialogue and collective bargaining to safeguard their rights.[9]

The Country Context: The Construction of Care Economy in Indonesia

Indonesia's care economy is shaped by traditional practices, cultural norms, and modern socio-economic dynamics. Historically, domestic work in Indonesia has its roots in colonial and feudal systems. In Java, for example, the concept of *abdi dalem*—royal servants—includes specialized roles such as *emban*, which are analogous to modern domestic work. Similarly, the cultural practice of *ngenger*, where children from less affluent families are entrusted to more established households in exchange for domestic assistance, has long influenced employer–worker relationships. Although these traditions are less visible today, they continue to underpin informal care arrangements, framing care work as a familial duty rather than a commercial service.

Building on this historical context, our study reveals similar trends in the contemporary redefinition of domestic work roles. Many domestic workers now prefer the term "*asisten rumah tangga*" (household assistant) over "*pekerja rumah tangga*" (domestic worker) as a means of reclaiming dignity and fostering a more respectful, familial relationship with their employers. As one worker remarked, "I prefer to be called a household assistant; it sounds a bit better."[10] Employers, too, favor this terminology, viewing their domestic staff more as family members than as formal workers.[11]

However, this blurred boundary between personal intimacy and formal labor carries significant implications. While familial treatment may foster trust and emotional security, it also obscures power imbalances, undermining clear labor protections and contractual rights. When domestic workers are treated as part of the family rather than formal employees, they risk losing access to essential safeguards such as fair wages, regulated working hours, and social security benefits, leaving them vulnerable to exploitation.

In parallel with these evolving work relationships, modern socio-economic forces further shape Indonesia's care economy. Rapid urbanization and the rise of nuclear households have diminished traditional extended family support systems, increasing the need for external care services for both eldercare and childcare. At the same time, economic pressures have spurred a significant rise in women labor force participation. Data from Indonesia's Ministry of Manpower indicate that the number of women workers increased markedly from 2014 to 2016, reaching 55,374 individuals.[12] UNFPA Indonesia also projects a growth in dual-earner

[9] Addati, L., Cattaneo, U., Esquivel, V., Valarino, I., & International Labour Office. (2018). *Care work and care jobs for the future of decent work*. International Labour Office
[10] FGDs with domestic workers, Makassar, November 2024
[11] FGDs with employers Jakarta, January 2025
[12] Indonesian Central Statistics Agency, 2017

households driven by higher women education, rising living costs, and shifting social aspirations.[13]

Despite this increase in workforce participation, many women continue to shoulder most of the unpaid care work.[14] This dual burden not only drives the demand for external care services but also contributes significantly to the persistent gap in Labor Force Participation (LFP) between women and men. The heavier domestic workload borne by women limits their availability for paid employment, reducing their overall participation in the labor force relative to men. Recent statistics illustrate these trends: as of August 2023, Indonesia's overall Labor Force Participation rate reached 69.48%, with men rates consistently higher than those of women over the past five years.

The Vulnerabilities of Domestic Workers in Indonesia

Domestic workers in Indonesia face significant vulnerabilities due to extensive workloads and inadequate social security. The study shows that these workers are burdened with a wide range of tasks—cleaning, cooking, laundry, dishwashing, ironing, meal preparation, and childcare[15]—and in many cases, their responsibilities extend far beyond traditional household chores. For example, some domestic workers are also expected to maintain rental units or support small-scale commercial activities[16], that might lead to longer working hours without a formal mechanism for consistent compensation[17]. The reliance on informal, negotiated arrangements—lacking clear job descriptions and contractual obligations—renders domestic workers particularly vulnerable to overwork, inconsistent pay, and limited access to labor protections, even though employers recognize their critical role in maintaining households.

In addition to heavy workloads, unequal access to social security and health coverage exacerbates domestic workers' vulnerabilities. Indonesia's social protection framework rests on two mandatory schemes: national health insurance runs by BPJS Kesehatan[18] and social security on employment that provide which administers national health insurance, and national social security system on employment that covers benefits such as work-accident compensation, old-age pensions, and survivor's benefits run by BPJS Ketenagakerjaan[19]. Although the law clearly assigns employers the duty to enroll their employees in both schemes, limited enforcement and widespread misconceptions — even among employers and domestic workers — mean many views health insurance as a state responsibility rather than an employer obligation. Moreover, the informal nature of domestic work continues to exclude

[13] UNFPA Indonesia 2015

[14] Detail on the dynamics of unpaid caring activities can be found in Annex 1.

[15] According to the survey in this study, the most common tasks assigned to domestic workers include cleaning houses (83.3%), cooking (79.2%), laundry (29.2%), washing dishes (75%), ironing (70.8%), preparing meals (58.3%), and childcare (41.7%). Fewer workers are tasked with grocery shopping (29.2%), eldercare (8.3%), and pet care (4.2%). A small fraction (4.2%) also assists with commercial activities.

[16] FGDs with domestic workers Makassar, November 2024

[17] The survey in this research indicate that domestic workers experience significant variability in their daily working hours. Approximately 26% of respondents reported working between 4 and 8 hours per day, while a slightly larger group—27%—reported working more than 10 hours daily.

[18] BPJS Kesehatan is administrator for national healthcare system.

[19] BPJS Ketenagakerjaan is administrator for employment protection system.

these workers from the national security system on employment scheme. One domestic worker, for example, explained that she does not participate in national health insurance scheme because the government has yet to provide adequate support for her enrollment.[20]

The study finds that only 76.5% of domestic workers have BPJS Kesehatan coverage, with just 9.2% of employers fully covering this benefit, and 26.1% of workers paying out-of-pocket. Employer surveys reveal that 92.2% do not provide BPJS Kesehatan, and only 3.9% offer BPJS Ketenagakerjaan benefits. Interviews underscore the inconsistent support during illness; while some domestic workers receive employer assistance, others must cover their own medical expenses. Interviews and discussion with domestic workers further highlight inconsistent support during illness—some domestic workers receive employer assistance, while others must cover medical expenses themselves. For instance, one domestic worker stated that she needed to pay for her medical bill when she was sick.[21] On the other hand, another domestic worker stated that when she was sick, her employer gave her money to go to the doctor.[22]

This vulnerability is compounded by the informal classification of many domestic workers as self-employed rather than wage recipients, effectively excluding them from mandated benefits. BPJS Ketenagakerjaan explained that "*Currently, the monitoring and inspection functions apply only to wage recipients (those who was hired by the company). For the informal sector or non-wage recipients, since they are categorized as self-employed workers, BPJS Ketenagakerjaan does not oversee their social security coverage, even though regulations mandate employers to provide it.*"[23] Moreover, domestic workers themselves have called for parity in social security coverage. As one domestic worker put it, "*Ideally, office workers and domestic workers should be treated equally, without discrimination when it comes to receiving BPJS employment benefits.*"[24]

This informality not only heightens domestic workers' vulnerability to exploitation but also deprives them of the full range of financial benefits and legal protections available in the formal sector. In practice, employers often set wages and the festive allowance (*Tunjangan Hari Raya* or THR) at their own discretion, adjusting payments according to personal financial capacity or other situational factors.

THR itself is the most common monetary incentive given to domestic workers. There is a broad consensus among both domestic workers and employers that domestic workers should receive such benefits. However, informality makes the inconsistent application of such benefits. The study found that THR provisions differ depending on the employment arrangement. For instance, workers on monthly contracts may receive a full month's salary as THR, while those on a daily wage system typically do not receive THR at all but may instead get a bonus or tip.[25] Thus, unlike formal workers where the THR is regulated under the law,

[20] FGD with Domestic Workers, Makassar, 30 November 2024
[21] FGD with Domestic Workers, Makassar, 30 November 2024
[22] FGD with Domestic Workers Surabaya, 21 December 2024
[23] Interview with BPJS Ketenagakerjaan, 14 February 2025
[24] FGD with Domestic Workers Makassar, 30 November 2024
[25] FGDs with employer in Jakarta and Surabaya.

for domestic workers, this festive allowance is not uniformly standardized. Instead, its provision is subject to the employer's discretion.

> The festive allowance (THR) isn't a fixed amount or anything—just whatever I can afford
>
> Employer, FGD, Surabaya.

Establishing the Baseline: CARE Connect Indicators for Empowerment and Economic Well-Being

This chapter presents a comprehensive baseline assessment of the CARE Connect program, outlining key indicators that span from ultimate outcomes—such as enhanced empowerment and socio-economic well-being for women and girls—to immediate outcomes like improved competencies and rights awareness among domestic workers. Drawing on extensive survey, FGDs, and KII findings, the chapter examines various dimensions including economic pathways, job mobility, access to personal development, perceptions of care work policies, and the autonomy of domestic workers. These insights provide a critical benchmark for understanding the current landscape of care work in Indonesia and serve as a foundation for targeted interventions aimed at strengthening women's agency, economic participation, and social protections within the care economy.

The Demography Profile of Survey Respondents

Demographic Profile of Domestic Workers Survey Respondents

A total of 285 domestic workers participated in the survey. Among these, 39.6% (113 individuals) were live-in domestic —residing with their employers—while 60.4% (172 individuals) were live-out workers who commute according to their work schedules. Majority of them (71.9%) worked in Jakarta and South Tangerang, followed by Surabaya (20.4%) and Makassar (7.7%). Notably, 62.5% of domestic workers, especially those who are live-in, migrated from other regions in search of employment, indicates the significant movement of labor toward urban centers.

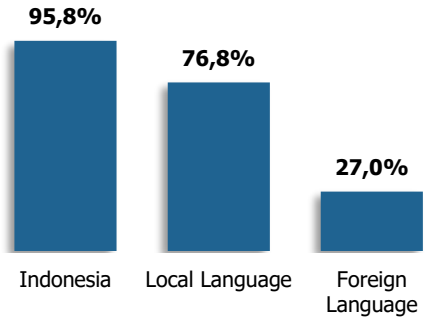


Figure 1. Language Spoken by Domestic Workers (n=285)

All respondents were women, reflecting the gendered nature of domestic work. In terms of age, 93% were over 24 years old and only 7% were between 18 and 24, that most domestic workers are adults with considerable work experience. The Furthermore, over 56.1% of the respondents had worked for more than five years, while 29.1% had between one and three years of experience.

Most domestic workers respondents have some formal education; however, only 9.3% completed high school.

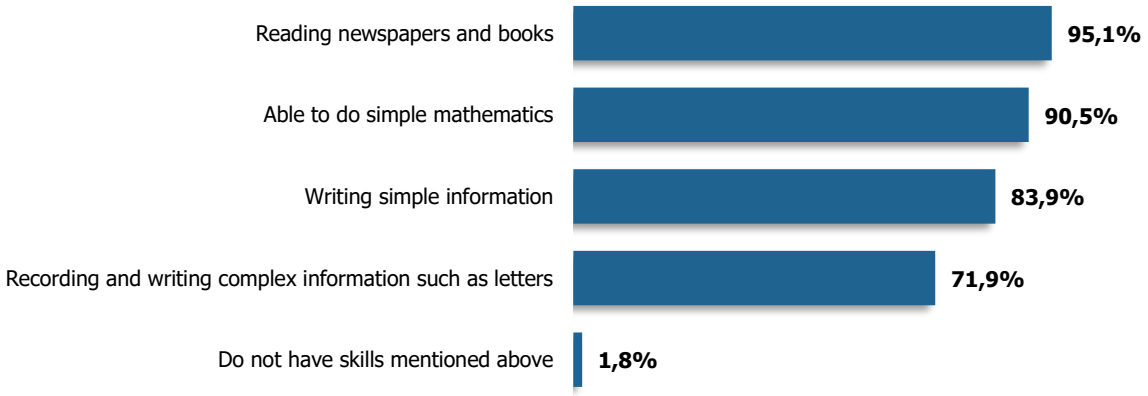


Figure 2. Level of Literacy of Domestic Workers (n=285)

Approximately 25.3% did not finish junior high school, and 24.2% did not complete elementary school. A very small percentage (0.7%) held a bachelor's degree. Most domestic workers are fluent in Bahasa Indonesia (95.8%) and their local language (76.8%), while 27% speak a foreign language. In terms of literacy, 95.1% can read books and newspapers, and 90.5% can perform basic arithmetic, although 1.8% reported lacking these essential skills.

Nearly two-thirds of domestic workers are married, and 86% have children. Yet among live-in domestic workers, 76.1% have children who are often left behind in their home, cared for by other family members such as fathers, grandmothers, or relatives. This significant separation between mothers and their children raises critical concerns about the well-being and development of these children and highlights the broader phenomenon of care chains.

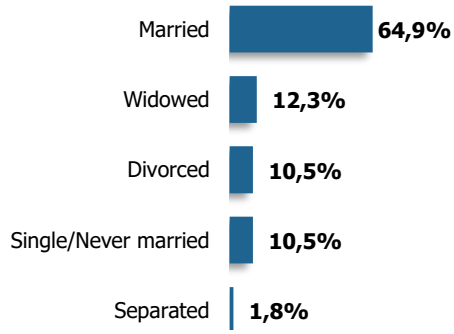


Figure 4. Marital Status of Domestic Worker Respondent

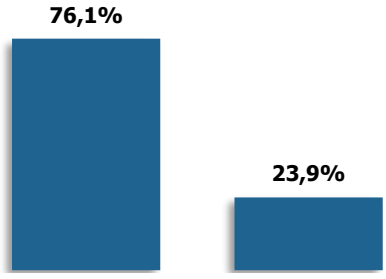


Figure 3. Proportion of Live-in Domestic Workers Who Have Children

The wage distribution reveals significant economic vulnerability among domestic workers: 42.9% earn less than Rp 2 million per month, while only 12.3% earn more than Rp 5 million, with most earning between Rp 1 million and Rp 2 million. Among live-out domestic workers, work arrangements vary considerably. While all live-in workers are full-time, about 52.3% of live-out workers are part-time. Furthermore, 56.7% of live-out workers serve in one household, 27.8% work in two households, and 15.6% are employed in more than two households. Part-time workers often juggle multiple assignments to boost their overall earnings, as wages in a single household are relatively low. For instance, one employer in Jakarta pays her part-time domestic workers only 500 thousand IDR per household, arguing that they spend minimal time and perform limited work. They also argue that domestic work will earn additional income in other households.[26] The study also records a significant proportion of domestic workers working for foreign (expatriate) employers, with 34.5% of live-in and 40.7% of live-out workers engaged in such arrangements.

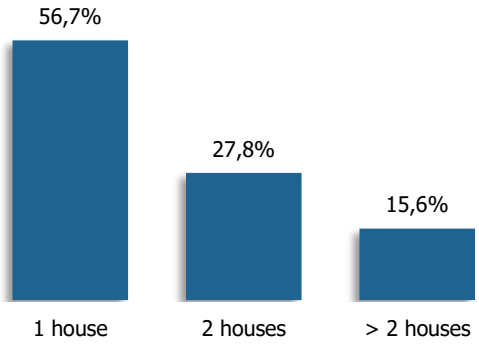


Figure 5. Number of Workplaces Served by Live-Out Domestic Workers

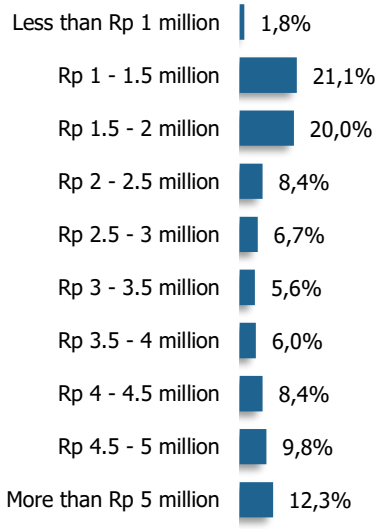


Figure 6. Monthly Average Wages of Domestic Workers (n=285)

While most domestic workers (64.6%) express satisfaction with their earnings, 35.4% report dissatisfaction with their current pay. Many reasons for not being satisfied with current earnings, during FGDs and interviews, the dissatisfaction with current salary mainly comes from workers feel that the salary does not reflect the load of work.

> "At first, I started working there with a salary of 1 million. The working hours were from 8 AM until finished. Usually, it was from 8 am to 12 pm, then a break from 1 pm to 3 pm , and at 4 pm, I would go back to sweeping. But now it's different. The work has changed, but the salary is only 500.
>
> ...At first, I was just a regular domestic worker. But then, I was placed in a boarding house. When I first arrived, all the rooms were empty. I helped promote the place to fill the rooms. Now, all 10 rooms are filled with tenants. Then, they said I also have to clean the corridors,

[26] FGD Employer, Jakarta, 4 January 2024

the rooms, and take out all the trash. But the problem is, why doesn't my employer see the way I work? With such a low salary, I'm helping them fill all the rooms, and I'm still cleaning the corridors, but my salary is still so low. I'm disappointed. I also think, if only I hadn't helped find the tenants for these rooms..."

Domestic Workers, FGDs, Makassar

Demographic Profile of Household Survey Respondents

A total of 63 respondents participated in the household survey. The sample comprised 17.5% men (11 individuals) and 82.5% women (52 individuals), and almost all respondents are adults, with only 1.6% classified as youth. Most household respondents (81% or 51 invidual) reporting that they hire domestic workers. Geographically, most respondents reside in Greater Jakarta (71.4%), followed by Surabaya (15.9%) and Makassar (12.7%).

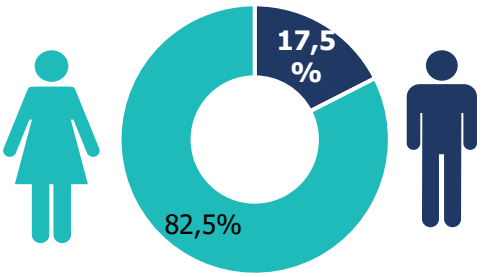


Figure 7. Gender Proportion of Household Survey Respondent

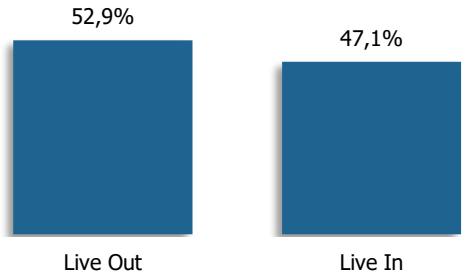


Figure 8. Employment Arrangement of Domestic Workers Hired by Employer

The study also indicates an increasing trend toward live-out arrangements in urban settings as most employers in the household survey hired live-out domestic workers (52.9%), while only 47.1% employed live-in workers. Most households that hire domestic workers employ only one worker (84.3%), while 11.8% hire two and just 3.9% employ more than two domestic workers.

Most household respondents hold a bachelor's degree (49.2%), followed by high school graduates (17.5%), diploma holders (9.5%), and those who pursued postgraduate studies (12.7%). A small percentage of respondents completed elementary school (1.6%), did not finish elementary school (1.6%), did not complete junior high school (3.2%), or graduated from junior high school (3.2%).

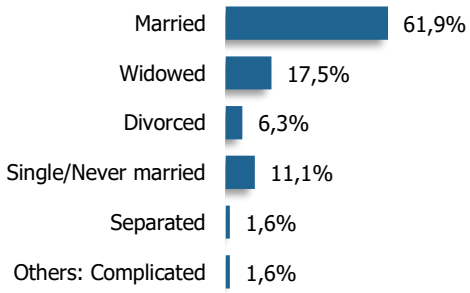


Figure 10. Marital Status of Household Respondents

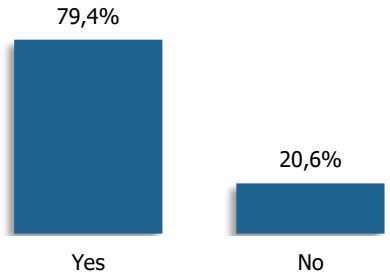


Figure 9. Proportion of Respondents Who has Children

Meanwhile, most household respondents are married (61.9%), while only 11.1% are single. The rest are divorced (6.3%), widowed (17.5%), separated (1.6%), or in a complicated relationship (1.6%). It is noteworthy that 74.5% of households hiring domestic workers have children, indicating that childcare is a primary driver for employing domestic workers. Moreover, given that household care responsibilities are traditionally shouldered by women, it is significant that 76,9% of women in households that hire domestic workers are also engaged in economic activities, with 42,5% serving as the primary earners in their families.

Demographic Profile of Surveyed CSOs

All of our respondents from CSOs — a total of five women working in Greater Jakarta — reported varying lengths of service within their organizations. The majority have worked for more than 10 years, reflecting strong long-term experience and institutional memory. A smaller group has between 5 and 10 years of experience, indicating a stable mid-level workforce with considerable expertise. Meanwhile, those with less than 5 years of experience represent newer entrants who may bring fresh perspectives but are still developing their capacity and networks.

Baseline Data for Outcome Indicators

Ultimate Outcome: Enhanced empowerment, social economic well-being and enjoyment of rights for women and girls in Indonesia

As part of the broader goal of enhancing empowerment, socio-economic well-being, and the enjoyment of rights for women and girls in Indonesia, this study examines the extent to which domestic workers have accessed different economic pathways beyond their primary employment, by assessing the additional activities of domestic workers and job transitioned of women respondents in households surveyed in the past three years.[27]

Table 3. Additional Income from Other Economic Activities by Domestic Worker Category (n=285)

Additional income from other economic activities	Live in	Live Out
Yes	16,8%	21,5%
No	83,2%	78,5%
Total	**100,0%**	**100,0%**

[27] While ideally this indicator would be also monitoring by measuring job shifts among domestic workers, Indonesia's labor market context and structural constraints make large-scale occupational changes unlikely within the project's four-year duration. Therefore, the project's indicator pragmatically captures additional economic activities—including even small side jobs—as interim markers of incremental empowerment. An increase in these activities can reflect varying degrees of empowerment and signal the potential for a full occupational transition in the long term.

Among the 285 surveyed domestic workers, only 19.6% reported earning additional income from other economic activities, while 80.4% rely solely on their primary employment. When disaggregated by employment type, 16.8% of live-in domestic workers and 21.5% of live-out domestic workers have supplementary sources of income. This suggests that live-out domestic workers have slightly greater flexibility and access to alternative economic opportunities compared to their live-in counterparts, who may experience more restrictions due to the nature of their residential employment arrangements.

Table 4. Type of Additional Income Generating Activities by Domestic Workers Category (n=285)

Type of additional income from other economic activities	Live in	Live Out
Home-based production or sales (e.g., small-scale manufacturing or local product production - MSMEs)	68,4%	78,4%
Online business (e.g., selling products/services through social media or e-commerce platforms)	15,8%	8,1%
Others (e.g., ride-hailing, etc.)	15,8%	13,5%
Total	**100,0%**	**100,0%**

Among those who engage in additional economic activities, home-based production or sales is the most common, with 75.0% involved in small-scale manufacturing or local product production, often linked to micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). This trend is more pronounced among live-out workers, with 78.4% participating in home-based production, compared to 68.4% of live-in workers. This indicates that live-out workers may have better access to resources and networks that enable them to undertake entrepreneurial activities.

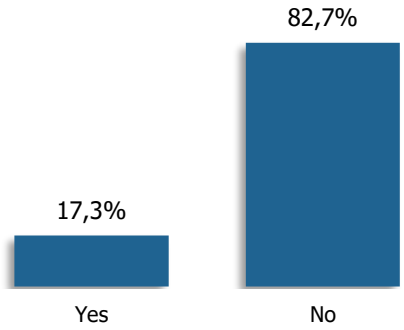


Figure 11. Proportion of Women with Job Transition in the past 3 years (n=52)

In the meantime, among the 52 surveyed women household respondents, whether employer or unpaid care workers, only 17.3% reported have changing jobs in the past three years, while the majority (82.7%) remained in the same economic role.

To assess domestic workers' access to personal development opportunities, the study examined both the extent of access and its perceived impact on skill enhancement and career prospects. Among the 285 surveyed domestic workers, only 41.8% reported having access to such activities—with minimal differences between live-in (41.6%) and live-out (41.9%) workers—while 58.2% lacked these opportunities.

Table 5. Proportion of Domestic Workers Have Access to Personal Development (n=285)

Access to personal development activities	Domestic Workers Category	
	Live in	Live Out
Yes	41,6%	41,9%
No	58,4%	58,1%
Total	**100,0%**	**100,0%**

Moreover, only 17,6% of employers reported involving their domestic workers in personal development initiatives, and a mere 3,9% indicated that their domestic workers are currently enrolled in such programs.

Table 6. Employer Support for Domestic Workers' Personal Development (n=51) and Workers' Participation in Education and Training Programs (n=285)

	Employers Involving Domestic Workers in Personal Development Activities	Domestic Workers' Current Enrollment in Educational or Training Programs
Yes	17,6%	3,9%
No	82,4%	96,1%
Total	**100,0%**	**100,0%**

Most domestic worker respondents (77.9%) reported acquiring new skills in their current workplace, primarily related to their job tasks—such as cooking (61.4%), ironing (55.4%), and using kitchen appliances (54.7%). Conversely, 22.1% indicated that they have not learned anything new. This also confirmed during FGDs and interview where employers also reported frequently sharing their knowledge with domestic workers, especially regarding work-related tasks,

> "Usually, I say to my domestic worker, 'I'll make these cakes tomorrow, so please help me, okay?' She replies, 'Yes, ma'am.' Then I teach her—I often do."
>
> Employer, FGD Surabaya

Discussions with employers and domestic workers reveal mixed interest in skill development. FGDs with domestic workers indicate that younger domestic workers are more eager to diversify their skills—two participants in Makassar even expressed interest in further training, with one aspiring to enroll in a sewing course to become a tailor. Field observations by researchers identify some skills that might be helpful for domestic workers to improve their qualifications, that might include degree in higher education, soft skills –including public speaking and organizational skills, and hard skills such as sewing, cleaning, cooking, foreign language and child caring knowledge, among others.

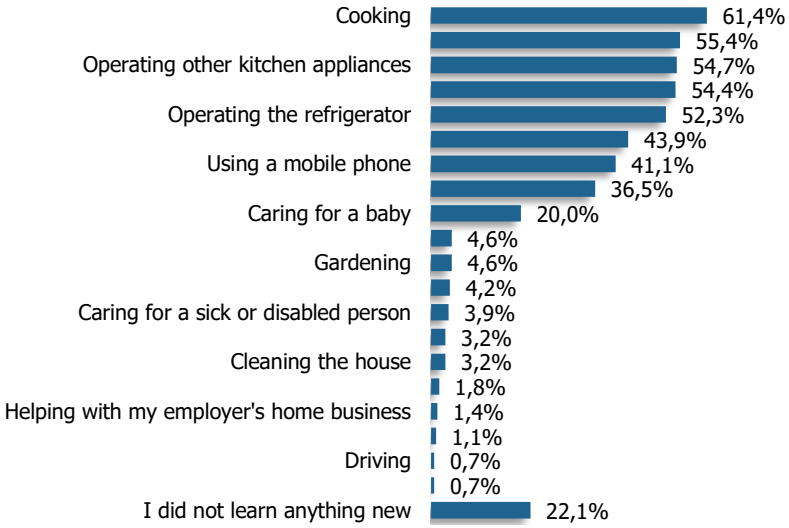


Figure 12. Skills Learned by Domestic Workers in Their Current Workplace (n=285)

However, the demanding nature of domestic work, characterized by long hours and minimal rest, severely limits opportunities for additional training, especially among older workers. Although many domestic workers show interest in extra courses or joining worker organizations, the immediate pressures of their jobs leave little room for such activities.

> "I once offered to enroll my domestic worker in a course, but she declined, saying it would take up too much of her time and distract her from her personal concerns. I even offered a sewing course."
>
> Employer, FGD, Jakarta

Some employers recognize the long-term benefits of capacity building. One employer noted, "If she gains any skills, she can generate additional income—maybe even become an entrepreneur and not remain a domestic worker for life."[28] Similarly, another shared, "*When I had my eldest child, I enrolled my caretaker in a nearby sewing course. Although she initially hesitated, I persisted, and eventually she took the course. After she got married and returned to her village, she started her own sewing business*."[29]

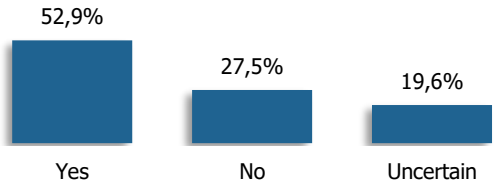


Figure 13. Employers' Interest in Supporting Domestic Workers' Participation in Training Programs

However, not all employers share this view. Among the 51 employer 52.9% expressed interest in enrolling their domestic workers in training programs, while 27.5% were not interested and 19.6% were uncertain. This mixed response suggests that while some employers are willing

[28] FGD with Domestic Workers, Surabaya, December 2024
[29] FGD with Domestic Workers, Jakarta, December 2024

to invest in their domestic workers' skill enhancement, others remain reluctant—often because they hire domestic workers for minimal, infrequent tasks. For example, one employer remarked, "*Since I only hire domestic workers once a week for basic cleaning, I don't consider it necessary to invest in their capacity development*."[30]

In terms of perceived usefulness of personal development activities, opinions vary significantly. Among the 119 domestic workers who accessed these programs, 37.8% rated them as very helpful and 30.3% found them helpful, indicating that nearly 68.1% see these activities as beneficial for skill development and career advancement. In contrast, 29.4% described the programs as moderately helpful, while only 1.7% rated them as slightly helpful or not helpful at all.

When disaggregated by employment type, live-in domestic workers are more positive about the training, with 48.9% rating it as very helpful compared to 30.6% of live-out workers. This suggests that live-in workers, despite facing more restrictive working conditions, may benefit more from structured learning opportunities within their employment setting. A worker in Jakarta, for example, shared that she benefited significantly from attending a language course, as it enabled her to communicate better with her expatriate employer and increased her confidence, making her feel less insecure about being perceived as unintelligent by her employer. In another discussion with one employer, she noted that her live-in domestic workers often had spare time between tasks, which she used to learn new skills.[31] In the meantime, among the employers who enrolled their domestic workers in training or capacity-building activities, all considered the quality of these programs to be good.

Table 7. Perceived usefulness personal development activities by domestic workers
Base: Domestic workers have access to personal development (n=119)

Perceived usefulness personal development activities	Domestic Workers Category	
	Live in	Live Out
Not helpful at all	0,0%	1,4%
Slightly helpful	2,1%	1,4%
Moderately helpful	27,7%	30,6%
helpful	21,3%	36,1%
Very Helpful	48,9%	30,6%
Total	**100,0%**	**100,0%**

While capacity building shows promise for improving domestic workers' lives, our study also explored the perceived impact of improved care work policies on advancing women's and girls' rights. Among 285 domestic workers, 55.8% agreed and 13.0% strongly agreed that such policies benefit women and girls, while only 3.2% (1.8% disagreed, 1.4% strongly disagreed) opposed this view; 28.1% remained neutral, suggesting some uncertainty or limited exposure. Notably, live-out workers were more likely to agree (62.8%) than live-in workers (45.1%), although a higher percentage of live-in workers strongly agreed (17.7% vs. 9.9%), indicating that perceptions of benefit may vary by employment type.

[30] Interview with employer, Jakarta, January 2025
[31] FGD with employer, Surabaya

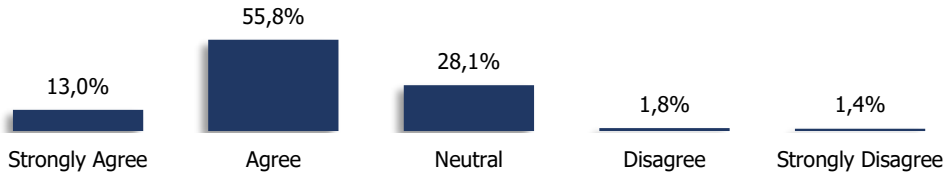


Figure 14. Perceived Impact of Improved Care Work Policies on Women's and Girls' Rights (n=285)

When analyzed by employment type, live-out workers (62.8%) were more likely to agree with the statement compared to live-in workers (45.1%). Similarly, fewer live-out workers strongly agreed (9.9%) compared to live-in workers (17.7%), which may suggest that live-out workers experience more visible benefits from policy changes or have greater exposure to discussions on labor rights and care work regulations.

Table 8. Perceived Impact of Improved Care Work Policies on Women's and Girls' Rights, by Domestic Worker Category

Perceived Impact of Improved Care Work Policies on Women's and Girls' Rights	Domestic Workers Category	
	Live in	Live Out
Strongly Disagree	0,0%	2,3%
Disagree	0,9%	2,3%
Neutral	36,3%	22,7%
Agree	45,1%	62,8%
Strongly Agree	17,7%	9,9%
Total	**100,0%**	**100,0%**

In the meantime, in the of Households survey, 72.7% of men respondents agreed that improved care work policies positively impact women's and girls' rights, compared to 57.7% of women respondents. Interestingly, none of the men respondents disagreed, while a small proportion of women expressed strong disagreement (1.9%) or remained neutral (11.5%). This difference may reflect a gendered disparity in the perceived effectiveness of care work reforms, with women—who are more directly involved in care responsibilities—being more critical of how these policies are implemented in practice

Table 9. Perceptions of Household Survey Respondents on the impact of improved care work policies by gender and age *(n=63)*

Perception impact of improve care work policies	Gender		Age	
	Men	Women	Youth	Adult
Strongly Disagree	0,0%	1,9%	0.0%	1.6%
Disagree	0,0%	0,0%	0.0%	0.9%
Neutral	27,3%	11,5%	0.0%	14.5%
Agree	72,7%	57,7%	0.0	61.3%
Strongly Agree	0,0%	28,8%	100%	22.6%

Further analysis also reveals distinct generational differences in how care work policies are perceived among different category of age within employer and unpaid care workers. Among these respondents, the younger respondents none agreed that improved care work policies positively impact the rights of women and girls. Instead, 100% of youth respondents strongly disagreed, indicating either a lack of awareness about these policies or a more negative perception of their effectiveness.

In contrast, 61.3% of adult respondents of employer and unpaid care workers agreed, while 22.6% strongly disagreed, demonstrating a more favorable perception of policy effectiveness among older individuals. Additionally, 14.5% of adults remained neutral, suggesting that while they may recognize the policies' benefits, they are still uncertain about their long-term impact.

The stark contrast between youth and adult perceptions suggests that younger individuals may feel excluded from care policy reforms or perceive them as insufficient in addressing structural inequalities in care work. Their overwhelming strong disagreement signals the need for better engagement, communication, and targeted policy interventions that directly address the concerns of younger generations, ensuring they also benefit from these reforms.

Further, it is clear from both FGDs and interview that many employers are very cautious related to the policies related to care workers. While they understand some workers need to be protected, they are afraid that the workers might demand the employers to fulfil their rights and disrupt the established dynamics between employers and domestic workers.

> "Nowadays, domestic workers—especially the younger ones—are very savvy. They have gadgets, can read, and are quite knowledgeable. With these new regulations, the pressure on us may increase because once they know the rules, it might come and hit us. Particularly with younger workers, it might pressure us (the employers), if we fail to comply with the government's regulations, they will come to us and said this regulation this, these regulations that. The consequences will come back to us."
>
> Employers, FGD, Makassar

In contrast, during discussions with unpaid care workers, they tend to be more supportive towards the policy related to care workers, including the protection towards domestic workers and provision of facilities for vulnerable groups that can ease care overwork on the family.

> "Oh, I completely agree. If there were legislation on domestic workers, I'd support it—this would allow them to receive better economic welfare, as their wages are often inadequate. Plus, employers tend to be overly demanding and picky yet remain stingy."
>
> Unpaid Care Worker, FGD, Surabaya

Intermediate Outcome: Enhanced protection and promotion of women's rights and needs related to paid care work in Indonesia

The indicator measures the percentage of individuals who recognize, appreciate, and advocate for the value of paid care work in Indonesia, as well as the percentage whose reflections indicate a shift toward gender-equitable social norms in the care economies of Indonesia.

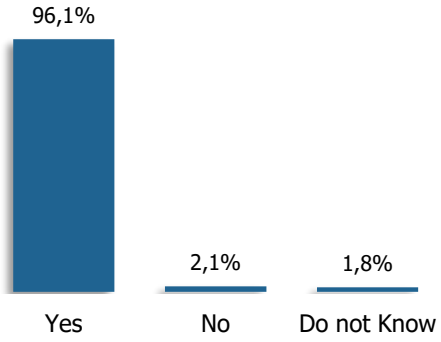


Figure 15. Perception of Domestic work as valuable to their families (n=285)

The study reveals that domestic workers overwhelmingly recognize the value of their work for their families, with 96.1% affirming that they feel their work is meaningful. This high level of self-appreciation is consistent across both live-in (94.7%) and live-out (97.1%) workers, indicating that regardless of their employment arrangement, domestic workers understand and affirm the critical role they play in sustaining household well-being. Only a negligible percentage, 2.1%, do not see the value in their work, while 1.8% remain uncertain.

FGDs and interviews reveal that domestic workers view their work as valuable to their families and as a means of asserting personal dignity and independence. Many serve as the primary breadwinners, making their earnings essential for both household sustenance and individual empowerment. For many domestic workers, earning their own income is not merely about survival, it is an act of empowerment. Their ability to purchase even modest items independently represents a reclamation of self-worth and a safeguard against economic vulnerability in later life.

> "I'm so happy that I can buy things with the sweat of my own labor, especially when money was more available recently. I am extremely grateful—I am now debt-free. Even though I only have a little, it is mine, so that when I grow old and can no longer work, I have something to rely on. I don't ask my husband for money; I buy things on my own. In the past, I saw someone wearing a robe, and I really wanted to have clothes like that for religious gatherings. I truly desired it, so I worked for 7 years, and I am very thankful that I was able to buy it on my own, even if it's modest, it's mine. I cherish it as a symbol of my dignity, and I am truly grateful to God for the opportunity."
>
> Women, Domestic Workers, FGD, Surabaya

However, when considering the broader societal impact of their labor, the perception is less uniformly positive. While most domestic workers acknowledge their personal contribution, only 66.7% agree that their work benefits society at large, with significant variations observed between different employment types and age groups. This gap suggests that, although domestic workers inherently appreciate the importance of their own efforts within their households, external validation and recognition of their contributions to the wider economy are lacking.

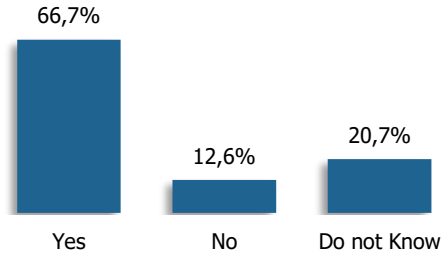


Figure 16. Domestic Workers' Perception of Their Contribution to Society (n=285)

Table 10. Perceived Contribution to Society, by Workers Category (n=285)

Domestic workers perceive have done valuable work for the society	Live in	Live Out
Yes	62,8%	69,2%
No	17,7%	9,3%
Don't know	19,5%	21,5%
Total	**100,0%**	**100,0%**

Findings from household surveys also show similar trends. The data reveal an overwhelmingly positive perception of household respondents, with 92.1% rating it as either somewhat or very valuable to society. Notably, 54.0% of respondents view it as "somewhat valuable," while 38.1% consider it "very valuable." This suggests that the essential roles of childcare, elder care, and domestic work are widely recognized, with no respondents deeming such work as "not very valuable." Similarly, during FGDs, while the informant acknowledge the valued contribution of domestic workers, they hesitant to provide bigger salary for domestic workers, arguing that all of the needs already covered, particularly for live-in domestic workers.[32]

> "Care work is often seen as a kind of labor that doesn't deserve payment, because it's viewed as something that strengthens family bonds. For friends who work in the care sector—like domestic workers, for example—their work is often considered something that could disrupt those cultural norms. It's seen as something that might cause problems or even harm the spirit of togetherness within the family. Some people even believe that putting a monetary value on this kind of work would actually damage that sense of familial solidarity.
>
> But as an organization, we're also thinking about how to turn this into an issue of recognizing and valuing care work—how to push for public support and appreciation for this type of labor."
>
> Women, CSOs, FGD

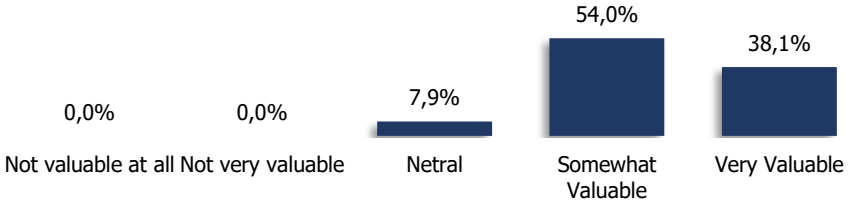


Figure 17. Perceptions Among Household Respondents on Domestic Workers' Contribution to Society (n = 63)

Further analysis shows distinct differences by gender and age. Women appear to value paid care work more highly than men—40.4% of women rated it as "very valuable" compared to

[32] This is consistent in every FGDs with employer in every city.

27.3% of men. This could reflect the fact that women are often more directly engaged in care-related roles and therefore more attuned to its intrinsic value.

Perceptions Among Household Respondents on Domestic Workers' Contribution to Society	Men	Women
Very Valuable	27,3%	40,4%
Somewhat Valuable	54,5%	53,8%
Neutral	18,2%	5,8%
Total	**100,0%**	**100,0%**

Table 11. Perceptions Among Household Respondents on Domestic Workers' Contribution to Society by gender (n = 63)

During focus group discussions and interviews, opinions on domestic work varied significantly. While many participants recognized the value of domestic work, others described it as demeaning and low-status—views that were especially pronounced among those with higher educational backgrounds. For example, one domestic worker noted that university graduates often consider domestic work shameful precisely because it does not require formal education.[33] This divergence highlights a significant paradox: despite its crucial and demanding nature, domestic work is frequently devalued and stigmatized by society.

> "Honestly, it's seen as lowly work. But what can you do? If you work abroad, miss, and you're from a village—if you come back with a lot of money, like hundreds of millions—they say you're selling yourself. Yet over there, you never know day from night; you don't even know what it's like to struggle through the rain. It's considered lowly work; that's just the way it is. For us, after only a few years, how can we possibly earn that much? Isn't that the whole point? It's a desperate struggle. "
>
> Women, FGD, Domestic Workers, Jakarta

Given this recognition, it is unsurprising that a strong majority of respondents support elevating paid care work to the same level of respect as other professional fields. Over half (50.8%) fully agree that it deserves equal recognition, and an additional 39.7% moderately agree. Only 7.9% express disagreement, with just 1.6% strongly opposed.

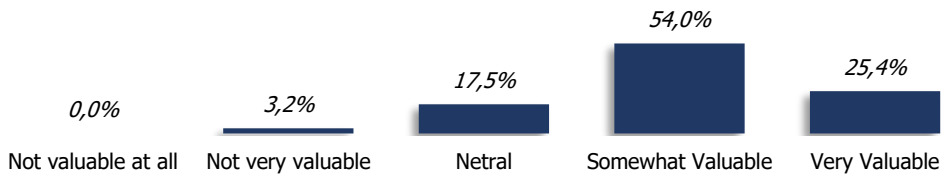


Figure 18. Recognition of Paid Care Work as an Essential and Respected Part of the Economy (Household Survey, n=63)

[33] FGD with Domestic Workers, Makassar

However, disaggregated data reveals important gender and generational nuances. While similar proportions of men (45.5%) and women (51.9%) fully support equal recognition of care work with other professions, men are more likely to offer conditional support—recognizing care work as equal only under specific circumstances (54.5% vs. 36.5%). men are more likely to offer conditional support—recognizing care work as equal only under specific circumstances (54.5% vs. 36.5%). Notably, while no men expressed disagreement, 11.5% of women did. This hesitation may reflect internalized gender norms or persistent structural biases that continue to devalue care work, particularly roles traditionally associated with women.

Table 12. Paid care workers deserve the same level of respect and recognition as other types of professional work by gender
Base: Household Survey (n=63)

Paid care work deserved the same level of respect and recognition as other types of professional work	Men	Women	Youth	Adults
Yes definitely	45,5%	51,9%	100%	50%
Yes, to some extent	54,5%	36,5%	0.0%	40.3%
No not really	0,0%	9,6%	0.0%	8.1%
No, not at all	0,0%	1,9%	0.0%	1.6%
Total	**100,0%**	**100,0%**	**100,0%**	**100,0%**

Generational differences are even more pronounced. Although youth respondents represent a small portion of the sample, all of them (100%) fully support equal respect for paid care work with other profession. Among adults, 40.3% offered conditional support by agreeing to some extent, while 8.1% said "not really" and 1.6% outright rejected the idea. In contrast, adult respondents are more divided: 50.0% fully agree, 40.3% somewhat agree, and 9.7% express varying degrees of disagreement. This suggests that younger generations may idealize care work for its social value, while adults—more aware of its limited economic prospects—approach the issue with greater caution.

The study also explores individuals' perceptions of men's involvement in domestic work among domestic workers and household survey respondents. Findings indicate growing acceptance of men's participation in caregiving and household responsibilities, though gender norms still influence attitudes—particularly regarding shared roles and men as domestic workers. When asked whether men can work as domestic workers, 62.1% of domestic workers agreed, 30.9% disagreed, and 7.0% were unsure. Acceptance was consistent across live-in (61.9%) and live-out (62.2%) workers.

Men can be domestic workers	Live in	Live Out
Yes	61,9%	62,2%
No	30,1%	31,4%
Don't know	8,0%	6,4%
Total	**100,0%**	**100,0%**

Table 13.Perceptions on Men Working as Domestic Workers, by Worker Category

Despite this growing acceptance, those who opposed men working as domestic workers (30.9%) cited deeply entrenched gender norms as the primary reason. The majority (77.3%) of domestic workers stated that domestic work has traditionally been performed by women, while 23.9% believed that men and boys are less capable of performing domestic tasks as effectively as women. Additionally, 17.0% felt that employers would be uncomfortable hiring men, and 10.2% viewed it as shameful for men to work as domestic workers.

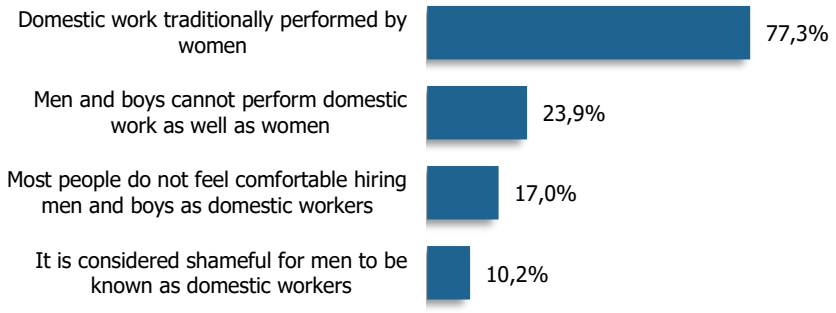


Figure 19. Reason men can't work as domestic workers (MA)
Base: Domestic workers who answered no (n=88)

Younger domestic workers were less likely to reinforce gender stereotypes. While 100% of youth who opposed men in domestic work cited tradition as the reason, none of them agreed with statements that men are inherently less capable or that hiring men domestic workers is socially unacceptable. In contrast, 24.7% of adults stated that men are less capable, 17.6% believed employers would feel uncomfortable, and 10.6% cited social stigma. These differences suggest that younger domestic workers may be more willing to challenge traditional norms, while older respondents remain more aligned with prevailing social attitudes.

Table 14. Reason men can't work as domestic workers by age category
Base: Domestic workers who answered no (n=88)

Reason man cannot be domestic workers	Youth	Adults
Domestic work traditionally performed by women	100,0%	76,5%
Men and boys cannot perform domestic work as well as women	0,0%	24,7%
Most people do not feel comfortable hiring men and boys as domestic workers	0,0%	17,6%
It is considered shameful for men to be known as domestic workers	0,0%	10,6%

While skepticism persists about men as professional domestic workers, there is near-unanimous agreement that men and boys can perform household chores. A total of 94.7% of respondents believed they are capable, with only 5.3% disagreeing. This view was consistent across both live-in (94.7%) and live-out (94.8%) domestic workers.

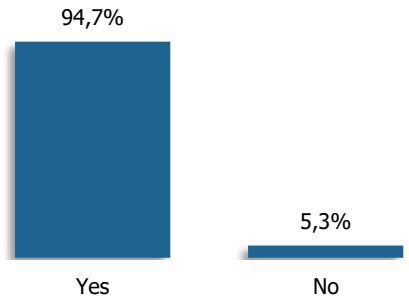


Figure 20. Percentage of Domestic Workers Who Agree That Men or Boys Can Do Household Chores

Table 15. Percentage of Domestic Workers Who Agree That Men or Boys Can Do Household Chores

Men/boys can do household chores	Domestic Workers Category	
	Live in	Live Out
Yes	94,7%	94,8%
No	5,3%	5,2%
Total	**100,0%**	**100,0%**

There is strong consensus among households' survey respondent that men should actively participate in domestic work. An overwhelming majority (96.8%) agreed, reinforcing the perception that household chores are not solely a woman's duty. Similarly, 96.8% of respondents agreed that men are allowed to clean the house even when their wives are at home, reinforcing the belief that domestic chores are not exclusively a woman's duty. Additionally, 93.7% agreed that fathers can take care of their children (e.g., feeding, bathing) even when the mother is present, indicating that traditional caregiving roles are gradually shifting toward a more inclusive care-giving model.

Gender-disaggregated data shows a small but notable difference: all men respondents (100%) agreed that fathers can take care of their children, while slightly fewer women (92.3%) shared this view. This gap suggests that some women may still view caregiving as primarily their responsibility, even as they acknowledge men's capacity to participate.

Table 16. Perceptions of Men's Involvement in Household Chores: Household Survey Results (n=63)

Statement	Agree	Not Agree	Do Not Know
Men, such as husbands or fathers, should help with household chores	96,8%	3,2%	0,0%
A father can take care of his children (e.g., feeding, bathing, etc.), even when the mother is present	93,7%	4,8%	1,6%
Men are allowed to clean the house, even when their wives are at home	96,8%	0,0%	3,2%
Household chores and caregiving responsibilities should be equally shared between men and women	81,0%	15,9%	3,2%

As shown in the survey, gender-disaggregated data shows that even though it is general conception among men and women that household's chore and caregiving responsibilities should be equally shared, more women (19.2%) than men (0%) disagreed with equal sharing

of household responsibilities, reflecting that some women may internalize the idea that caregiving is their duty, rather than a shared responsibility.

However, while agreement levels were high across both men and women from employer and unpaid care workers, slight variations were observed. All men respondents (100%) agreed that fathers can take care of their children, while 92.3% of women held the same view. The small gender gap suggests that women may still perceive caregiving as their primary role, even when acknowledging men's capacity to perform such tasks.

Table 17. Perceptions on Fathers' Role in Childcare Despite Mothers' Presence (n=63)

A father can take care of his children (e.g., feeding, bathing, etc.), even when the mother is present	Men	Women
Agree	100,0%	92,3%
Not agree	0,0%	5,8%
Don't know	0,0%	1,9%
Total	**100,0%**	**100,0%**

Although 81.0% of respondents agreed that household and caregiving responsibilities should be shared equally, 15.9% disagreed, and 3.2% were unsure. This suggests that some employers and unpaid care workers still believe in traditional gender divisions of labor, where women remain primarily responsible for domestic tasks.

Table 18. Perception over shared towards care works by gender (Households survey, n=63)

Household chores and caregiving responsibilities should be shared equall	Men	Women
Agree	81,8%	80,8%
Not agree	0,0%	19,2%
Don't know	18,2%	0,0%
Total	**100,0%**	**100,0%**

As shown in the survey, gender-disaggregated data shows that even though it is general conception among men and women that household's chore and caregiving responsibilities should be equally shared, more women (19.2%) than men (0%) disagreed with equal sharing of household responsibilities, reflecting that some women may internalize the idea that caregiving is their duty, rather than a shared responsibility.

The FGDs and interviews also observed similar findings, most women acknowledge that the ideal is a balanced sharing of domestic tasks.

> "In my opinion, an ideal husband should help take care of the children and share in household chores—not just earn money but also manage the home."
>
> Women, Unpaid Care Workers, FGDs, Makassar

Yet, even within these narratives, there is an implicit acceptance that day-to-day management of the household remains a woman's responsibilities. Conversely, during the discussion women informants often express frustration with the status quo. They recount scenarios where, despite occasional minor help from husbands, the overall responsibility never shifts; the core tasks continue to fall on the women in the household.

> "That's what happens at home; the husband helps occasionally, but when he's not there, everything falls back on the mother. So, the responsibility remains with women."
>
> Women, Domestic Workers, FGDs, Surabaya

The researchers also observed that gender construction in the household is deeply embedded in longstanding cultural norms that valorize women's unpaid care work as natural and inevitable. Some informants often allude to inherent gender traits—almost as if the roles are biologically predetermined. Some of these informants reinforce a perception that women's responsibility for cooking, cleaning, and child rearing is not negotiable but an expected part of their identity.

> "The mothers always say, 'That's your duty'... because it's simply in a woman's nature."
>
> Women, Unpaid Care Workers, Makassar

Even as some households attempt to distribute tasks more equitably, the broader societal expectation remains that women should be the primary caretakers. This expectation is further reinforced by generational attitudes—older generations often hold onto more traditional, patriarchal views, while younger voices may express a desire for change yet are still caught within the same structural constraints.

Moreover, while majority of women acknowledge that when husbands do engage in domestic tasks, it is often in a limited, task-specific manner that does not fundamentally alter the overall gendered division. The ideal of "*saling membantu*" (mutual support) exists more as an aspiration than a reality in many households.

Thus, the study observed an attempt to negotiate a more "pragmatic" division of labor. In households where women are actively involved in setting up the work schedule, there is evidence of a division based on practical constraints and the physical ability of the household members and domestic workers. Women informants highlights that while the husband may take on certain tasks—like going to the market or handling heavier chores—the overall orchestration of the household remains under the purview of the woman. The division is "negotiated" in the sense that the husband's contribution is seen as a relief on specific days or tasks, yet it does not challenge the underlying assumption that the bulk of domestic care falls to women.

Further, women also perceived that while man is looking for money outside, they do not have a heart to tell the husband with the households' chores while he get back home.

"In my case, my husband really wants to show appreciation, then when I see that he's tired, he doesn't have to help me—I can manage on my own, because I know he's tired too."

Women, FGD Unpaid Care Workers, Makassar

For many women division of labor is less about negotiation and more about enduring a system where women—even those employed to help—are left to shoulder almost all household tasks. The women expression during discussion often reveal that the cultural script is unyielding: men rarely step in for routine care work, and when they do, it is frequently described as "*sekedarnya*" (just enough) or done out of necessity rather than as a shared responsibility.

Furthermore, gender constructions within household shape care patterns, including the emergence of care chains. This dynamic reinforces the role of women as primary care workers. Further details are provided in Annex 1.

Intermediate Outcome. Enhanced participation of women and girls in economic, educational, political, community and leisure activities aligned to their own choice in the Philippines and Indonesia

This outcome is measured by the participation of domestic workers—especially women—in organized groups and their involvement in collective action related to domestic work in Indonesia. The indicator also assesses women's autonomy in decision-making, including decision-making related to care responsibilities, whether they are domestic workers, employers, or unpaid care workers.

Among the 285 domestic workers surveyed, 41.1% reported being members of domestic work-related groups, while 58.9% were not involved in any such organizations. Membership varied by employment type: 48.3% of live-out workers participated in these groups, compared to only 30.1% of live-in workers. The lower participation rate among live-in workers may be due to limited mobility and time constraints.

Table 19. Participation in Domestic Work Associations (n=285)

Participation in Domestic Work Associations	Domestic Workers Category	
	Live in	Live Out
Yes	30,1%	48,3%
No	69,9%	51,7%
Total	**100,0%**	**100,0%**

Although many domestic workers are involved in organized groups, only 19.7% hold leadership positions. Interestingly, among members, live-in workers were more likely to be in leadership roles (26.5%) compared to live-out workers (16.9%). This suggests that while fewer live-in workers join organizations, those who do are often more engaged or motivated to lead—possibly a response to the greater isolation and challenges they face in their work

environment. In the meantime, among 52 women respondents of household surveyed, 26.9% held leadership positions in organizations, while 73.1% did not.

Table 20. Domestic Workers Holding Leadership Roles in group or association (n=117)

Domestic Workers in with Leadership Roles in organization (%)	Domestic Workers Category	
	Live in	Live Out
Yes	26,5%	16,9%
No	73,5%	83,1%
Total	**100,0%**	**100,0%**

Focus group discussions (FGDs) further highlight the transformative impact of organizational participation. Many domestic workers shared how joining an organization boosted their confidence, improved communication with employers, and strengthened their ability to advocate for fair treatment. Further, organizational membership not only builds individual skills but also fosters collective resilience and empowers workers to challenge exploitative practices.

> "Before joining an organization, I didn't know how to speak up. Now I know how to negotiate, find the right approach, and get support from others in the group."
>
> Women, Domestic Workers, FGD, Jakarta

Another added:

> "If we stay silent, employers think everything is okay. After joining the organization, I learned how to speak up and challenge unfair treatment—like when overtime pay was cut without explanation.
>
> Women, Domestic Workers, FGD, Jakarta

However, access to these organizations remains uneven. In FGDs, many domestic workers expressed interest in joining but noted that such associations were not available in their cities, limiting opportunities for broader collective action.

The study found that, big number of women—particularly domestic workers—report a degree of autonomy in decision-making. Among 285 surveyed domestic workers, 60.4% agreed they could go out without supervision, while 10.9% strongly agreed. However, 26.7% disagreed, suggesting that although the majority experience some freedom of movement, a significant portion (37.6%) still face mobility restrictions.

Disaggregation by employment type reveals that live-out domestic workers (64.0%) are more likely to report freedom of movement than live-in workers (54.9%). Moreover, a higher proportion of live-in workers strongly disagreed with this statement (15.0% vs. 8.1%), indicating that residential employment arrangements may limit autonomy—likely due to employer control over schedules and movement. Age-based data shows further variation. Youth workers reported slightly lower overall agreement (55.0%) compared to adults (60.8%), but a significantly higher share of youth (30.0%)—although only represent small proportion of sample, strongly agreed, versus only 9.4% of adults. This suggests that while

some younger workers enjoy greater mobility, others may experience more restrictions—potentially due to social norms or employer assumptions about age and independence.

When it comes to decision-making at work, domestic workers appear to have greater autonomy. The majority (67.0%) agreed they have the freedom to decide how to carry out their tasks, and 9.1% strongly agreed. Only 23.9% disagreed. Compared to mobility, fewer workers reported strict limitations on task-related decision-making, indicating that while their movement may be controlled, they have more agency in how they perform their duties.

There were no major differences by employment type: 69.2% of live-out workers and 63.7% of live-in workers agreed they could make work-related decisions. Interestingly, live-in workers were slightly more likely to strongly agree (12.4%) than live-out workers (7.0%), possibly reflecting individual variations in work arrangements or employer-worker relationships. Age-disaggregated data revealed the most striking difference. Although the youth[34] sample size was smaller, 75.0% of younger workers reported decision-making autonomy, compared to 66.4% of adults. Only 15.0% of youth disagreed, versus 24.5% of adults. This suggests that while younger domestic workers may face stricter movement limitations, they tend to have greater flexibility and input in how they carry out their work tasks.

Table 21. Domestic Workers' Autonomy in Work Decisions, by Job and Age Category
Base: Domestic workers (n=285)

I am able to make decision about how to do the works	Domestic Workers Category		Age Category	
	Live in	Live Out	Youth	Adults
Strongly Disagree	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%
Disagree	23,9%	23,8%	15,0%	24,5%
Agree	63,7%	69,2%	75,0%	66,4%
Strongly agree	12,4%	7,0%	10,0%	9,1%
Total	**100,0%**	**100,0%**	**100,0%**	**100,0%**

A higher percentage of domestic workers feel empowered in making decisions about how they perform their work. 67.0% agreed that they have autonomy in their tasks, while 23.9% disagreed and 9.1% strongly agreed. Unlike the question of mobility, fewer workers reported strong restrictions on decision-making, suggesting that while movement is controlled, workers have more agency in executing their tasks.

Employment type did not show major differences, with 69.2% of live-out workers and 63.7% of live-in workers agreeing that they can make work-related decisions. However, live-in workers (12.4%) were slightly more likely than live-out workers (7.0%) to strongly agree, reinforcing the idea that residential work arrangements come with greater limitations on worker autonomy.

[34] In this study, youth are defined as individuals aged 15 to 24 years.

Meanwhile, among the 52 surveyed women respondents in the household survey, 92.3% agreed that they have the freedom to make decisions about their household and external activities. Only 5.8% disagreed, while 1.9 % remained uncertain.

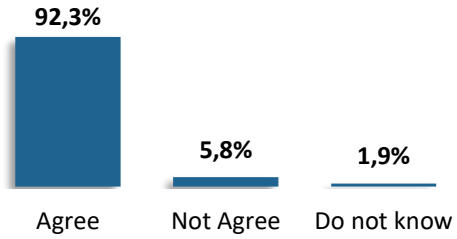


Figure 21. Women have the freedom to make decisions about their household and external activities
Base: Women Households' Survey Respondent (n=52)

Immediate Outcome: Enhanced competencies of paid care workers, particularly domestic care workers, and their employers to recognize and respond to the rights and needs of paid care workers in Indonesia

This particular outcome is measured based on the level of knowledge of domestic workers' rights, among domestic workers and employers.

Among 285 surveyed domestic workers, 81.1% reported being aware of their rights, while 18.9% were not leaving a significant portion vulnerable to exploitation and poor working conditions. Awareness was slightly higher among live-out workers (81.4%) compared to live-in workers (80.5%).

Table 22. Level of Awareness on the rights as domestic workers by domestic workers category and age category
Base: Domestic workers (n=285)

Has awareness of the rights you have as a domestic worker	Domestic Workers Category		Age Category	
	Live in	Live Out	Youth	Adults
Yes	80,5%	81,4%	80,0%	81,1%
No	19,5%	18,6%	20,0%	18,9%
Total	**100,0%**	**100,0%**	**100,0%**	**100,0%**

Of those aware of their rights (231 respondents), knowledge was strongest around basic labor protections: nearly all (99.6%) knew about fair wages, 90.5% about rest days, and 88.7% about safe working conditions.

However, awareness of broader labor rights and protections was significantly lower. Only 63.6% of respondents acknowledged their right to protection from abuse, suggesting that many domestic workers may not fully understand reporting mechanisms or legal recourse

options in cases of mistreatment. Even fewer respondents (59.3%) were aware of their right to unionize and organize, highlighting a critical gap in knowledge about collective bargaining, labor representation, and access to worker advocacy groups.

Beyond labor protections, awareness of additional entitlements such as decent meals (1.3%) and access to health and social protection (0.9%) remained exceptionally low. This suggests that domestic workers may primarily associate their rights with immediate work conditions, such as wages and rest days, rather than long-term well-being benefits like social security and employer-provided meals. These gaps underscore the need for targeted awareness campaigns to ensure that domestic workers are fully informed about their rights beyond basic labor conditions.

Among domestic workers who reported being aware of their rights (231 respondents), knowledge varied across different legal protections. Nearly all respondents (99.6%) were aware of their right to fair wages. Similarly, 90.5% of respondents recognized their entitlement to rest days, while 88.7% were aware of their right to safe working conditions, indicating that most domestic workers understand basic labor protections related to wages, working hours, and workplace safety.

However, awareness of broader labor rights and protections was significantly lower. Only 63.6% of respondents acknowledged their right to protection from abuse, suggesting that many domestic workers may not fully understand reporting mechanisms or legal recourse options in cases of mistreatment. Even fewer respondents (59.3%) were aware of their right to unionize and organize, highlighting a critical gap in knowledge about collective bargaining, labor representation, and access to worker advocacy groups.

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Table 23. Recognized rights as a domestic worker by domestic workers category and age category (MA)

Base: Domestic workers aware of the right (n=231)

Recognized rights	Domestic Workers Category		Age Category	
	Live in	Live Out	Youth	Adults
Fair Wages	98,9%	100,0%	100,0%	99,5%
Safe Working Conditions	97,8%	82,9%	93,8%	88,4%
Right to Rest Days	96,7%	86,4%	87,5%	90,7%
Protection form Abuse	67,0%	61,4%	75,0%	62,8%
Right to Organize	62,6%	57,1%	62,5%	59,1%
Others: Rights to Decent Meals	1,1%	1,4%	0,0%	1,4%

Recognized rights	Domestic Workers Category		Age Category	
	Live in	Live Out	Youth	Adults
Others: Right to Health & Social Protection	0,0%	1,4%	0,0%	0,9%

Live-in workers were more likely to be aware of protections related to safe working conditions (97.8%) and rest days (96.7%) compared to live-out workers (82.9% and 86.4%, respectively). However, awareness of unionizing rights was higher among live-in workers (62.6%) compared to live-out workers (57.1%), suggesting that residential domestic workers may face greater structural barriers in accessing labor organizations and advocacy networks.

Similarly, during focus group discussions and interviews, domestic workers consistently identified fair wages and good treatment from employers as their most critical rights. Several informants also stressed the need for domestic workers to be included in social protection schemes, such as BPJS Ketenagakerjaan, to ensure their long-term economic security and dignity.

The baseline study examines employers' knowledge of policies and legal frameworks related to domestic worker protection, particularly their awareness of the Ministerial Decree on the Protection of Domestic Workers. The findings indicate limited awareness among employers, particularly among women respondents, suggesting gaps in understanding the legal rights and protections of paid care workers.

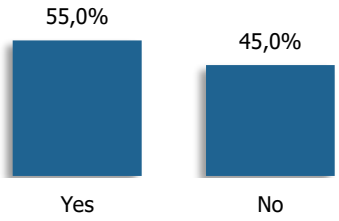


Figure 22. Employers with In-Depth Understanding of the Ministerial Decree (Base: Those Aware, n = 20)

Among the 20 surveyed employers who have heard the Ministerial Decree regulating domestic workers, less than half (45.0%) reported having in-depth knowledge of the Ministerial Decree, while 55.0% admitted they were unaware of the policy. This indicates that a majority of employers lack familiarity with existing legal protections for domestic workers, potentially affecting their ability to implement fair labor practices in their households.

When disaggregated by gender, men employers (75.0%) were significantly more likely to report awareness of the decree compared to women employers (37.5%). In contrast, 62.5% of women employers admitted having no knowledge of the policy, highlighting a greater need for awareness and education among women employers, who often oversee household employment arrangements and caregiving responsibilities.

Further, the study also found that among 285 surveyed domestic workers, only 1.1% felt very confident in negotiating their employment conditions, while 13.3% felt confident and 15.1% were somewhat confident. In contrast, 57.2% reported lacking confidence, and 13.3% felt very unconfident meaning over 70% of domestic workers struggle to assert their rights during negotiations with employers.

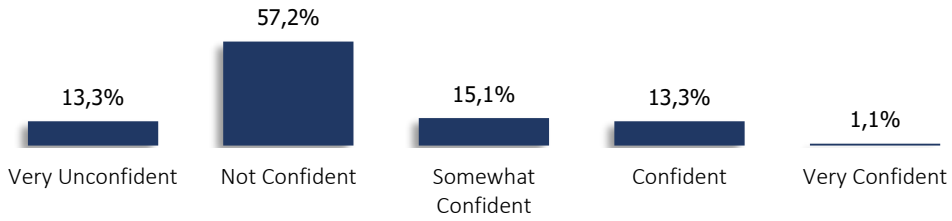


Figure 23. Confidence Among Domestic Workers to Advocate for Fair Employment Conditions (n = 285)

Focus group discussions revealed varying levels of negotiation capacity. While some domestic workers have begun to advocate for fair wages and working hours, many remain hesitant due to fear of job loss or retaliation. One domestic worker described her failed attempt to ask for a raise as "*nerve-wracking*,"[35] explaining that her employer threatened to replace her.[36] Others echoed similar fears: one admitted, "*I'm afraid of being fired,*"[37] while another said she didn't dare ask her employer to leave after her tasks were done, even if she could occasionally request time off during emergencies.[38] Still, some workers shared successful experiences. One participant secured a raise by threatening to leave and another regularly negotiated overtime pay.[39]

When disaggregated by employment type, live-in workers were more likely to express confidence: 18.6% felt confident and 20.4% somewhat confident, compared to 9.9% and 11.6% of live-out workers, respectively. Conversely, 66.3% of live-out workers reported lacking confidence, compared to 43.4% of live-in workers. This suggests that live-in workers may feel more familiar or secure with their employers, while live-out workers—often managing multiple employers or facing more precarious conditions—feel less empowered to negotiate.

Table 24. Confident to fight for wages/working hours/scopes of work with employer by domestic workers category
Base: Domestic workers (n=285)

Confident to fight for wages/working hours/scopes of work with employer	Live in	Live Out
Very Confident	1,8%	0,6%
Confident	18,6%	9,9%
Somewhat Confident	20,4%	11,6%
Not Confident	43,4%	66,3%
Very Unconfident	15,9%	11,6%
Total	**100,0%**	**100,0%**

[35] FGD Domestic Workers, Makassar, 30 November 2024
[36] *Ibid.*
[37] *Ibid.*
[38] FGD Domestic Workers, Surabaya, 22 December 2024
[39] FGD Domestic Workers, Jakarta, 5 January 2025.

Immediate Outcome: Improved social attitudes by key project stakeholders in support of women and girls' participation in economic, educational, political, community and leisure activities in Indonesia

The study explores how supported domestic workers feel by key stakeholders—employers, local governments, and civil society organizations (CSOs) in promoting their rights and participation. Findings show mixed levels of support, with employers perceived as more supportive than local governments or CSOs. However, access to empowering training remains limited, especially for younger workers.

Among 285 domestic workers surveyed, only 39.6% had received training that increased their confidence and empowerment, while 60.4% did not. Live-in workers (41.6%) were slightly more likely to access training than live-out workers (38.4%).

Table 25. Proportion of Domestic Workers Reporting Increased Confidence from Training, by Category and Age
Base: Domestic workers (n=285)

Received any training that made more confident and empowered in the work	Domestic Workers Category		Age Category	
	Live In	Live Out	Youth	Adults
Yes	41,6%	38,4%	30,0%	40,4%
No	58,4%	61,6%	70,0%	59,6%
Total	**100,0%**	**100,0%**	**100,0%**	**100,0%**

The most attended training programs included Domestic Workers' Awareness School (32.7%), training on baby and elderly care (16.8%), and cooking skills (15.9%). However, only 9.7% of respondents received training on negotiating with employers regarding salary and working conditions, and only 6.2% attended advocacy training for domestic workers' rights. This highlights a critical gap in training related to self-advocacy and labor rights, which are essential for strengthening domestic workers' bargaining power.

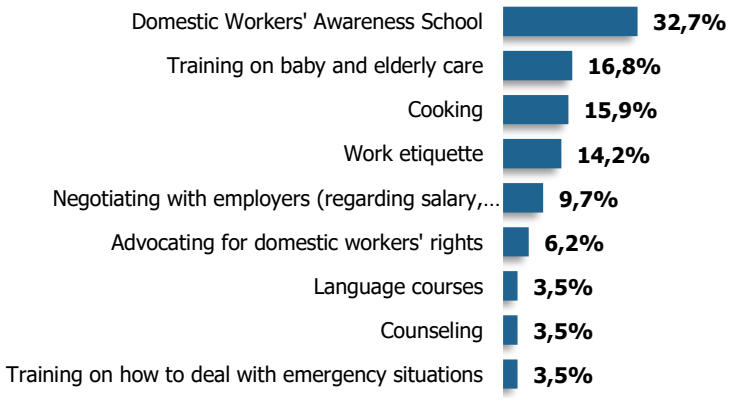


Figure 24. Training programs
Base: Domestic workers received any training (n=113)

When asked how much they felt their employers cared about their rights and needs, a majority of respondents expressed a moderate level of support. 62.5% of all domestic workers said their employer somewhat cared, with slightly higher agreement among live-out workers (63.4%) than live-in workers (61.1%). A smaller group—23.5%, exceeded their employer very much, with live-in workers slightly more likely to report this (24.8%) than live-out workers (22.7%). Meanwhile, 12.6% of respondents felt their employer did not care much, and a very small minority (1.4%) felt not cared for at all.

Table 26. Perception towards Stakeholder Supports to the rights and needs domestic workers (n=285)

Statement	Very Much	Some-what	Not Much	Not At All	Total
Employer cared about rights and needs domestic workers	23,5%	62,5%	12,6%	1,4%	100,0%
Local government cared about rights and needs domestic workers	2,5%	37,9%	51,6%	8,1%	100,0%
CSOs cared about rights and needs domestic workers	11,9%	46,7%	36,8%	4,6%	100,0%

In contrast, perceptions of local government support were far less positive. Just 2.5% of all respondents felt that local government cared very much, and 37.9% believed they somewhat cared. However, the majority of domestic workers—51.6%, felt that local governments did not care much about their rights, and 8.1% believed they did not care at all. These perceptions were consistent across both live-in and live-out workers, with over half in each category indicating a lack of meaningful engagement or recognition from local authorities.

This finding aligns with the results of key informant interviews. In both Makassar and Surabaya, local governments have played a limited role in addressing paid and unpaid care work through their policies and programs. The absence of local regulations that explicitly protect domestic workers has led to a lack of significant initiatives at the city level. This gap also extends to unpaid care workers, such as housewives or individuals providing care for persons with disabilities, children, and the elderly.

The underlying issue also lies in Indonesia's labor classification system, which categorizes housewives and domestic workers as informal workers and excludes them from the definition of wage earners. As a result, some local government agencies exclude these groups from capacity-building programs, focusing instead on formal sector wage earners. One local government-initiated caregiver training program has since discontinued them in 2024 due to the limited number of participants who could be absorbed into the labor market and focus on the training program that are better aligned with industry and employment needs.[40]

> "Our training programs are general and designed for job seekers, particularly those linked to companies or the formal sector. While nurses are included, we target the unemployed, former

[40] Interview with Surabaya Manpower Office, 9 January 2024

terrorism convicts, and people with disabilities. These programs are not permanent and depend on annual proposals in the city development planning process. We don't provide training for housewives or domestic workers—perhaps those fall under the social affairs office. However, for migrant domestic workers, we do have training tailored to their job requirements.

Interview, Makassar Manpower office.

However, despite limitations in policy and legal recognition, some local governments still include domestic workers within existing dispute resolution mechanisms. For instance, the Surabaya Manpower Office has handled three industrial relations disputes involving domestic workers and their employers. However, due to the absence of a specific law protecting domestic workers, officials are unable to enforce settlements based on the same standards applied to formal workers. Nevertheless, they still aim to prioritize the protection of workers' rights within the constraints of the existing system.[41] According to Permenaker 2/2015 on the Protection of Domestic Workers, local governments do have the authority to provide certain forms of support; however, this is currently limited to receiving consultations rather than offering comprehensive protection or services.[42]

All local government representatives interviewed agreed that the adoption of the Bill on the Protection of Domestic Workers would mark a significant step forward in elevating the status and protection of domestic workers, recognizing them as professionals comparable to those in the formal sector. In Surabaya, local officials emphasized that formalizing domestic work would offer critical legal protection and establish clear labor standards.[43]

Perceptions of civil society organizations (CSOs) among domestic workers revealed a mixed picture. While 11.9% of overall respondents felt that CSOs cared very much about their rights and needs, a larger group—46.7%—believed CSOs somewhat cared. However, 36.8%—felt that CSOs did not care much, and 4.6% believed they did not care at all. Disaggregated data by employment type adds further nuance. Among live-in domestic workers, only 12.7% perceived strong support from CSOs, and 40.7% believed CSOs somewhat cared. Yet 43.4% felt that CSOs did not care much, and 3.5% said they did not care at all. Among live-out domestic workers, 11.6% perceived strong support, while 50.6% believed CSOs cared to some extent. Still, 32.6% said CSOs did not care much, and 5.2% felt they were not cared for at all.

Table 27. Perception Towards Support of CSOs on the Right of Domestic Workers (n=285)

CSOs cared about rights and needs domestic workers	Live in	Live Out
Very Much	12,7%	11,6%
Somewhat	40,7%	50,6%
Not Much	43,4%	32,6%
Not At All	3,5%	5,2%
Total	**100,0%**	**100,0%**

[41] *Ibid.*
[42] *Ibid.*
[43] *Ibid.*

Immediate Outcome: Strengthened capacity of CSOs, particularly WROs, paid care worker unions, and paid care worker groups to advocate for women's rights and needs related to paid care work in Indonesia

Among the five surveyed organizations, 100% reported being involved in policy discussions and decision-making related to care work. This indicates a strong commitment among CSOs to shaping policies that impact paid care workers, including advocacy for better wages, improved working conditions, legal protections, and social security benefits. The FGDs revealed that one of the main challenges faced by civil society organizations (CSOs) in policy spaces is the limited extent of their influence. Specifically, CSOs noted that influencing policymakers—particularly in advocating for the adoption of the Bill on the Protection of Domestic Workers—is difficult due to entrenched class interests. During the FGDs, participants noted that advocacy for the Bill has not gained broad support from labor groups, who perceive domestic work as fundamentally different from factory-based work—the traditional focus of labor unions. Additionally, some participants pointed out that even garnering support from NGOs can be challenging, as some NGO staff themselves may employ domestic workers.

> "The lobbying process is difficult, as Lita from JalaPRT explained, because members of parliament often identify as employers themselves—they see their own interests reflected in this law. This challenge did not arise during the advocacy for the Law on Sexual Violence Crimes."
>
> Women, CSOs, FGD

CSO also 80.0% rated their ability to hold duty bearers accountable as "moderate", while 20.0% rated it as "high". No organizations considered their ability very high or very low, indicating that while CSOs are somewhat confident in their ability to pressure policymakers, they may face structural barriers or resource limitations that prevent them from exerting stronger influence.

Table 28. The ability of organizations to hold duty bearers accountable for responsibilities and organization's advocacy efforts is influencing stakeholders to act according to their commitments (n=5)

Statement	Very Low ability	Low Ability	Moderate Ability	High Ability	Very High Ability
The ability of organization to hold duty bearers accountable for responsibilities and commitments	0,0%	0,0%	80,0%	20,0%	0,0%
Statement	**Not effective at all**	**Slighly effective**	**Moderate-ly Effective**	**Very Effective**	**Extremely Effective**
The level of effectiveness of organization's advocacy efforts is influencing stakeholders to act according to their commitments.	0,0%	20,0%	80,0%	0,0%	0,0%

When asked about the effectiveness of their advocacy in influencing duty bearers, most CSOs expressed moderate levels of effectiveness: 80.0% rated their advocacy as "moderately effective," suggesting that they see some impact but recognize room for improvement. 20.0% rated their efforts as "slightly effective," indicating that at least one organization feels its advocacy is not yielding the desired results. No organizations rated their advocacy as "very effective" or "extremely effective," highlighting potential challenges in ensuring policy implementation and accountability.

In discussing how to engage community leaders in the advocacy for the Bill on the Protection of Domestic Workers, FGD participants from CSOs emphasized the need for stronger consolidation and broader multi-actor engagement—like the successful strategy used in the advocacy for the Law on Sexual Violence Crimes.

> "If I reflect on it, what we need to strengthen is the power of a multi-actor movement—more consolidated and united. It doesn't have to be led by a single figure. We can collaborate like we did in the past. In the advocacy for the Law on Sexual Violence Crimes, for example, academics were involved—they acted and spoke independently. Religious leaders are also engaged by offering their interpretations and voicing support. Even though they moved in their own spaces, all actors were part of a shared, mutually reinforcing movement. Ultimately, those working inside the parliament played a decisive role."
>
> Women, FGD, CSOs

Immediate Outcome: Strengthened capacity of CSOs (particularly WROS), duty-bearers and the private sector to implement gender-transformative initiatives to enhance women and girls' participation in various activities in Indonesia

All five surveyed organizations reported have formulated plans to support women's participation in promoting care workers' rights. They also reported have commitment to support women participation in various activities in Indonesia. However, only 80% felt equipped to implement these plans effectively, while 20% acknowledged capacity gaps. This suggests that despite strong intent, some organizations may lack the technical skills, resources, or institutional support needed to translate commitments into meaningful action, limiting their ability to influence policy, deliver training, or foster women's leadership in the care sector.

Table 29. CSOs' Confidence in Advancing Gender-Transformative Initiatives (n=5)

Statement	Not Confident at all	Slightly Confident	Moderate Confident	Very Confident	Extreme-ly Confident
CSOs' confidence in implementing Gender Transformation Initiatives	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	80,0%	20,0%

Statement	Not Confident at all	Slightly Confident	Moderate Confident	Very Confident	Extreme-ly Confident
CSOs confidence in engaged stakeholders to support gender-transformative initiatives	0,0%	20,0%	40,0%	40,0%	0,0%
CSOs' confidence in the ability to design programs that actively promote gender equality and address systemic gender inequalities	0,0%	0,0%	40,0%	60,0%	0,0%

Among the five surveyed organizations, 80.0% reported being "very confident" in their ability to implement gender-transformative initiatives, while 20.0% were "extremely confident." Notably, none of the organizations reported being only moderately or slightly confident, indicating strong institutional capacity and commitment to driving systemic gender change.

While organizations demonstrated high confidence in implementing gender-transformative initiatives, their confidence in engaging key stakeholders—such as community leaders and policymakers—was comparatively lower, with 40.0% feeling "very confident," 40.0% expressing moderate confidence, and 20.0% reporting only slight confidence, suggesting potential challenges in securing commitment and support from decision-makers.

When asked about their ability to design programs that actively promote gender equality and address systemic gender inequalities, organizations expressed high levels of confidence, with 60.0% feeling "very confident" in their capacity to develop effective gender-focused programs, while the remaining 40.0% reported "moderate confidence," indicating a strong but varied level of assurance in their program design capabilities.

Understanding Policy Frameworks and Stakeholder Dynamics in Promoting Domestic Workers' Rights

In Indonesia, care work policies remain rooted in traditional gender roles, [44] However there was ongoing gender equality efforts that was promote by the government, such as gender-responsive workplaces[45], child-friendly cities[46], and plans to establish daycare centers in government institutions[47]. Indonesia has also committed to SDG Target 5.4, which emphasizes valuing unpaid care work through public services and shared responsibility[48]. However, progress is limited by persistent cultural norms and weak institutional support.

The next section explores how these policy gaps and social barriers impact domestic workers and highlights opportunities to strengthen protections through the 5R framework: Recognize, Reduce, Redistribute, Reward, and Represent care work.

Recognizing Care Work in Indonesia: Policy, Gaps, and the Urgency of Legal Reform

Indonesia's care economy policy landscape is gradually evolving but remains shaped by traditional gender norms. While the Law on Maternal and Child Welfare[49] marks progress by recognizing care work and outlining rights to maternity leave, affordable childcare, and workplace protections, implementation remains weak. According to the ILO, only 1 in 10 parents have access to affordable childcare, and quality concerns – including neglect and abuse – persist.[50]

The Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (KPPPA) has launched a Care Economy Roadmap with seven priorities, including expanding care services, improving conditions for care workers, and enhancing social protection. However, these priorities are not all integrated into the 2025 Government Work Plan. Such as one of priority in the Care Economy Roadmap on the maternity care, one of the concerns is the availability of maternity leave policies and supportive welfare facilities[51]. Meanwhile, in the 2025 Government Work

[44] As reflected in Law on Marriage, Artcile 31 (3), which designates men as heads of households and women as homemakers.
[45] Ministerial Regulation No. 5 of 2015 on gender-responsive workplaces
[46] Presidential Regulation No. 5 of 2021 on child-friendly cities
[47] As part of the plan on the 2020–2024 Strategic Plan
[48] This target calls for valuing unpaid care through public services, infrastructure, and shared household responsibilities, adapted to national contexts.
[49] Law Number 4 of 2024.
[50] Early Dwi Nuriana, Kerangka 5 R & Ekonomi Perawatan di Indonesia Berinvestasi Kepada Kebijakan dan Layanan Perawatan yang lebih setara Gender di Dunia Kerja, 31 Januari 2024, https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@asia/@ro-bangkok/@ilo-jakarta/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_910525.pdf
[51] KemenPPPA Luncurkan Peta Jalan Ekonomi Perawatan (Care Economy Roadmap) 2025-2045 : https://www.kemenpppa.go.id/page/view/NTE0Mg==

Plan document, the policies and programs are directed toward initiatives that provide free meals for pregnant and breastfeeding mothers.[52]

National planning documents—the RPJPN 2025–2045 and RPJMN 2025–2029—also had recognize care work as critical to human development, aiming to expand services, increase women's labor force participation, and promote gender equality. The 2025 RKP includes actions to strengthen childcare, elder care, and community-based services. Yet, without strong legal recognition and accountability, these efforts risk remaining symbolic.

Meanwhile, care workers, the backbone of the care system—remain undervalued and legally unprotected. Ministerial Regulation No. 15/2015 sets basic standards for domestic workers but lacks enforcement and does not formally recognize them as part of the workforce. Civil society groups, including JALA PRT, argue the regulation is insufficient, as it lacks grounding in the Manpower Law or ILO Convention 189.

Although Law No. 24/2011 on BPJS and Government Regulation No. 44/2015 provide a framework for social protection, only 0.9% of domestic workers are enrolled. The key issue is recognition: BPJS Ketenagakerjaan continues to classify domestic workers as self-employed, excluding them from employment-based protections.

> "To protect domestic workers, a dedicated law (UU PPRT) is needed to clearly define mechanisms and provisions for their social protection."
>
> BPJS Ketenagakerjaan representative, Interview

Cultural barriers further complicate progress. Deep-rooted hierarchies, such as the Javanese *priyayi* tradition and patriarchal norms, continue to position domestic work as informal, subordinate labor. Workers are often hired through personal networks and treated as "part of the family," blurring their employment status and limiting access to protections.

The Bill on Domestic Worker Protection presents a pivotal opportunity for reform. It includes provisions to: guarantee legal protection and prevent exploitation; ensure contracts, fair wages, leave, and social security; promote skills development and dispute resolution mechanisms; formally recognize domestic workers as part of the labor force.

> "The spirit of the RUU PPRT is about recognition. Recognizing domestic workers as legitimate workers remains a major hurdle—not just legally, but culturally."
>
> CSO, FGDs

Reducing the Burden of Unpaid Care Work

The principle of "reduction" in care economy policy refers to easing the excessive and unequal burden of care work—particularly on women—by promoting shared responsibilities and improving access to supportive services and infrastructure. In Indonesia, care work remains

[52] Rencana Kerja Pemerintah 2025 : https://perpustakaan.bappenas.go.id/e-library/file_upload/koleksi/dokumenbappenas/konten/Upload%20Terbaru/%7BDIGITAL%7D%20RENCANA%20KERJA%20PEMERINTAH%20TAHUN%202025.pdf

disproportionately shouldered by women, often without adequate support systems or recognition.[53]

Reducing this burden requires a combination of policies, services, and infrastructure that help minimize the time and physical energy spent on unpaid domestic tasks. These include affordable and accessible daycare facilities, reliable household infrastructure and access to labor-saving technologies. For instance, access to clean water can reduce the time spent collecting water, while affordable energy and household appliances can lessen daily chores such as cooking or laundry.

> "The hardest task is doing the laundry. Washing clothes is such a hassle, especially without a washing machine."
>
> Unpaid Care Workers, FGD, Makassar

Recognizing the importance of shared caregiving responsibilities, Law No. 4 of 2024 on Maternal and Child Welfare introduces provisions that mandate support from husbands and families. Husbands are entitled to up to five days of paternal leave and are expected to support their spouses through childbirth and postnatal care. This includes ensuring health and nutrition for the mother and child, supporting exclusive breastfeeding, and accompanying them to healthcare services.[54]

However, legal and policy frameworks related to maternity protection in Indonesia remain limited when compared to international standards. While Law No. 11 of 2020 on Job Creation and Law No. 13 of 2003 on Manpower include provisions on menstrual leave, maternity leave, and breastfeeding facilities, they fall short of meeting the minimum standards outlined in ILO Convention No. 183. These gaps include insufficient maternity leave duration, limited protections for workplace health, and lack of guarantees for job security and non-discrimination.

ILO Convention No. 183 and Recommendation No. 191 set international standards for maternity protection, outlining five essential components to safeguard the rights and well-being of working women. First, the convention guarantees a minimum of 14 weeks of paid maternity leave, covering the period of pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum recovery. Second, it ensures that women receive cash benefits and medical allowances during this leave, including coverage for healthcare costs associated with pregnancy and childbirth. Third, the convention mandates health protection in the workplace for pregnant and breastfeeding women, as well as for their unborn children, to prevent exposure to harmful conditions. Fourth, it emphasizes employment protection and non-discrimination, ensuring that women cannot be dismissed due to maternity and have the right to return to the same or an equivalent position with equal pay after their leave. Lastly, the convention calls for supportive breastfeeding arrangements in the workplace, enabling mothers to breastfeed or express milk during working hours in a safe and private environment.

[53] See further Annex 1. to understand the multi facet dimension of unpaid care works.
[54] Law No.4 of 2024, Article 6

For domestic workers, maternity protections are largely absent due to the lack of formal employment relationships and written contracts. Ministerial Regulation No. 2/2015 merely recommends that leave be granted "by mutual agreement," without enforceable guarantees.

Elder care further adds to women's burden. Studies show that 89% of care workers support older adults[55], and 40% of elderly Indonesians live in multigenerational households—typically under the care of women. [56] This "sandwich generation" often manages elder care, childcare, and housework simultaneously, with little external support. While family-based care is culturally valued, it often reinforces gendered divisions of labor and leads to care overload.

> "If both parents work and there's no domestic worker, the responsibility falls to the oldest daughter—even if she's physically not strong."
>
> Interview, Unpaid Workers

Although Indonesia has laws covering elderly and social welfare—such as Law No. 40/2004 on the National Social Security System, Law No. 11/2009 on Social Welfare, and Law No. 13/1998 on Elderly Welfare—service provision remains fragmented and uneven. Home care services, priority healthcare access, and integrated data systems for the elderly are still limited, especially outside urban centers. Meanwhile, middle-income families often fall outside both contributory social protection programs and targeted social assistance, with low participation in pension and old-age benefits.[57]

To address the structural causes of care overload, the Bill on Domestic Workers Protection key provisions aligned with the reduction principle that includes: mandated written employment contracts[58] and limits on working hours and workload.[59] The Bill also stipulate employer obligations, including respecting rest time, providing clear information about job scope, and reporting employment to local neighborhood units (RT/RW).[60]

Redistributing Care Responsibilities

Redistribution focuses on rebalancing the unequal burden of care work by promoting shared caregiving responsibilities among partners, families, communities, employers, and the state. The aim is to increase women's productivity, challenge traditional gender roles, and foster collective responsibility for household and caregiving tasks.

Although Law No. 4 of 2024 frames caregiving as a shared responsibility between men and women, this principle has yet to be reflected in daily social practices. Care work, especially in informal settings, continues to receive limited policy attention, leaving both paid and unpaid

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[55] Early Dwi Nuriana, *Ibid.*
[56] Kondisi Kesejahteraan Lansia dan Perlindungan Sosial Lansia di Indonesia, Prakarsa, 2020
[57] TNPK-SMERU, Situasi Lansia di Indonesia dan Akses terhadap Program Perlindungan Sosial : Analisis Data Sekunder, 2020
[58] Domestic Workers Protection Bill, Article 5
[59] *Ibid,.* Article 7
[60] *Ibid.* Articles 11,13-15.

care workers with minimal recognition and protection. While some national and local initiatives have begun addressing the issue, efforts remain fragmented. The government's care economy roadmap outlines services like maternity and parental leave, daycare, and breastfeeding facilities, but these mainly benefit women in formal employment. Institutions such as KPPPA, KEMENSOS, and BKKBN also implement caregiving programs, though their scope and reach remain limited. Meanwhile, Indonesia's National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) has mandated care work as part of its efforts to achieve Mission 4 under the national priority agenda, that emphasizes on "S*trengthening human resource development, science, technology, education, health, sports achievement, gender equality, and the empowerment of women, youth (millennials and Gen Z), and persons with disabilities*."[61]

Effective redistribution requires targeted interventions—such as expanding paternal leave, launching public campaigns to normalize men's involvement in caregiving, providing childcare subsidies, and ensuring the availability of affordable, high-quality care services across sectors. These measures are crucial to building a more equitable care system and advancing gender equality both at home and in the workplace.

Rewarding the Value of Care Work

Currently, there is no specific legal provision that guarantees wages as a form of reward for domestic workers. The Bill of Domestic Workers Protection seeks to fill this gap by recognizing domestic workers' contributions to social reproduction through care work. This recognition is reflected in the draft's provisions on rights to fair wages, allowances, health insurance, and social security[62] and must be included in written employment agreements.[63]

> "Care work is often seen as a kind of labor that doesn't deserve payment, because it's viewed as something that strengthens family bonds. For friends who work in the care sector—like domestic workers, for example—their work is often considered something that could disrupt those cultural norms. It's seen as something that might cause problems or even harm the spirit of togetherness within the family. Some people even believe that putting a monetary value on this kind of work would actually damage that sense of familial solidarity. "
>
> CSO, FGDs,

Beyond compensation, the bill also establishes mechanisms for dispute resolution through mutual agreement[64], and third-party mediation in cases of power imbalance.[65] If these methods fail, legal action may be pursued, giving domestic workers access to formal mechanisms to claim their rights.

[61] Presidential Decree No. 12 of 2025
[62] Bill of Domestic Workers Protection, Article 11
[63] *Ibid.* Article 5,8, and 15
[64] *Ibid.* Article 26
[65] *Ibid,* Article 27.

To reinforce these protections, the Bill also introduces administrative sanctions for irresponsible placement agencies[66] and provides oversight mechanisms.[67] The Bill also prohibits discrimination, threats, harassment, and violence—forms of abuse that are still common in domestic work settings.[68] Finally, the Bill stipulates criminal penalties to deter violations and provide stronger legal safeguards for domestic workers.[69]

In short, the concept of reward in RUU PPRT goes beyond wages. It encompasses legal protection, dispute resolution pathways, and sanctions to ensure accountability. These provisions represent a crucial step toward elevating the status of care work and securing fair treatment for domestic workers within Indonesia's labor system.

Representation in Decision-Making and Collective Bargaining

Representation in both paid and unpaid care work is essential for ensuring domestic workers have a voice in decision-making and access to collective bargaining. Within the 5R framework, *recognition* is a necessary precondition for *representation*. Without formal recognition, domestic and migrant workers remain excluded from policy processes and denied the right to organize.

In Indonesia context, the right to freedom of association, as it is explicitly guaranteed under the 1945 Constitution.[70] However, the current draft lacks strong guarantees for the right of domestic workers to form or join labor unions. The Omnibus Law on Job Creation removed specific provisions related to freedom of association previously included in the labor law, although the law still recognizes the role of labor unions—particularly in matters such as wage disputes.[71]

From a practical standpoint, the development of domestic worker unions, such as Jala PRT, also demonstrates the potential for domestic workers to organize and unionize through dedicated forums and advocacy spaces. It was evident from FGDs that domestic workers who are organized are able to negotiate with employers due to an increase in their self-confidence. In fact, through organizing, some domestic workers have managed to secure written employment agreements with their employers.

> 'The written employment agreement is part of their efforts after receiving education through their organization, like what happened to *Mbak Yopi* (one of the members). When *Mbak Yopi* wasn't part of an organization, she was afraid, she hesitated, and she felt embarrassed to express her suggestions as a domestic worker. But after joining an organization, she became quite confident, even today.'"
>
> Domestic Workers Organization, Interview

[66] *Ibid.* Article 23
[67] *Ibid.* Article 25
[68] *Ibid.* Article 28
[69] *Ibid,* Article 30-32.
[70] Indonesia Constitution, Article 28.
[71] The Law No. 11 of 2020, Article 88.

Explicitly guaranteeing the right to unionize, along with effective dispute resolution mechanisms, would align with ILO Recommendation No. 204, which supports the transition from informal to formal employment. Thus, it is important for the Bill to include such provisions. Given that most domestic workers are women, securing their right to organize would not only enhance labor protections but also empower them politically and socially ensuring their active participation in shaping policies that affect their lives and work.

Dynamics of Advocacy: Power, Class, and Cultural Resistance

The advocacy for the Domestic Workers Protection Bill (RUU PPRT) has been shaped by limited funding, political inertia, and cultural norms that devalue care work. Unlike the well-supported campaign for the Sexual Violence Eradication Law (UU TPKS), CSOs pushing for RUU PPRT have faced "zero" funding, limiting their reach and momentum.

> "The TPKS Law received a lot of funding… But for RUU PPRT, it's zero."
>
> CSO, FGDs.

Despite these challenges, civil society—led by JALA PRT since 2005—has employed creative strategies, from public mobilizations and media outreach to partnerships with religious and student organizations. Their sustained pressure helped prompt a Presidential Letter (Surpres) that brought the bill to the legislature.

However, class dynamics remain a key barrier. Many lawmakers, who are also employers, resist formalizing domestic work due to concerns over wage regulations and potential legal consequences.

> "In TPKS, the issue united women. But in RUU PPRT, class divides are real supporters of women's rights hesitate because they are employers."
>
> CSO, FGDs

To address this, CSOs are reframing the bill to highlight benefits for both workers and employers. For instance, KOWANI pointed out that the bill includes provisions protecting employers from unqualified or negligent workers.

> "Many of our members support the bill but worry about imbalance. We emphasize that the bill protects employers too."
>
> KOWANI, Interview

Institutions like LBH APIK also stress the need to involve universities and national councils to frame domestic work as a legitimate and economically valuable profession. However, links

between paid domestic worker rights and the needs of unpaid care workers remain weak in current advocacy narratives.

Focus group discussions with unpaid care workers in Jakarta, Surabaya, and Makassar revealed urgent needs—such as affordable daycare, home-based income opportunities, and lower electricity costs. Programs like Surabaya's Smart Business for Housewives have been discontinued, while concerns persist over the cost and safety of private daycare. These voices—mainly women caring for children, elderly, and people with disabilities—remain largely absent from public policy and social protection schemes.

While Indonesia's care economy roadmap shows potential, it primarily benefits women in formal employment. Unpaid care workers, who form the backbone of the care economy, remain excluded.

There is growing awareness that structural change will require multi-stakeholder, cross-class alliances that connect local activism to national advocacy. Strengthening networks between grassroots care workers and national coalitions is key to sustaining momentum.

> "Building networks is crucial in our advocacy for the Domestic Workers Protection Bill."
>
> CSO, FGD

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

The study shows that the prevailing conditions, practices, and perceptions surrounding both paid and unpaid care work in Indonesia are shaped by a combination of deep-rooted cultural norms and evolving socio-economic dynamics.

The care economy remains strongly influenced by historical traditions such as *abdi dalem* and *ngenger*, which frame domestic work more as a familial duty than formal employment. This legacy continues today, as informality aspects characterized the domestic workers relation with employer. Further, this also amplify by both employers and workers that often prefer the term *asisten rumah tangga* (household assistant) over *pekerja rumah tangga* (domestic worker), reflecting an intention to create a more respectful and familial relationship rather than worker-employer relationship.

However, this blurred distinction between family-like intimacy and formal labor brings serious consequences. While such relationships may foster trust and emotional closeness, they also obscure power imbalances and weaken labor protections. Domestic workers frequently take on a broad array of responsibilities—ranging from cleaning and childcare to assisting with employers' business activities or maintaining rental properties—often without formal contracts, fair compensation, or clear working hours.

In terms of unpaid care work, women continue to bear the primary responsibility, even as their participation in the labor market increases. This dual responsibility constrains their access to formal employment and perpetuates gender gaps in labor force participation. Although urbanization and the shift toward nuclear families have driven up the demand for external care services, both paid and unpaid care work remains undervalued and inadequately protected within Indonesia's broader labor and social protection systems.

In Indonesia, the landscape of paid and unpaid care work is being shaped by a complex interplay of socio-economic transformations, cultural traditions, and weak political-legal frameworks—particularly evident in urban centers such as Jakarta, South Tangerang, Surabaya, and Makassar, where the majority of domestic workers in the study are employed.

Indonesia's rapid urbanization and the growing prevalence of nuclear family arrangements have gradually weakened traditional extended-family-based care systems. As families move to urban areas and live in smaller households, the demand for paid domestic care services—especially childcare and eldercare—has significantly increased. This demand is further driven by the rising participation of women in the workforce, a trend supported by economic necessity, improved education, and evolving gender aspirations. Data from the Ministry of Manpower show that the number of women workers grew substantially from 2014 to 2016, reaching over 55,000, and continues to increase.

However, despite these gains, women continue to shoulder a disproportionate burden of unpaid care work. The "double burden" of managing both paid employment and domestic responsibilities contributes to enduring gender disparities in labor force participation. As of August 2023, Indonesia's overall Labor Force Participation Rate stood at 69.48%, with men consistently outnumbering women over the past five years. This imbalance underscores how unpaid care responsibilities restrict women's economic opportunities, reinforcing dependence on underpaid or informal care work arrangements.

Culturally, deep-rooted perceptions of domestic work as a form of familial duty still shape employer–worker relationships. Practices like *ngenger* and *abdi dalem* have long positioned care work within a moral and hierarchical framework, rather than as a professional occupation. Although the FGDs revealed that domestic workers who have undergone capacity-building initiatives make positive contributions in their workplaces.

This legacy continues subtly today, as seen in the preference for the term *asisten rumah tangga* (household assistant) over *pekerja rumah tangga* (domestic worker)—an attempt to dignify the role while resisting full professionalization. The gendered nature of care work is evident: all survey respondents were women, and among live-in workers, 76.1% had left their children behind in rural hometowns, cared for by extended families—an illustration of the "global care chains" within Indonesia's own borders.

Further, it is clear from both FGDs and KIIs that many employers are very cautious related to the policies related to care workers. While they understand some workers need to be protected, they are afraid that the workers might demand the employers to fulfil their rights and disrupt the established dynamics between employers and domestic workers.

Within the policy landscape, Indonesia has made **symbolic progress in recognizing care work**, aligning with SDG Target 5.4 and developing a national Care Economy Roadmap. National planning documents such as the RPJPN 2025–2045 and RPJMN 2025–2029 acknowledge care work as critical to human development and gender equality. However, this recognition remains fragmented and inconsistently implemented. For instance, while the roadmap calls for improved care infrastructure and social protection, the 2025 Government Work Plan lacks concrete provisions such as maternity leave, paternity leave or significant investment in public childcare. Policies for pregnant women are limited to the provision of free meals. Yet, Law No. 4 of 2024 on the Welfare of Mothers and Children in the First One Thousand Days of Life acknowledges the value of care work—not only through improved nutrition for mothers and children, but also through support services, maternity leave, and policies that facilitate caregiving work.

Legal recognition of domestic workers remains precarious. Ministerial Regulation No. 15/2015 provides minimum standards but lacks force under labor law, and as a result, domestic workers are not formally classified as part of the workforce. Consequently, only 0.9% are enrolled in employment-based social protection schemes like BPJS Ketenagakerjaan.

Efforts to **reduce the burden of unpaid care work**, particularly for women in low-income urban households, remain limited. Although Law No. 4 of 2024 mandates five days of paternity leave and encourages shared caregiving, its implementation is inconsistent. Many domestic workers, especially live-in (internal) migrants in cities like Jakarta, not only fulfill demanding

care roles for their employers but also struggle with care responsibilities for their own families, often from a distance. As one respondent in Makassar shared, even basic services like access to a washing machine could significantly ease their daily load—yet such support remains rare. Meanwhile, elder care responsibilities continue to fall on women, with 89% of care workers supporting older adults, and multigenerational households often placing simultaneous demands on middle-aged women.

Policies that seek to **redistribute care responsibilities** remain aspirational. While the care economy roadmap promotes shared caregiving and expanded services like daycare and parental leave, these mostly benefit women in formal employment, excluding unpaid care workers and informal workers. Patriarchal norms, coupled with the absence of affordable services, mean that caregiving continues to be seen as women's duty. Initiatives needed to enable redistribution—such as public childcare, energy subsidies, and support for home-based livelihoods—remain scattered and underfunded. Programs like Surabaya's Smart Business for Housewives, which once supported women care workers, have been discontinued.

The **rewarding of care work**—through fair wages, legal protections, and recognition—remains a major challenge. Many domestic workers still lack contracts, are paid less than IDR 2 million (42.9% of respondents), and are not covered by health or employment insurance. The Domestic Workers Protection Bill (RUU PPRT) is a significant opportunity to shift this paradigm. It proposes clear standards on wages, working hours, social protection, and access to justice, and introduces sanctions against exploitative practices. However, progress is slow due to political resistance, particularly from lawmakers who also employ domestic workers. Class dynamics have also weakened solidarity within the broader women's rights movement, as concerns about regulation among middle- and upper-class employers limit support for reform.

Representation remains a critical gap in the protection of domestic workers. The Omnibus Law No. 11 of 2020 on Job Creation, despite concerns about weakened labor protections, continues to recognize trade unions under Article 88 as legitimate parties in wage negotiations with employers, In the meantime, while long-standing advocacy by civil society groups like JALA PRT, support for the domestic workers' bill has been minimal. Importantly, the link between paid and unpaid care advocacy remains weak. While domestic workers have begun to organize, the voices of unpaid care workers in project locations—many of whom care for children, elderly, and people with disabilities—are still largely absent from policy discussions.

Organizations like Jala PRT, a domestic workers' trade union, play a pivotal role in advancing collective representation. Their presence offers a valuable platform for domestic workers to join as union members and engage in collective advocacy. Moreover, the recognition of domestic workers' right to unionize has been shown to significantly increase their confidence in asserting their rights, making decisions, and resolving workplace issues. Enabling domestic workers to participate in union activities and engage in collective bargaining agreements is essential—not only to protect their rights but also to prevent future workplace conflicts and promote fair labor practices.

From the study, the transformation of Indonesia's care economy hinges on the successful application of the 5R framework. While policy recognition has improved, implementation gaps, legal ambiguity, and cultural resistance continue to undermine progress. The RUU PPRT remains a critical policy lever to institutionalize recognition, ensure reward, and enable representation, but without strong political will, funding, and cross-class alliances, care work will remain undervalued and unprotected.

In the project locations, these structural and cultural dynamics are especially visible revealing both the urgency for reform and the resilience of local actors. The way forward lies in connecting grassroots demands to national advocacy platforms, embedding care work into broader social justice and gender equality agendas, and ensuring that those who provide care—whether paid or unpaid—are finally recognized, supported, and empowered.

Baseline Data for Outcome

The study also provides baseline data related to the expected outcomes of the project. The study presents the current status of the **ultimate outcome: enhanced empowerment, socio-economic well-being, and enjoyment of rights for women in Indonesia**, as reflected through three key indicators. While there are signs of progress, the findings highlight persistent barriers that require expanded opportunities, targeted outreach, and inclusive policy implementation.

Economic mobility remains limited, with only 19.6% of domestic workers reporting additional income-generating activities in the past three years. Live-out workers (21.5%) showed slightly more flexibility than live-in workers (16.8%), while just 17.3% of women in household surveys reported job transitions.

Perceptions of personal development opportunities are moderately positive: among the 41.8% of domestic workers who accessed such programs, 68.1% found them helpful or very helpful, particularly live-in workers (48.9%). Yet actual participation remains low, with only 3.9% currently enrolled, signaling a need to improve access and availability.

On the **perception of policy impact**, 68.8% of domestic workers agreed that improved care work policies support women's and girls' rights. However, attitudes varied by employment type and gender: live-out workers were more likely to agree, while live-in workers expressed stronger agreement. Among household members, 72.7% of men and 57.7% of women agreed, reflecting gendered differences in how care policies are experienced and understood.

For **the intermediate outcome: enhanced protection and promotion of women's rights and needs related to paid care work in Indonesia**, the study looking at proportion of individuals that recognize and appreciate and represent the importance and value of paid care works in Indonesia, while also measuring the changes in attitudes towards gender-equitable social norms in Indonesia,

The study demonstrates a strong sense of **self-recognition and appreciation** among domestic workers regarding the value of their work, with 96.1% affirming its meaningfulness to their families. This affirmation is consistent across employment types, indicating that both

live-in and live-out workers recognize their critical roles in sustaining household well-being. However, broader societal recognition is less certain: while 66.7% of domestic workers believe their work benefits society, this gap suggests a disconnect between personal value and societal acknowledgment. Household survey data reinforces this pattern of recognition, with 92.1% of household respondents rating paid care work as somewhat or very valuable. Gender differences highlight further nuances. Women are more likely than men to view paid care work as "very valuable" (40.4% vs. 27.3%),

Perceptions of care work status also reveal mixed attitudes. While 50.8% of respondents fully support equal respect for paid care work as other professions and 39.7% moderately agree, hesitancy remains, particularly among adults. Men are more likely to support care work conditionally, while 11.5% of women express disagreement—potentially signaling internalized stigma or lived experiences of care work's undervaluation.

The study reveals **a gradual shift toward greater acceptance of men's involvement in domestic work** in Indonesia, yet deeply rooted gender norms continue to shape attitudes and practices within households. While a growing number of domestic workers (62.1%) support the idea that men can work as domestic workers, nearly a third still oppose it—primarily due to traditional beliefs that domestic work is inherently women's responsibility. Younger domestic workers appear more open to challenging these norms, while older respondents more often reinforce them.

There is near-universal agreement (94.7%) that men and boys are capable of doing household chores, and household survey data shows overwhelming support (96.8%) for men's participation in caregiving and cleaning tasks. However, this recognition of capability does not always translate into shared responsibility. Women, in particular, express frustration over the continued expectation that they remain the default caretakers—even when employed domestic workers are present.

Gender-disaggregated data further underscores the internalization of traditional roles: while all men respondents agreed that caregiving should be shared, nearly 1 in 5 women (19.2%) disagreed, reflecting persistent self-assigned responsibility for domestic tasks. Women's narratives suggest that even when men contribute, it is often task-specific and framed as assistance rather than shared duty. The cultural ideal of "mutual support" remains aspirational rather than practiced.

In the meantime, to assess **the enhanced participation of women and girls in economic, educational, political, community, and leisure activities aligned with their own choices in Indonesia**, the study measures the percentage and total number of women who hold leadership roles within organized groups in their communities and percentage of women who has freedom in decision making.

The study reveals that while organizational participation among domestic workers is relatively common, it remains uneven, particularly between live-in and live-out workers. Of the 285 domestic workers surveyed, 41.1% reported being members of domestic work-related groups, with significantly higher participation among live-out workers (48.3%) compared to live-in workers (30.1%). This disparity is likely reflecting greater mobility and autonomy among live-

out workers, while live-in workers often face restrictions due to their residential employment setting.

Interestingly, despite lower participation, live-in workers were more likely to **hold leadership roles** within organizations (26.5% vs. 16.9% of live-out workers), suggesting that those who do join may be more driven to assert their voice—perhaps as a way to counteract the isolation or power imbalance they experience at work. Among women in the household survey, 26.9% held leadership positions, indicating a modest but notable level of civic engagement beyond the domestic work sector.

Focus group discussions underscore the transformative impact of organizational membership. Workers consistently cite increased confidence, communication skills, and the ability to advocate for fair treatment as key benefits of participation. However, access to such organizations is uneven, with many workers expressing interest in joining but lacking local options—highlighting the need to expand organizing spaces, particularly in underserved areas.

Autonomy in mobility and decision-making presents a mixed picture. Among domestic workers, 60.4% agreed they could leave the house without supervision, while 26.7% disagreed with live-in workers reporting greater restrictions than their live-out counterparts. Age-disaggregated data shows that youth workers demonstrate both higher perceived autonomy and vulnerability—30% strongly agreed they could go out freely (over three times the adult rate), yet some still face limitations due to social norms or employer control. In contrast, among the 52 women in the household survey, 92.3% reported having the freedom to make decisions about household and external activities, with only 5.8% disagreeing and 1.9% uncertain.

The study also measure **the immediate outcome: enhanced competencies of paid care workers,** particularly domestic care workers, and their employers to recognize and respond to the rights and needs of paid care workers in Indonesia by mapping out %/total of paid care workers with the skills and knowledge that allow them to promote their rights and needs, %/total of employers with the skills and knowledge that allow them to promote the rights and needs of paid care workers, %/total of paid care workers who are confident (scale 1-5) in their ability to respond to their rights and needs.

The study reveals a generally high **level of awareness among domestic workers regarding basic labor rights**, with 81.1% reporting awareness, slightly higher among live-out workers (81.4%) than live-in workers (80.5%). However, nearly one in five remain unaware, exposing them to greater risks of exploitation and underscoring the need for broader outreach.

Among those aware, knowledge is strongest around basic protection: fair wages (99.6%), rest days (90.5%), and safe working conditions (88.7%). Yet, awareness drops significantly for broader rights, such as protection from abuse (63.6%) and the right to unionize (59.3%). Long-term entitlements like decent meals (1.3%) and access to social protection (0.9%) are almost entirely overlooked, reflecting a narrow understanding of labor rights. Live-in workers showed higher awareness in some areas, including unionizing rights, likely due to greater exposure to constraints—but their limited mobility may still hinder access to information.

Focus group discussions reinforce these trends, with domestic workers prioritizing fair wages, respectful treatment, and inclusion in social protection as key concerns. Overall, the findings highlight the urgent need for targeted rights education to ensure domestic workers understand the full spectrum of their legal protections—not just workplace basics, but also long-term security and dignity.

The baseline study reveals **limited employer awareness of legal frameworks** related to domestic worker protection, particularly the Ministerial Decree on the Protection of Domestic Workers. Among the 20 surveyed employers familiar with the decree, only 45.0% reported having in-depth knowledge, while 55.0% admitted limited or no understanding of its content. This knowledge gap is more pronounced among women respondents and reflects a broader lack of familiarity with existing protections. Such limited awareness may hinder employers' ability to uphold fair labor practices and contribute to the ongoing vulnerability of domestic workers. Strengthening employer education on legal obligations is therefore essential to advancing the protection and rights of paid care workers.

In the meantime, the study **highlights a significant lack of confidence among domestic workers in negotiating their employment conditions**, with over 70% reporting low or no confidence in asserting their rights related to wages, working hours, or scope of work. Only 1.1% felt very confident, while 13.3% felt confident and 15.1% somewhat confident, underscoring a widespread reluctance to engage in negotiations with employers.

Focus group discussions reinforce these findings, revealing that fear of job loss, retaliation, and power imbalance are key barriers to negotiation. While a few workers reported successful efforts—such as negotiating overtime pay or securing raises—many shared experiences of anxiety, rejection, or threats when attempting to assert their rights.

Disaggregated data shows that live-in workers reported higher levels of confidence (18.6% confident and 20.4% somewhat confident) compared to live-out workers (9.9% and 11.6%, respectively). This suggests that live-in workers, who often have closer daily interactions with employers, may feel more familiar or secure in their environments. In contrast, live-out workers, who often work for multiple households or under more precarious arrangements, feel less empowered to speak up.

The study shows that **CSOs, particularly WROs, care worker unions, and care worker groups in Indonesia, demonstrate strong commitment to advancing gender equality and the rights of paid care workers**. All five surveyed organizations have plans to support women's participation, though 20% reported lacking capacity to fully implement these plans, highlighting gaps in resources and technical support.

Confidence in delivering gender-transformative initiatives is high, with 100% of organizations reporting strong confidence. However, confidence drops when engaging policymakers and community leaders—only 40% felt very confident, and the rest expressed moderate to low confidence. Similarly, while most organizations are confident in gender-responsive program design, variation remains.

The study reveals a mixed picture of **stakeholder support for women and girls' participation in economic, educational, and community life**, particularly for domestic

workers. Employers are perceived as the most supportive, with 86% of domestic workers feeling their employer cared somewhat or very much about their rights. In contrast, local governments are seen as largely unsupportive, with nearly 60% reporting little or no support. Civil society organizations (CSOs) received more balanced feedback—46.7% perceived moderate to strong support, though over 40% felt CSOs cared little or not at all.

Recommendations

Based on the baseline findings, the Care Connect Project is well-positioned to catalyze systemic change by engaging government institutions, civil society actors, and domestic workers. The study highlights persistent structural gaps—across recognition, redistribution, protection, and representation of care workers—that require coordinated, multi-stakeholder responses. The following strategic directions are recommended:

Engaging Government Institutions

The project should actively support national and local governments in strengthening policy and regulatory frameworks that recognize care workers as essential and rights-bearing contributors to society. This includes:

- Facilitate policy dialogue and provide technical assistance to accelerate the passage of the long-overdue Domestic Workers Protection Bill, ensuring its alignment with the broader Care Economy Roadmap. These efforts should address the highly informal nature of paid domestic work—which contributes to the vulnerability of care workers—by promoting stronger legal recognition, robust regulatory frameworks, and effective protection mechanisms. Additionally, the Bill should explicitly guarantee the right to unionize domestic workers.
- Promoting integration of care economy goals into development planning processes, such as the RPJMN 2025–2029 (if applicable), with a focus on translating strategic targets into implementable programs and budgets, particularly at the subnational level.
- Encouraging the expansion of public care infrastructure and services (e.g., daycare, eldercare) and targeted social assistance (e.g., household utility subsidies), as part of a gender-responsive strategy to reduce unpaid care burdens on women.
- Supporting policy reform and awareness-raising on paternity leave, shared caregiving, and the redistribution of care responsibilities, leveraging global good practices and SDG commitments.

Strengthening capacity of Domestic Workers, Domestic Workers Organization and CSOs

To advance the rights and recognition of paid and unpaid care workers, the project should strengthen collaboration with women's rights organizations (WROs), labor unions, and informal worker collectives. This includes building the capacity of grassroots groups to organize, advocate, and influence policy at both national and local levels.

Targeted support should focus on:

- Enhancing technical and advocacy capacity of care worker organizations, especially grassroots groups, to lead collective actions, amplify worker voices, and engage meaningfully in decision-making forums. As baseline data shows that live-out domestic workers, who are more likely to engage in advocacy spaces, also report greater awareness of labor rights and the benefits of care work policies, but awareness of broader labor rights remains low across the board, highlighting an urgent need for tailored rights education and outreach, with for example the education on the rights to unionize and the right to be protected from abuse.

- Capacity building for domestic workers should prioritize rights education and advocacy skills, particularly for live-in workers who are less engaged in public spaces and report lower awareness. Baseline findings indicate that domestic workers relatively have greater awareness of labor rights and the benefits of care work policies. However, overall awareness of broader rights—such as the right to unionize and protection from abuse—remains low across all groups. This gap, combined with a significant lack of confidence in negotiating employment conditions, underscores the urgent need for tailored, accessible training programs that empower domestic workers to assert their rights and engage meaningfully in dialogue with employers.

- Addressing generational gaps in perception and engagement. Despite the small number of youth respondents, striking differences that were found between age groups indicated the need for targeted engagement strategies that resonate with younger constituencies and acknowledge their lived experiences.

- Bridging the divide between paid and unpaid care work advocacy. Many programmatic and policy efforts have focused on domestic workers, while unpaid care workers—especially women supporting children, the elderly, and people with disabilities—remain largely invisible. The project should ensure both groups are represented in programming and included in advocacy efforts.

- Promoting economic resilience through livelihood opportunities. Given that live-out workers are more likely to pursue additional income—primarily through home-based production that requires minimal capital and leverages existing skills—the project could provide capacity-building and seed support to worker groups to strengthen entrepreneurial activities, improved/building new livelihood skills and strategy and improve financial independence.

- Strengthen the capacity of civil society organizations (CSOs), particularly women's rights organizations (WROs) and domestic worker unions—to effectively engage with diverse stakeholders, including government institutions, employers, and community actors. Capacity-building efforts should enhance their confidence and technical skills in designing and implementing gender-transformative programs that promote gender equality and address systemic inequalities. This might include training on gender analysis, the application of the 5Rs framework, and evidence-based advocacy using data and storytelling. Support should also focus on strengthening organizational governance, financial sustainability, and digital capabilities—such as leveraging online platforms for organizing, advocacy, and mapping care services. In addition, peer

learning, cross-organizational collaboration, and South-South (Indonesia -Philippines) exchanges can amplify collective impact, while structured engagement with policymakers, religious leaders, and the media can help broaden public and political support for care work as a development priority.

Partnering with Employers and Employer Associations

The project should develop constructive partnerships with employer associations, private sector actors, and household employers to promote rights-based employment practices. This includes:

- Raising awareness and building knowledge on fair employment standards, respectful communication, and supporting worker well-being. It is equally important to emphasize that the forthcoming Domestic Workers Protection Law is not only designed to safeguard the rights of domestic workers, but also to protect employers—particularly from exploitative recruitment agencies and potential risks associated with unregulated labor arrangements.
- Encouraging investment in worker training and development, especially for live-in workers who face mobility constraints and social isolation.

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Annex 1. The Unpaid Dimension of Care Works

This study highlights the multifaceted burden of unpaid care work predominantly carried by women. Many women carry the activities of unpaid care work at home, a responsibility that encompasses a wide range of activities from house cleaning to child caring. In some cases, women also took care elderly. many women providing daily assistance to aging parents or in-laws, handling tasks that range from meal preparation and personal hygiene support to addressing health-related needs. In some households, the care overwork extends to family members with disabilities or special needs, where specialized support and constant vigilance are required. Moreover, many women are also tasked with running errands and managing supplementary tasks, such as handling small-scale business activities or delivering orders, which further intensifies the overall domestic workload.

The study identifies that women's daily routines extend far beyond simple chores. From the break of dawn, many women begin their days with a relentless series of tasks—ranging from meal preparation and household cleaning to childcare and elder care—that most of the time continue without pause throughout the day.

> "I usually wake up at 3 or 4, and by the evening I've already prepared things, cooked, and so on, because I have a younger sibling at home who needs to be taken care of."
>
> Women, Unpaid Care Workers, FGD Makassar

Multiple accounts detail how the transition from *sholat* (prayer) to an endless sequence of chores—washing dishes, tidying up, and meal preparation—leaves little room for personal well-being. As one participant reflects, "*As usual, at 5 in the morning I perform the Fajr prayer as part of my daily housewife routine. After the Fajr prayer, I wash the dishes, tidy up, and prepare breakfast for the grandmothers.*"[72]

A critical insight is the stark imbalance in the division of domestic labor. Although occasional assistance is mentioned—such as help from husbands on Sundays—the data overwhelmingly indicate that women are left to shoulder most tasks. One woman stated, "No one helps me, I do all my work by myself."[73]

The study also found that the economic invisibility of unpaid care work is a central theme. Despite its critical role in sustaining households and society, such labor is rarely acknowledged as "real work." The study also recorded that this invisible care work described is not confined to a single domain but spans across generations. Women often care for children, elderly parents, and even family members with disabilities.[74] This intergenerational and intersectional responsibility—

[72] FGD with Unpaid Care Workers, Jakarta, 4 January 2025.
[73] *Ibid.*
[74] FGD with Unpaid Care Workers, Makassar, 1 December 2025.

intertwined with factors such as class, ethnicity, and urban versus rural contexts—adds complexity to the issue.

For many households, these invisible activities were transferred to domestic workers. The study found that the majority of employer, 84.3%, reported that they shared the responsibility of domestic chores and childbearing with their domestic workers. By undertaking household chores and caregiving responsibilities, they enable employers to engage in formal employment and productivity-generating activities. This reliance on domestic workers reflects a broader trend where the care economy underpins not only individual households but also the national economy, even though their work, often rendered invisible in official statistics.

As one employer from Makassar noted:

> "Without domestic workers, we wouldn't be able to carry out our daily activities smoothly because household chores would pile up. Their presence is a great help."
>
> Women, Employer FGD, Makassar

In the meantime, domestic workers, while receiving wages for their formal duties, also face extensive unpaid responsibilities that blur the boundaries between paid employment and personal life. The FGDs and interviews with domestic workers reveal three interrelated aspects of unpaid work: the care chain as implication of their work as domestic workers, the extra household tasks (or responsibilities within the home), and the additional activities of managing family care. These unpaid dimensions not only deepen the workload of domestic workers but also underscore the gendered nature of care labor.

Domestic workers are often part of a broader care chain that extends beyond their formal job description. For instance, during paid work hours, they sometimes leave young children in the care of older family members—a responsibility that is assumed without extra compensation. One participant in an FGD noted that she left her child with her mother. She thought as she lives outside the employer's house, she managed to see her child every day

> Q: "They're still so young to be working like that. Who takes care of the little one?"
> A: "With their grandmother."
>
> Women, Domestic Workers, FGDs, Surabaya

Another participant highlighted that some of the household responsibilities were taken care of by her children.

> "At home, my child has already done the cleaning, swept, and mopped, so when I get home, everything is tidy. After school, they sweep and mop. It's all neat."

Women, Domestic Workers, FGD, Jakarta

This similar finding also reflected on the survey. For live out domestic workers surveyed, 36% of them still need to work on unpaid care activities at home. Among them, 66,1% of them received help from other family members, particularly their husband. These findings illustrate that even as domestic workers fulfill their paid obligations, they are embedded in a care network where unpaid familial support—often provided by older relatives—becomes a necessary extension of their work.

Beyond their contractual duties, domestic workers frequently encounter additional unpaid household tasks. These tasks may include routine cleaning, dishwashing, and other domestic chores that are expected to be carried out without extra pay, even when exhaustion sets in. One respondent explained:

> "For me, when I'm really tired at home, I just crash, watch TV, and then sleep because I'm exhausted. If there are dishes left out, I leave them; sometimes they pile up by Sunday, and then I clean them up."

Women, Domestic Workers, FGD, Jakarta

Moreover, the overload of these additional tasks is often perceived as unfair, especially when the responsibility falls predominantly on women. One worker candidly reflected on the gendered imbalance:

> "In my opinion, it's actually unfair. Most of the responsibility falls on women. What else can they do but accept it? The husband doesn't help."

Women, Domestic Worker, FGD, Jakarta

In addition to managing household tasks, many domestic workers shoulder unpaid responsibilities related to family care. They often find themselves balancing work with caring for their own family members—such as children or sick parents.

> "...I waited for 10 days at the hospital... and then when I returned from the hospital, I took care of everything... I had no time to rest."

Women, Domestic Worker, Interview, Jakarta.

Thus, it is clearly shown that the unpaid dimension of domestic work extends across multiple layers of a worker's life. Domestic workers not only participate in a care chain where unpaid familial support is assumed, but they are also expected to undertake extra household duties and manage significant family care responsibilities—all without additional pay. This dual responsibility

intensifies their overall workload, contributes to fatigue, and reinforces gendered expectations that leave little room for personal respite or professional advancement.

With this situation, women often must juggle extensive caregiving responsibilities with supplementary income-generating activities. These dual roles are not separate tasks but are deeply intertwined, reflecting both economic necessity and the ongoing struggle to maintain household stability. During discussion, women participants often explain that they must balance caring for family members with her employment or running small businesses or other entrepreneurial activities—dual responsibilities that is both physically and mentally taxing. One participant described the delicate balancing act, noting that her children sometimes urge her not to pick them up from school because "*if I pick them up, there will be no one to guard the shop.*"[75] She emphasized that the well-being of her children is paramount, even if it means sacrificing the income from the small business. In another discussion revealed that many women engage inside ventures such as selling fried snacks while simultaneously managing household responsibilities. As one informant explained, after preparing and cooking meals for her family, she would monitor her children's prayer times until late at night, all while trying to keep her mini enterprise afloat.[76]

Mental and physical health also suffer under these dual responsibilities. Participants in the discussions frequently mentioned the toll of long workdays and the stress of juggling multiple roles. The research observed that informant often explained a broader pattern of burnout, where the cumulative effects of unpaid care work and supplementary economic activities contribute to chronic fatigue, stress, and even physical ailments like high blood pressure and weight gain. One participant expressed how the continuous strain from caring for children, managing household tasks, and trying to earn extra income eventually affects her health: "*I feel overwhelmed, and the constant pressure and lack of sleep leave me completely drained.*"[77] One participant even admitted that she seeks professional helps to taking care her mental illness.

> "I went through a six-month healing period because my mental state was unstable. Thank God, I didn't even have to take medication. Now, while I'm working on healing, I've already consulted a psychologist. I need a support system that doesn't involve debates, but rather one that listens and gives hugs."
>
> Women, Unpaid Care Workers, Makassar

[75] FGD Unpaid Care Workers, Makassar, 1 December 2024.
[76] *Ibid.*
[77] FGD Unpaid Care Workers, Surabaya, 22 December 2024.

Annex 2. Empowering Domestic Workers Through Participatory Research Roles

As part of its feminist research approach, the Care Connect Baseline Study intentionally involved domestic workers not only as respondents but also as co-producers of knowledge. This decision—to engage domestic workers as enumerators—was grounded in the belief that those closest to the issues are best positioned to ask meaningful questions and interpret responses with contextual sensitivity. In practice, this approach proved beneficial for both the researchers and the enumerators, fostering mutual learning, trust, and deeper insight throughout the research process.

To lead this effort, we appointed four enumerator coordinators. One of them was a migrant domestic worker who had recently transitioned to a new placement in Singapore but maintained strong ties with Jakarta-based domestic workers and had collaborated with the lead researcher across multiple studies in various capacities. Another coordinator represented JALA PRT, a domestic workers' advocacy network, while the remaining two were NGO practitioners with experience in labor and gender rights. With their support, we recruited 14 women domestic workers to serve as enumerators, 10 of whom were active members of domestic workers' unions. These women undertook data collection from 225 domestic worker respondents across Greater Jakarta.

Given the project's commitment to grassroots participation, the selection criteria for enumerators were intentionally kept minimal: they needed to reside in the research location and possess an Android phone with basic digital literacy, as data collection was conducted using the Kobo Collect application. Recognizing that Kobo was unfamiliar to most of the domestic worker enumerators, we organized a series of training sessions—both online and offline—to accommodate their schedules and varying levels of experience.

These sessions served not only to introduce the technical aspects of Kobo but also to create space for collaborative engagement with the questionnaire. Enumerators were encouraged to review and reflect on the questions, resulting in valuable feedback that significantly improved the clarity and accessibility of the instrument. Their input led to the addition of contextually relevant questions and more practical wording, ensuring the tool better captured the lived realities of domestic workers. Enumerator coordinators also participate in the training to enable them to provide peer support in the field and to troubleshoot issues as they arise.

Recognizing the value of participants' time and labor, we provided modest compensation to both enumerators and interviewees. While we were aware of the potential risk of bias—such as leading questions arising from familiarity or shared experiences—we emphasized research ethics throughout training. Enumerators were repeatedly reminded that their role was to listen, not to lead. All interviews were recorded within the Kobo system, and a quality control team member

was assigned to review recordings, confirm the integrity of the process, and ensure that all interviews were conducted ethically and professionally.

During the process, we are struck by their high level of enthusiasm, commitment to meeting deadlines, and the quality of their work. Many were first-time enumerators, and although several initially expressed feelings uncertain or intimidated by the task, they quickly adapted. They demonstrated remarkable ability to learn the Kobo Collect tool—both in terms of inputting responses and managing the flow of interviews with respondents. Those who had prior experience, particularly members of JALA PRT, approached the work with a deeper sense of purpose. For them, participating as enumerators was not only about contributing to a research project but also about amplifying the voice of domestic workers. They saw the relevance of the survey's content to their daily lives and rights and expressed hope that their involvement could support broader advocacy for domestic worker protections. Their motivation clearly extended beyond the modest compensation provided.

Throughout the process, we encountered minimal challenges. All enumerators carried out their interviews with diligence and professionalism. In a few instances, interviews had to be repeated due to minor technical issues—such as incomplete or unrecorded audio files. These were promptly resolved by the enumerators themselves, who identified the problems and conducted replacement interviews with care and attention to quality. Their initiative in addressing such issues not only ensured data reliability but also reflected a strong sense of responsibility and ownership over the research process.

The primary challenge reported by the domestic worker enumerators was scheduling as both enumerators and respondents were active domestic workers, their available free time often did not align. Despite this, the interviews proceeded smoothly. In fact, one of the most significant advantages of involving domestic workers as enumerators was the rapport they established with respondents. Because they shared similar lived experiences, conversations felt more natural and trusting. Respondents were more open, their answers more reflective, and the overall tone of the interviews—was empathetic and respectful.

To ensure the safety of both enumerators and respondents, we collectively agreed during training that interviews would not be conducted at night or in the presence of employers. This precaution was reinforced by coordinators and gatekeepers, who monitored the process and reminded enumerators to prioritize their safety and the confidentiality of respondents. A WhatsApp group served as a real-time communication channel where enumerators, coordinators, and researchers could share updates, troubleshoot technical issues, and support one another throughout the data collection phase. This created a collaborative environment that was both efficient and grounded in care—further illustrating the value of a feminist, participatory approach to research.

We collected reflections from three domestic worker enumerators on their experiences during the data collection process. Their stories offer insight not only into the technical aspects of the research but also into how participating in this project is intersected with their personal histories and sense of identity.

Rose (pseudonym), aged 47, has worked as a domestic worker since the age of 15. Now a grandmother, she completed junior high school and recently returned to education through the support of the JALA PRT union, of which she is a member. Although she has not yet enrolled in college, she aspires to continue her studies. This was her first experience as an enumerator—her previous involvement in research had only been as a respondent. Rose shared that she truly enjoyed the interviews, especially the opportunity to listen to the stories of fellow domestic workers. For her, being part of a research project that focuses on care work was a source of pride. However, she also reflected on the challenges: some respondents would reply with short "yes" or "no" answers, making it difficult to explore deeper narratives, even when she tried to probe further with follow-up questions.

Orchid (pseudonym), aged 42, has been a domestic worker for 13 years. She is married with children and grandchildren and is currently in her sixth semester at a private university. Like Rose, her motivation to pursue education came through her engagement with JALA PRT. She had prior experience as an enumerator in a study focused on violence against domestic workers, but this was her first time participating in research on care work. Y noted how inspiring it was to hear so many diverse and honest stories from fellow workers. Still, she found the logistics of data collection to be challenging. As a domestic worker herself, her schedule was tight and often conflicted with that of the respondents. Interviewing live-in workers posed additional challenges, especially when the only available setting was within the employer's household—spaces that did not always feel safe or private. Some potential respondents also declined to participate or were hesitant to speak openly, reflecting the enduring fear and vulnerability that many domestic workers continue to face.

Iris (pseudonym) aged 49, has been a domestic worker for 23 years. She holds a university degree in French literature—an uncommon background among domestic workers—and brought both academic and lived experience to the research. This was her first time acting as an enumerator. Like Rose, she found meaning in collecting stories and contributing to a study that centers the lived realities of domestic workers. She noted that while some respondents were very open, others were more reserved. However, she understood that not everyone feels comfortable sharing personal experiences, and that part of the role of an enumerator is to recognize and respect these boundaries.

For all these three women, participating as enumerators was both empowering and eye-opening. It offered them not only new technical skills but also a deeper connection to fellow domestic workers and a meaningful sense of purpose—contributing to a cause that directly reflected their lived realities. Their reflections remind us that research is not merely a process of data collection; it is also a space for building solidarity, affirming experience, and making visible the voices of those often excluded from policy and advocacy dialogues.

What stood out most to *Rose* during data collection was the experience of elderly domestic workers who, despite their age, continued working out of economic necessity. She was particularly disturbed by accounts of employers paying wages in installments—a practice that reflects both precarity and power imbalance in the employment relationship.

Orchids was struck by the contrast in perspective between unionized and non-unionized domestic workers. As a member of JALA PRT, she was surprised by how many respondents—especially those not affiliated with any union—internalized gendered stereotypes about care work. One respondent, for instance, stated that men should not be domestic workers because it was "not their nature." Orchid disagreed, noting that roles such as drivers and gardeners are also part of the care economy and are often performed by men, highlighting how care work itself is shaped by social norms and not inherent capabilities.

For *Iris*, who also conducted interviews with employers, one of the most revealing moments came from a respondent who enforced strict rules on her domestic worker. The employer explained that her approach was shaped by previous negative experiences with other workers. While Iris understood the reasoning, she recognized how such generalizations risked stigmatizing domestic workers as untrustworthy—a perception that perpetuates harmful stereotypes and undermines efforts to build fairer, more respectful working relationships. Addressing this, she felt it would require sustained efforts in education, dialogue, and cultural change.

They do not have any difficulty in collecting and processing data. But only a little data related to the use of language that is better understood by domestic worker respondents. The difficulty is more about time. Rose and Orchid who work for more than one employer, find it more difficult to divide their time because they also work as domestic workers and must adjust the domestic worker's time is also not easy. They trying to continue to match the time and getting new respondents from recommendations from domestic worker respondents too. Live-out Domestic worker respondents are easier for having time to interview, but those who live-in domestic worker respondents must match the freest time they have.

The baseline research process offered an important learning opportunity for the enumerators, especially in deepening their understanding of care work as a broader concept. Both *Rose* and *Orchid* reflected that framing domestic work as part of the care economy was a new insight. Previously, their understanding—and that of most respondents—had been limited to "domestic work" as household tasks. Many respondents, they noted, associated "care work" exclusively with the nursing profession or hospital-based caregiving. *Orchid* believed this limited perspective stemmed from a lack of exposure, particularly among domestic workers who were not part of a union like JALA PRT.

Iris, on the other hand, described how the research helped her realize that care work includes much more than physical tasks—it also encompasses emotional labor, social support, and the relational care that domestic workers provide to their employers and the household. All three enumerators expressed interest in participating in similar research in the future, noting that the time commitment and structure of this baseline study was manageable alongside their work schedules.

Looking forward, *Rose* recommended that domestic workers involved in programs such as those run by Oxfam - Penabulu be introduced more explicitly to the concept of care work. She emphasized that recognizing their labor as care work can help them appreciate the essential role

they play in the lives of employers and in the broader economy. *Orchid* echoed this, recommending that programs use accessible language and relatable examples, especially through social media—to help domestic workers see themselves as care workers. This, she believes, could also encourage greater support for the Domestic Workers Protection Bill (RUU PPRT). She added that a more widespread social media campaign could shift public recognition of domestic workers' roles, highlighting how expansive and essential care work truly is. With a better understanding of their role, she hopes that domestic workers will be more empowered to define their work boundaries and avoid being overburdened.

Iris offered additional recommendations for future research and program implementation. She suggested tailoring questionnaires more carefully to the specific category of respondent—whether employer, live-in, or live-out worker—to ensure relevance and improve response quality. She also encouraged community involvement in future project activities, believing this would foster greater inclusion and relevance.

In terms of improving research design, *Rose* proposed that questions in similar studies should be shorter and easier to understand, minimizing academic jargon. She appreciated the presence of fellow domestic workers as part of the research team, noting that they helped translate abstract concepts into practical, everyday language. *Orchid* added that reducing the number of survey questions would help prevent respondent fatigue, which was an issue in this study. Finally, *Iris* suggested that the results of the baseline research be shared with the public in an easy-to-read format. For her, it's important that respondents know their voices mattered, and that their participation contributed to something larger than themselves.

Annex 3. Detail Quantitative Data Collection

Sample

This baseline uses the Slovin formula to calculate the total sample for this baseline. The formula is as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N \cdot e^2}$$

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N \cdot e^2}$$

where:

- n = sample size
- N = total population size
- e = margin of error (expressed as a decimal, e.g., 0.05 for 5%)

Based on this calculation, with a 5% margin of error, the representative sample size is 315. The project then added 35 additional samples as a backup, bringing the total to 350. This sample was then distributed across regions. Assuming that those with domestic workers belong to the middle class, which constitutes 17.5% of the national population, this proportion was used as the basis for calculating a proportional sample size for each region relative to its population, as seen in table below:

Area	Population (2023)	Middle Class (2023)	Sample
DKI Jakarta+South Tangerang	12.048.362	2.108.463	250
Surabaya	3.009.286	526.625	60
Makassar	1.474.393	258.019	40
Total	**16.532.041**	**2.893.107**	**350**

The sample for this study selected using snowball sampling, a method commonly used to access hard-to-reach populations when formal databases are unavailable. This approach is particularly effective for identifying informal care workers, such as domestic workers, who are often hidden or challenging to reach through conventional methods. A network of organizations, including JALA PRT, will assist in the initial identification of participants. In regions lacking civil society organization (CSO) networks, initial respondents will be asked to refer others within their

community. Given that informal care workers in Indonesia are often part of close-knit social networks, this method is expected to expand the sample efficiently.

The criteria for the sample are:

a. **Paid Domestic Workers:** Domestic workers with at least one year of experience.
b. **Unpaid Care Workers:** Unpaid care workers who have provided caregiving services for at least one year.
c. **Employers:** Employers who have hired domestic workers for at least one year.

Area	Category	Total Sample	Source
DKI Jakarta + South Tangerang	Paid Domestic Workers	130	JALA PRT
	Paid Domestic Workers	75	Researcher Network
	Household Respondents	45	Researcher Network
	CSOs	5	Penabulu/Oxfam
Makassar	Paid Domestic Workers	22	Research Network
	Household Respondents	8	Researcher Network
Surabaya	Paid Domestic Workers	58	Researcher Network
	Household Resondents	10	Researcher Network

Data Collection Process

In this study, CAPI (Computer-Assisted Personnel Interview) was employed to enhance data collection efficiency and accuracy. While it is expected that contact of care workers coming from the workers organization and organizational partners, based on discussion with partners, they might have limited capacity to reach out to these workers. Thus, in this baseline the researcher worked through their network to identify the potential respondent.

The researcher hired around 21 enumerators, who each enumerator looked for 10 – 15 respondents. Around 15 of them are domestic workers.

The criteria of the enumerator:

1. Have a wider network of domestic workers, unpaid care work, and employers
2. Has been working as a domestic worker at least one year (for domestic worker)
3. Familiar with technology or internet-based applications
4. Familiar to communicate using social platform (WhatsApp)
5. Have a mobile phone that can install the application
6. Agree to participate in the enumerator training and a deep understanding of content of the survey

The research team collaborated closely with Oxfam organization partner to recruit and train enumerators for the project. In addition, the researcher coordinated with other gatekeepers to facilitate access to the field and help to ensure smooth engagement with key stakeholders and respondents.

Annex 4. The Indicator Mapping Matrix

Results	Indicators	Question(s)*	Baseline Values
ULTIMATE OUTCOME			
1000 Enhanced empowerment, social economic well-being and enjoyment of rights for women and girls in the Philippines and Indonesia	1000a: %/total of women who have accessed a different economic pathway than the one that they currently are in during the past three years (disaggregated by age)	DW Survey: Do you earn additional income from other economic activities?	Live in DW-17% Live out DW - 22%
		HH Survey (Women Only): Have you changed jobs in the past three years?	Yes: 17% No: 83%
	1000b: % of women who perceive the quality of the activities they have undertaken as part of their personal development (as per scale 1-5) (disaggregated by age).	DW Suvrvey: Have you participated in any personal development activities?	Live-in - 41% Live-out - 42%
	1000c: %/total of individuals who believe that improved care work policies and practices are improving women and girls' rights (disaggregated by age and sex)	DW & HH: To what extent do you agree with the statement: "Improved care work policies are positively impacting the rights of women and girls in society"? (Strongly disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree)	Men - 73% (Agree and Strongly Agree) Women - 83% (Agree and Strongly Agree) Live-in DW - 63% (Agree and Strongly Agree) Live-out DW - 73% (Agree and Strongly Agree)
INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES			
1100 Enhanced protection and promotion of women's rights and needs related to paid care work in	1100a: %/total of individuals who recognize, appreciate and represent the importance and value of paid care work in Indonesia and the	HH Survey: How valuable do you believe paid care work is to society? (Very valuable, Somewhat valuable, Neutral, Not very valuable, Not valuable at all)	Male - 82% (Somewhat valuable and very valuable) Female 94% (somewhat valuable and very valuable)

the Philippines and Indonesia	Philippines (disaggregated by age and sex)	HH Survey: To what extent do you agree with the statement: "Paid care work should be recognized as an essential and respected part of the economy"? (Strongly disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree)	Male - 73% (agree and strongly agree) Female - 81% (agree and strongly agree)
		DW Survey: Do you feel that as DWs you have done valuable work for the society?	Live-in DW - 63% (Yes) Live - out DW - 69% (Yes)
	1100b: % of individuals whose reflections show changes in attitudes toward gender-equitable social norms in the care economy in Indonesia and the Philippines (disaggregated by age and sex).	DW & HH: Men and boys should help with household work	Men- 91% (Agree) Women - 98% (Agree) Live-in DW - 95% (Agree) Live-out DW - 95% (Agree)
		DW & WW: Household chores and caregiving should be equally shared between women and men	Men - 82% (Agree) Women - 81% (Agree)
		HH: Men can do care work and be caregivers even when there are women present at home	Men - 96% (Agree) Women - 95% (Agree)
		DW: Men can be paid domestic workers too	Live-in DW - 62% Live-out DW - 62%
1200 - Enhanced participation of women and girls in economic, educational, political, community and leisure activities aligned to their own choice in the Philippines and Indonesia	1200a: %/total of women who play a leadership role within an organized group in their community (disaggregated by age)	DW & HH (women): Are you currently in a leadership role?	Live-in DW - 27% Live-out DW - 20% Women (HH Survey) - 28%
	1200b: % of women and girls who feel they can freely decide how to spend their time and reduce hours spent on unpaid care work (scale 1-5) (disaggregated by age).	DW: I am able to go out of the house when I want without supervision. ((Strongly disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree)	Live-in DW - 70% (Agree and Strongly Agree) Live-out DW - 72% (Agree and Strongly Agree)
		DW: I am able to make decision about how to do the works. ((Strongly disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree))	Live-in DW - 76% (Agree and Strongly Agree) Live-out DW - 76% (Agree and Strongly Agree)

		HH: I have the freedom to make decisions regarding my children, household matters, and activities outside the home. (Agree, Not agree, Do not know)	Women (HH Survey) - 92%
IMMEDIATE OUTCOMES			
1110 - Enhanced competencies of paid care workers, particularly domestic care workers, and their employers to recognize and respond to the rights and needs of paid care workers in the Philippines and Indonesia	1110a: %/total of paid care workers with the skills and knowledge that allow them to promote their rights and needs (disaggregated by age)	DW: Are you aware of the rights you have as a domestic worker? (Y/N)	Live-in DW - 81% Live-out DW - 81%
		DW: Which right are you aware of? (Fair wages, Safe working conditions, Right to rest days, Protection from abuse, Rights to be unionized, Others (specify))	Live-in DW: Fair wages - 99% Safe Working Condition - 98% Right to rest days - 97% Right from abuse - 67% Right to Organize - 63% Live-out DW: Fair wages - 100% Safe Working Condition - 89% Right to rest days - 91% Right from abuse - 64% Right to Organize - 59%
	1110b: %/total of employers with the skills and knowledge that allow them to promote the rights and needs of paid care workers (disaggregated by sex)	HH: Do you have in-depth knowledge on the following law/policies: Ministerial decree on Protection of Domestic Workers (Y/N) (Notes: this was asked among those who have heard the respective policy, the total respondents who has answer yes is 20 or 32% from total respondent)	Men - 75% Women - 38%
	1110c: %/total of paid care workers who are confident (scale 1-5) in their ability to respond to their rights and needs (disaggregated by age)	DWI am confident to fight for my wages/working hours/scopes of work with my employer (Very confident, Confident, Somewhat confident, Not confident, Very unconfident).	Live-in - 20% (Confident and very confident) Live-out - 11% (Confident and very confident)

1120 - Strengthened capacity of CSOs, particularly WROs, paid care worker unions, and paid care worker groups to advocate for women's rights and needs related to paid care work in the Philippines and Indonesia	1120a: # CSOs, particularly WROs, paid care worker unions, and paid care worker groups who meaningfully participate in policy/influencing spaces related to paid care work	CSO: Does your organization currently engage in policy discussions and decision-making processes related to care work? (Y/N)	100% (All 5 CSOs interviewed)
	1120b: Perceptions of CSOs, particularly WROs, paid care worker unions, and paid care worker groups who are confident in their ability to hold duty bearers to account in implementing existing care policies (scale of 1-5)	CSO: How would you rate the ability of your organization to hold duty bearers accountable for their responsibilities and commitments? (Very low ability, Low ability, Moderate ability, High ability, Very high ability)	CSOs - 20% (High ability and very high ability)
1210 - Improved social attitudes by key project stakeholders in support of women and girls' participation in economic, educational, political, community and leisure activities in the Philippines and Indonesia	1210a: # of key stakeholders able to formulate and carry out plans to advocate for women's participation in a variety of spaces (disaggregated by sex)	CSOs: How confident is your organization in the ability to design programs that actively promote gender equality and address systemic gender inequalities?	CSOs : 3 organization (Very confident, 60%- Survey)
		CSOs: How confident is your organization in implementing gender-transformative initiatives that challenge and change traditional gender roles and norms?	CSOs: 1 organization extremely confident (20%) CSOs: 4 organization very confident((80%) (Survey)
		Government (Qualitative Observation) Bappenas: has started to formulate road map on care economy, based on the 5R framework. Makassar Labor Office: has formulate regulation on BPJS Ketenagakerjaan that has accommodate informal sector including domestic workers.	4

		Surabaya Labor Office: Already set up grievance mechanism that accommodate domestic workers and has experience training caregivers, unpaid care workers.	
	1210b: %/total of women and girls who feel that key stakeholders in their regions support women's participation in a variety of spaces (disaggregated by age)	DW: How much do you feel your employer cares about your rights and needs? (Very much, Somewhat, Not much, Not at all)	Live-in DW - 25% (very much) Live-out DW - 23% (very much)
		DW: How much do you feel the local government helps you get the services or resources you as a domestic worker need? Very much, Somewhat, Not much, Not at all)	Live-in DW - 3% (very much) Live-out DW - 2% (very much)
1220 - Strengthened capacity of CSOs (particularly WROS), duty-bearers and the private sector to implement gender-transformative initiatives to enhance women and girls' participation in various activities in the Philippines and Indonesia	1220a: % (#) of CSOs, particularly WROs, duty bearers, and private sector stakeholders with skills to implement initiatives enhancing women's participation	CSO: Does your organization have the necessary skills and capacity to enhance women's participation in policy and decision-making processes? (Y/N)	CSOs - 80%
	1220b: % (#) of CSOs, particularly WROs, demonstrating confidence to implement gender-transformative initiatives (scale 1-5)	CSO: How confident is your organization in implementing gender-transformative initiatives that challenge and change traditional gender roles and norms? (Not confident at all, Slightly confident, Moderately confident, Very confident, Extremely confident)	CSOs - 100% (Very confident and extremely confident)
		CSO: How confident is your organization in engaging stakeholders (e.g., community leaders, policymakers) to support gender-transformative initiatives? (Not confident at all, Slightly confident, Moderately confident, Very confident, Extremely confident)	CSOs - 40% (very confident and extremely confident)
		CSO: How confident is your organization in the ability to design programs that actively promote gender equality and address systemic gender inequalities? (Not confident at all, Slightly confident, Moderately confident, Very confident, Extremely confident)	CSOs - 60% (very confident and extremely confident)