

## COUNTRY BRIEF

# Future Demand for Care in the PHILIPPINES

February 2026



## ABOUT THE COUNTRY BRIEF

This country brief is derived from the report *“Future Demand for Care in Indonesia, the Philippines & Vietnam”* published in October 2025 through a collaborative effort among teams in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Vietnam, led by the Global Institute for Women’s Leadership (GIWL) at the Australian National University. In Indonesia, the study was conducted by the SMERU Research Institute; in the Philippines, by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS); and in Vietnam, by the Mekong Development Research Institute (MDRI).

The study was carried out in partnership with Investing in Women, an initiative of the Australian Government through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The views expressed in this publication are the authors’ alone and are not necessarily the views of the Australian Government. The Australian Government neither endorses the views in this publication nor vouches for the accuracy or completeness of the information contained within the publication.

## Key Messages

### Demographic, social and economic shifts will put growing pressure on traditional family-based care.



Demographic shifts, such as longer life expectancy, increasing disability prevalence, declining fertility rates, and migration, as well as evolving care norms will outpace traditional family-based care.

The Philippines' role as a major global exporter of care workers, mostly women, is impacting family dynamics in caregiving when mothers migrate for work. Rapid urbanisation is reshaping family structures into smaller, nuclear family units, increasing demand for paid care services.

Existing care systems are further strained by climate-related disasters, particularly in the Philippines which is ranked as the world's most disaster-prone country. Climate change heightens health risks faced by older persons and persons with disability, frequently damage physical care infrastructure and disrupt essential care services, increasing care needs.

### Rapidly rising care demand is prompting government and private sector action.



Investments in home- and community-based care can reduce dependence on informal care which disproportionately falls on women, and expand their economic opportunities.

The Philippines' National Care Economy Policy Framework is being developed to recognize, value, and redistribute unpaid care work, predominantly done by women, although no accompanying action plan is in place yet.



The private sector plays a critical role in providing care services and trainings. In the Philippines, caregiving courses are mostly offered by private institutions. As government efforts, though essential, often struggle to keep pace with evolving care needs, the private sector offers potential to scale caregiving education.

### A gender lens reveals care's impact on women's economic equality.



Demand for formal care will accelerate over the next 25 years, presenting both challenges and opportunities for women's economic equality.

Among the three countries studied, the Philippines has the lowest rate of labour force participation by women - at 50% in 2023. The government aims to boost this to 59% by 2034 through the *Trabaho Para sa Bayan* Plan, its 10-year master plan for job creation and workforce development.



The expansion of the paid care sector also presents further employment opportunities for women. The private sector can help drive the professionalisation of care work, necessary to improve the quality of care and combat persistent under-recognition and undervaluation of care.

### Public and private investments can transform care systems in ways that promote gender equality.



In order to meet changing care demands, there needs to be coordinated legislative, policy and community efforts to shift gender norms and redistribute paid and unpaid care responsibilities for all genders.



Workplace policies can support women's workforce participation and more equitable distribution of care. In the Philippines, existing laws and policy reforms such as those reflected in the national job master plan can guide companies in promoting employer-supported flexible work arrangements to support women's labour force participation.

# Introduction

The Philippines' economic trajectory as a growing middle-class country with strong development ambitions is significantly increasing the future demand for paid and quality care, with compounding impacts of migration and climate change likely to strain care systems. The private sector plays a critical role in supporting the redistribution of care work through workplace policies.

Rural to urban migration is reshaping family structures, increasing demand for paid care services. International migration, driven by the Philippines' role as a major exporter of care workers, mostly women, is also impacting family dynamics in caregiving and poses challenges to meet local demand for skilled care workers. Existing care systems are further challenged by climate-related disasters in the Philippines, ranked as the world's most disaster-prone country.

In the midst of these shifts, employment-related care policies, such as flexible work, hold significant potential to help workers balance their work and care responsibilities and support women's labour force participation in the short-term.

Understanding future care demand is crucial for guiding strategic investments in the care economy. In 2025, the Global Institute for Women's Leadership (GIWL), in partnership with Investing in Women (IW), an initiative of the Australian Government, published the report, *The Future Demand for Care in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Vietnam*.<sup>1</sup> The research emphasises how public and private sector investments can adopt a gender-transformative approach by:

- Addressing care needs effectively
- Promoting gender equality
- Avoiding reinforcement of existing gender inequalities

Drawing from the report, this brief discusses how future demand for care is likely to shift over the next 25 years, with a focus on the Philippines.

## A gender lens reveals how care challenges and opportunities affect different genders.



Planning for future care demand through a gender lens supports women's economic equality.

- Globally, unpaid care work keeps approximately 708 million women out of the labour market.<sup>2</sup>
- On average, women perform two and a half times more unpaid care work than men.<sup>3</sup>



Increasing women's economic participation also delivers significant macroeconomic benefits.

- Raising women's labour force participation rate by just 5.9 percentage points could boost GDP by up to 8% in emerging and developing economies.<sup>4</sup>
- Closing care policy gaps and expanding care services, could generate nearly 300 million jobs by 2035;<sup>5</sup> approximately 70 to 90% of these jobs would benefit women.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See *Future Demand for Care in Indonesia, the Philippines & Vietnam - Investing In Women*.

<sup>2</sup> ILO, Unpaid Care Work Prevents 708 Million Women from Participating in the Labour Market, October 29, 2024, <https://www.ilo.org/resource/news/unpaid-care-work-prevents-708-million-women-participating-labour-market>

<sup>3</sup> UN Women, Redistribute Unpaid Work, n.d., accessed August 18, 2025, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/csw61/redistribute-unpaid-work>

<sup>4</sup> Antoinette M. Sayeh et al., "Countries That Close Gender Gaps See Substantial Growth Returns," IMF, September 27, 2023, <https://www.imf.org/en/Blogs/Articles/2023/09/27/countries-that-close-gendergaps-see-substantial-growth-returns>

<sup>5</sup> International Labour Organization, Care at Work: Investing in Care Leave and Services for a More Gender Equal World of Work (International Labour Office, n.d.)

<sup>6</sup> UN Women, Investing in Free Universal Childcare in Sub-Saharan Africa: Côte D'Ivoire, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal and The United Republic of Tanzania: Estimating Spending Requirements, Gendered Employment Effects and Fiscal Revenue (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), 2021)



# Research Design and Methodology

## Multi-country Research Consortium

GIWL led a research consortium with the SMERU Research Institute in Indonesia, Philippine Institute for Development Studies in the Philippines, and Mekong Development Research Institute in Vietnam.



Research questions were grouped into seven key themes:

1. Demographic, social, and economic **transitions**
2. **Views on care** and links to transitions
3. **Demand for care** and its links to transitions
4. **Expectations from institutions** on care support
5. **Institutional response** to demand for care support
6. Changing demand for care and **women's economic equality**
7. **Implications** for government and private sector

## Intersectional Gender Lens

The conceptual framework applied an **intersectional gender lens**, examining how factors like race, ethnicity, sexuality, and class intersect with gender and shape each other, rather than treating them as separate hierarchies.<sup>7</sup> The study used a mixed-methods approach, drawing on qualitative and quantitative data collected between October 2024 and August 2025 from 335 participants through interviews, focus groups, and validation workshops. Findings were triangulated with national and international statistics and policy documents.

## Framework to Address Unpaid and Paid Care

Drawing from the UN Women toolkit on paid and unpaid care and supplementary approaches,<sup>8</sup> the research focused on inequalities in care work through attention to **6Rs**.<sup>9</sup>



**Recognition** aims to make unpaid care work visible and valued as a significant contributor to the economy and society.



**Reduction** focuses on lessening the burden and time-consuming nature of unpaid care tasks, primarily shouldered by women.



**Redistribution** involves the equitable sharing of care responsibilities between women and men, between households and the state, and between public and private sectors.



**Reward** addresses paid care work, advocating for decent wages, fair working conditions, and social protection to reflect the sector's value.



**Representation** ensures that care workers have a voice in shaping their profession through, for example, formalisation, collective bargaining, and freedom of association.



**Resilience** is about building care systems that can adapt to and withstand major crises, such as pandemics or climate change.

<sup>7</sup> Patricia Hill Collins, "It's All In the Family: Intersections of Gender, Race, and Nation," *Hypatia* 13, no. 3 (1998): 62–82, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1527-2001.1998.tb01370.x>; Kimberle Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color," *Stanford Law Review* 43, no. 6 (1991): 1241, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1229039>.

<sup>8</sup> UN Women, "A Toolkit on Paid and Unpaid Care Work: From 3rs to 5rs," 2022.

<sup>9</sup> Expanded from the International Labor Organization's *5R Framework for Decent Care Work* to include resilience.

# Key Demographic, Social & Economic Transitions

Several key trends consistently emerged across Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam, which reflect both structural shifts and evolving societal expectations around care responsibilities. Trends consistently point to changes in future demand for care around quantity, quality and complexity.

Younger cohorts are increasingly migrating to urban areas for economic opportunities, often leaving behind older adults.



In the Philippines, the share of older people living alone rose from **10.7%** in 1980 to **17.6%** in 2020.

## CHANGING POPULATION STRUCTURE

The increasing proportion of older people in the population, the majority of whom are women, and higher rates of older people living alone who require support with daily activities increase the demand for care.

## INCREASING DISABILITY PREVALENCE

Disability incidence due to age-related functional decline, as well as higher rates of early diagnosis in children, is contributing to higher demand for care support. The need for flexible, needs-based services, assistive technologies, and a skilled care workforce that supports autonomy and social recognition will grow substantially.

In the Philippines, there is evidence of a growing number of children with special needs enrolled in government-run early childhood care and development programs. This is likely due to increased parental awareness and early diagnosis of developmental and learning disabilities.

## MIGRATION

Young people migrating from rural to urban areas for economic opportunity are disrupting traditional family-based care models. This demographic shift has contributed to a rising proportion of older people living alone.

Urbanisation is steadily increasing in the Philippines, reshaping household structures towards smaller, nuclear family units. Smaller households tend to spend more on paid domestic services compared to larger households according to the 2023 Family Income and Expenditure Survey.<sup>10</sup>

The Philippines is positioned as a key supplier of the global care workforce, with overseas employment heavily concentrated in care-related and domestic roles, which are predominantly filled by women. This has important implications for family care dynamics as, when mothers migrate for work, caregiving responsibilities often shift to the remaining parent, typically the father. Cultural norms, however, may limit men's engagement in tasks traditionally associated with women.<sup>11</sup>

Additionally, strong and growing global demand for domestic and care workers from the Philippines suggests that it may be increasingly difficult

<sup>10</sup> Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), Family Income and Expenditure Survey (FIES) 2023 (PSA, 2023)

<sup>11</sup> Ginbert P. Cuaton and Jeany Rose Teguihanon, "Who Cares for the Children and Families Left Behind? A Study on the Costs and Benefits of Maternal Migration," International Journal of Caring Sciences (Nicosia) 12, no. 3 (2019): 1850–56.

to recruit such workers locally, particularly those with training and certification, due to their relatively higher reservation wages.

### GENDER NORMS AROUND CARE

Care remains largely the responsibility of women. Women bear a disproportionate share of unpaid care and make up the majority of low-paid, poorly protected domestic workers. Across all countries, caregiving practices are strongly shaped by cultural norms and expectations.

As with other countries in the study, family-based care remains the preferred arrangement in the Philippines, particularly for supporting ageing parents. This is seen as an expression of “*utang na loob*” or debt of gratitude in reciprocal family obligations.

However, younger generations show shifts in attitudes and behaviours towards more equal sharing of childcare & adult care responsibilities between partners.<sup>12</sup>

### LABOUR MARKET TRENDS AND POLICIES

Rising rates of women’s education and labour market demand is likely to drive greater need for paid care services, especially childcare, as women enter the labour force.

The Philippines aims to boost the labour force participation of women to 59% by 2034 through *Trabaho Para sa Bayan* Plan 2025-2034, its 10-year master plan for job creation and workforce development.

### GROWING MIDDLE CLASS

The substantial middle-class population has more disposable income that increases their demand for and ability to afford high-quality paid care solutions.

The Philippines reported a 6% annual GDP growth rate in 2024.<sup>13</sup> Its middle class accounted for about 40% of the population in 2021, up significantly from 29% in 1991.<sup>14,15</sup>

### CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate-related disasters disrupt care infrastructure and disproportionately affect vulnerable groups, further straining care systems. Women, who already shoulder a disproportionate share of unpaid care work, face even greater responsibilities during and after such disasters. Further, climate shocks frequently force households to redirect spending toward immediate recovery needs, placing further strain on disposable income that might otherwise be used for care-related expenses.

The Philippines is ranked as the world’s most disaster-prone country due to its high vulnerability and limited capacity to adapt and respond to disasters.<sup>16</sup>



The Philippines aims to boost the labour force participation network of women

to **59%** by 2034.

**#1**

The Philippines is ranked the most disaster-prone country in the world.

During and after disasters, women face even greater care responsibilities.



<sup>12</sup> Companion study on Social Norms, Attitudes, and Practices (SNAP) by GIWL in partnership with IW, to be published in February 2026.

<sup>13</sup> Figures for annual GDP growth are from the World Bank, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG>.

<sup>14</sup> According to Albert (2024), a middle-income class household with five members in the Philippines would have a monthly income ranging approximately PHP 25,000 to 145,000.

<sup>15</sup> Jose Ramon G. Albert, The Middle Class in the Philippines: Growing but Vulnerable, ISEAS Perspective no. 102 (2024), [https://www.iseas.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/ISEAS\\_Perspective\\_2024\\_102.pdf](https://www.iseas.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/ISEAS_Perspective_2024_102.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> World Economic Forum, The Global Risks Report 2023 (World Economic Forum, 2023).

## GOVERNMENT ASPIRATIONS FOR GROWTH

Government targets for economic growth will rely on supporting workers to meet their care responsibilities, increasing the need for institutional care solutions. Government aspirations, at present, have not adequately accounted for the care responsibilities and needs of care recipients and workers.

The Philippines' economic growth goals are reinforced by the Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028.<sup>17</sup>

These shifts interact with and reinforce one another, often straining traditional family-based caregiving arrangements. Under the status quo, women's economic equality remains un- or under-supported, as unpaid care burdens continue to disproportionately fall on women.

## Views and Demands for Care and Their Links to Transition

Caregiving responsibilities continue to fall primarily on women, who are expected to take care of children, grandchildren, aging spouses, parents, in-laws, and persons with disability.

Cost of living concerns are necessitating dual incomes in households, leading to the redistribution of care responsibilities, such as increased involvement of men or outsourcing. This redistribution is driven by economic necessity, rather than a deliberate effort to support women's workforce participation.

Demand is increasing for a holistic care approach across all life stages – children, older people, people with disabilities.



**Children** — Expectations are shifting beyond basic access to early childhood services towards high-quality early education. Demand is not limited to high-income households.



**Older people** — Care needs are expanding beyond physical health to include mental health and social engagement.



**Persons with disability** — Care must support personal development, autonomy, and inclusion.

Insights from qualitative interviews and validation workshops revealed shifting preferences for modes of care and care delivery. Respondents from the Philippines highlighted a growing interest in technology-enabled care models that offer flexible, needs-based services aligned with holistic care principles.



<sup>17</sup> Philippine Government, Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028 (Philippine Government, n.d.), <https://pdp.depdev.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Philippine-Development-Plan-2023-2028.pdf>.



# Institutional Response to Demand for Care Support

Across Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam, there is evidence of current and growing responses in the form of policy frameworks, employer-related care policies, service provision, care training provision, and the development of innovative services. Having an integrated roadmap or national framework for the care economy is essential to support the development of a sustainable, equitable and inclusive care ecosystem.



In the Philippines, the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) is leading the development of a National Care Economy Policy Framework (NCEPF) in partnership with Oxfam Pilipinas. As of August 2025, the framework is still pending finalisation and approval by the current administration. Based on stakeholder interviews, NCEPF has no accompanying action plan in place yet.

Governments are **establishing regulatory frameworks** to support the care economy. However, due to **limited public funding**, governments often struggle to scale care provision or the ecosystem—making private sector involvement critical.

The **private sector remains a key provider of care services**. Given the strong preference for home-based care, it plays a leading role in providing these services, mainly through digital platforms that connect families with trained caregivers. Provision of care training and certification is key to enhancing the care economy, and the private sector is the main provider of **caregiving training and education**.

The Philippines stands out for its global reputation as a major exporter of care workers. Policies, programs and standards are set by the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA). As of December 2024, data from TESDA show that, of all institutions offering caregiving courses, 363 are private while only seven are public.<sup>18</sup>

Aside from direct provision, the private sector is also in the best position to **drive innovations in care systems**, such as through startups developing digital solutions (e.g. telehealth, app-based home care services).

<sup>18</sup> Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), Number of TVET Institutions Offering Caregiving Courses 2024 (TESDA, 2024).

## HOW STAKEHOLDERS ARE RESPONDING TO THE CHANGING CARE DEMANDS:

### GOVERNMENT

- Policies to offer incentives to encourage businesses to implement care programs (e.g. tax deductions, subsidies)
- Government provision of subsidies to increase the affordability of formal care
- Setting policies, programs, and standards to ensure quality of care

### EMPLOYERS

- **Parental and carer's leave policies** can encourage sharing of caregiving, though uptake rates are unclear
- Employer-supported **flexible work arrangements** hold potential to help workers balance work and care responsibilities
- Direct provision of **on-site facilities** or other supplementation for childcare

### PRIVATE SECTOR PROVIDERS

- Strong preference for home-based care is driving growth in private-sector care worker services
- Start-ups are developing innovative services that expand the broader care ecosystem. **Examples include:**
  1. Services to help public and private sector organisations recruit people with disabilities and provides training to enhance their employability
  2. Apps to support older people's physical, mental, and emotional well-being

### INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

- Providing technical assistance for policy frameworks and guidelines
- Funding research, and piloting or scaling innovative care solutions in collaboration with civil society and non-profit organizations

## EXAMPLES OF HOW THE PHILIPPINES IS RESPONDING TO FUTURE DEMAND FOR CARE

### *Developing a national care economy framework*

The Philippine National Care Economy Policy Framework is being finalised by the current administration. It is vital that this framework has a clear scope and boundaries, contains implementable strategies – with funding – and aligns with national development objectives. Once adopted, the framework represents a significant step toward integrating care work, both paid and unpaid, into the development agenda of the Philippines.

### *Allocating limited fiscal resources strategically*

Mandated allocations in the Philippines such as the Gender and Development Fund<sup>19</sup>, Special Education Fund<sup>20</sup>, and Local Development Fund<sup>21</sup> offer untapped potential for financing local care initiatives. By leveraging these resources more

<sup>19</sup> The Gender and Development Fund refers to a mandatory allocation of at least five of a government agency's or local government unit's (LGU) budget towards initiatives that advance gender equality and empower women

<sup>20</sup> The Special Education Fund refers to a dedicated fund at the local government level specifically allocated to support public basic education, which is primarily sourced from an additional one percent tax on the assessed value of real property.

<sup>21</sup> 119 The Local Development Fund is a mandatory fund of at least 20 percent of a LGU's annual Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA), specifically allocated for development projects. The use of the LDF, whether willfully or through negligence, for disallowed expenditure items can subject LGU officials and personnel to penalties under existing laws.

effectively, local governments can expand access to care programs and facilities, ensuring that fiscal strategies align with both immediate and future demands.

#### *Developing and strengthening workforce policies relating to care*

In the Philippines, mandatory retirement at age 65 places significant constraints on otherwise healthy and capable people from being gainfully employed. Revising these requirements would provide older adults the opportunity to remain in the workforce longer, helping to manage caregiving responsibilities associated with ageing populations.

#### *Recognising, valuing and investing in care work professionalisation*

The private sector plays a major role in scaling caregiving training and services as government efforts, through essential, often struggle to keep pace with evolving care needs. For example, TESDA does not currently offer specific dementia care modules. However, care work professionalisation has largely been oriented towards meeting overseas labour market demands, highlighting the need to develop a stronger domestic market for skilled care workers.

In the context of cross-country learning, the Philippines can share examples of developing and implementing caregiving competency standards, given its role as a major exporter of care workers and leader in developing and implementing caregiving competency standards.

#### *Promoting economic productivity growth that is responsive to care needs*

The information technology and business process management (IT-BPM) sector has pioneered hybrid work setups that allow employees to spend more time with their families without reducing productivity. Some companies have taken further steps to address inequity in childcare by offering gender-neutral parental leave, allowing fathers or alternative caregivers, not just mothers, to take paid leave. Flexible work arrangements, supported by the government's job master plan, can help future-proof the labour force and meet care needs.

Employer-supported flexible work arrangements (FWA) hold significant potential to help workers balance their work and care responsibilities and support women's labour force participation in the short-term. However, in all three countries, labour codes tend to lack details on flexible work arrangements as mainstream policies, and their implementation often depends on employer discretion.

In the Philippines, FWA provisions appear in the Solo Parents Welfare Act, which grants single parents the right to flexible working hours or varied arrival and departure times, and the Telecommuting Act, which institutionalises telecommuting as an alternative work arrangement for private sector employees. The *Trabaho Para sa Bayan* Plan 2025-2034, launched in 2025, provides guidance on how employers can improve the experience of FWA, along with broader strategies to support a more inclusive labour market and women's economic equality. As with all legislation, impact will depend on implementation and uptake. A potential risk that women will be the primary adopters of telecommuting, which could reinforce traditional gender norms around caregiving, must be recognised and mitigated.



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## KEY ENABLERS AND BARRIERS

### ENABLERS

- The care economy has emerged as a **key policy priority** (e.g., ASEAN's Comprehensive Framework on the Care Economy 2021)
- Rapidly rising care demand is prompting action
- **Community-based care solutions** are growing with government support

### BARRIERS

- Cultural reliance on family-based caregiving limits formal care market development
- Challenges in cross-ministry coordination hinder effective care policymaking
- **Government budget constraints** limit care investment and policy prioritisation
- **Exporting of care workers overseas** diverts resources away from addressing domestic care needs
- **Comprehensive data** to map demand and supply of existing care services is lacking

## Changing Demand for Care and Women's Economic Equality<sup>22</sup>

At the core of shifting care demands is the persistent unequal distribution of unpaid care work, which is reinforced by social, political, and legal structures that expect women to be primary carers. Rising demand for care may constrain women's labour force participation, particularly in formal employment, due to time poverty and unpaid care burdens. The strain on women is likely to intensify unless care systems are meaningfully transformed. As women become more highly educated, on average, than men, nations are failing to utilise this critical investment, to the detriment of women and the economy.

Investments in care infrastructure and services can alleviate the unpaid care burdens and support women to enter the workforce.

In the Philippines, care responsibilities often extend to women relatives or domestic workers – highlighting that even when care is outsourced, it remains feminised.

**The expansion of the paid care sector presents further employment opportunities for all genders.** It also enables more people to enter the workforce, primarily women, given they take on more care responsibilities. However, jobs must be created with fair wages, legal protections, and recognition of care as skilled work.

National legislation and workplace policies (e.g. paid parental and carer leave, flexible work arrangements) can support redistribution of unpaid care responsibilities among all genders.

<sup>22</sup> Economic equality, as defined in IW's *Women's Economic Equality Framework* (July 2024), is the capacity for people of all genders to participate in, contribute to, and benefit from, the economy (paid and unpaid) in ways which recognise the value of their contributions, respect their dignity, and make it possible to negotiate a fairer distribution of the benefits of work.

## FURTHER INTERSECTIONAL CONSIDERATIONS INFLUENCE THE IMPACT OF CHANGING CARE DEMANDS ON WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EQUALITY



**Low-income and rural women often face compounded barriers**—either because they cannot afford existing paid care services, or because they are the ones providing care solutions for higher-income households, often in low-paid, informal roles with limited legal and social protections.



**Migrant women often face greater challenges in accessing care support**, as they lack nearby informal family networks and may be unfamiliar with available (formal) paid care services or face barriers to accessing quality care services in their destination areas.



**Women with disabilities, or those caring for people with disabilities**, face unique challenges in balancing caregiving with economic participation—due to relatively limited availability of quality disability care services and a prevailing approach that emphasises support over independence.

## Implications for Government, the Private Sector and Communities

Having a road map and action plan for the care economy, signals a strong government commitment that can encourage broader engagement from the private sectors and other stakeholders. However, effective implementation and cross-collaboration is key.

Due to limited fiscal space, government must **leverage the private sector** in care provision. Private sector investment in the care sector can be stimulated by:

- Strengthening regulatory frameworks to facilitate private sector involvement to ensure service quality, affordability and equity
- Offering tax incentives, subsidising land acquisition, and simplifying licensing and permit requirements
- Providing clear guidelines for how to access available incentives, ensuring transparency, and reducing administrative barriers

### 12 KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

01	Develop and strengthen national care economy frameworks	02	Allocate limited fiscal resources strategically	03	Leverage the role of the private sector in care provision	04	Invest in care alternatives, including flexible, home-based, and community-based care
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05	Develop and strengthen workforce policies relating to care	06	Recognise, value, and invest in care work professionalisation	07	Improve data collection, monitoring, and evaluation	08	Promote equitable care norms
09	Promote economic productivity growth that is responsive to care needs	10	Increase agency and equality-based approaches to care	11	Invest in further research on gender responsive care	12	Develop care contingency plans for unforeseen and high-impact events

## Conclusion

Demand for paid, accessible and high-quality care will steadily increase in the Philippines in the next 25 years, driven by strong development ambitions, including increasing women's labour force participation, and demographic shifts. Migration and climate change, reinforced by the Philippines' role as a major exporter of care workers globally and ranking as the world's most disaster-prone country, will further strain existing care systems.

Responding to these increasing care demands requires addressing entrenched gender norms and supporting equal distribution of unpaid care work. Employment-related policies, such as flexible work, and inclusive workplace policies can further illuminate pathways to balance unpaid care between women and men. Aside from workplace policies, the private sector plays a critical role in not just providing but also scaling caregiving services and training to keep pace with evolving care needs.

As government, the private sector, and communities work together on care economy transformations, actions should consider major crises such as climate-related disasters to ensure care systems are inclusive and sustainable.



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