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Title of South-South and triangular cooperation (SSTC) good practice: South4Care: Fostering Decent Work for Paid Care Workers in the Arab States through Peer Learning

Countries involved from Arab States: Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, United Arab Emirates and Yemen. **Partner Countries:** Brazil, Canada, Mexico (Americas), Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand (Asia), Norway (Europe), Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, South Africa and Tanzania (Africa), Moldova and Uzbekistan (Eastern Europe).

South-South Objectives	1. Promote South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) as the core modality for knowledge-sharing, bringing together experiences and expertise from the Global South and North to strengthen policy and practice in the care economy. 2. Build the capacity of ILO constituents and stakeholders in the Arab States region to design, implement, and evaluate care policies and systems that respond to the needs of workers, employers, and society at large. 3. Address decent work deficits faced by paid care workers, particularly migrant domestic workers, through peer learning and exchange of good practices facilitated under SSTC frameworks. 4. Strengthen national care policies and systems by drawing on comparative lessons from South-South exchanges, with an emphasis on inclusiveness, gender equality, and sustainability. 5. Operationalize the ILO's 5R Framework (Recognize, Reduce, Redistribute, Reward, Represent) through SSTC-driven policy dialogue and innovation, enabling governments and social partners to adapt the framework to national contexts. 6. Support women's labour force participation in the Arab States by leveraging SSTC peer learning to identify strategies that reduce unpaid care burdens and expand decent work opportunities. 7. Foster collaboration among developing countries to co-create solutions for fair migration governance and improved protections for migrant domestic workers, using SSTC as a tool for solidarity and shared responsibility. 8. Position the ILO as a lead knowledge and technical partner in the global care economy agenda, using the South4Care platform to consolidate evidence, document good practices, and disseminate innovative approaches through SSTC channels. 9. Promote policy coherence between global commitments and regional priorities, ensuring that the 2024 ILC Resolution on Decent Work and the Care Economy is translated into actionable national strategies through South-South exchanges. 10. Lay the foundation for sustained regional and interregional cooperation by institutionalizing the South4Care platform as a long-term SSTC hub for knowledge exchange, capacity development, and solidarity across countries of the Global South.
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South-South Cooperation between institutions and countries to achieve the objectives	The application of the SSTC approach was enhanced through the collaborative organization of the South4Care Learning Hub by ILO ROAS, GEDI, WORKQUALITY and PARTNERSHIP, in partnership with ITC/Turin. With different departments working together, the first edition of the South4Care Learning Hub was able to bring a wider range of participants and experts from all regions of the world. ILO and ITC/Turin acted as the convener and knowledge agent to ensure rich information exchange and learning experience. Through a triangular cooperation modality, these stakeholders engaged in peer learning with champion countries from the Global South (including Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Moldova the GCC, Arab Partners, Qatar, Brazil, and countries from Latin America and the Caribbean). UN Women, UN ESCWA, UN OHCHR, and UNICEF joined to strengthen the existing partnerships and ensure policy coherence. In total, 92 Participants, 9 Observers and 56 Experts joined the meeting.
Effectiveness of the South-South / peer learning methodological approach	The first edition of the South4Care Learning Hub was held during 1-18 September 2025 (online and in Doha from 15-18 September) in the Arab States region, recognizing that enhanced efforts to strengthen the care economy can bring multiple benefits in the region where women's labour force participation rates have been low and care workers, especially migrant domestic workers, have been facing decent work deficits. This knowledge sharing and capacity building initiative aimed to strengthen the capacity of ILO constituents and other key stakeholders particularly in the Arab States region, in designing and implementing measures to address decent work deficits faced by care workers and to better address care needs in the world of work. To enhance effectiveness of learning, this initiative was done through South-South Triangular Cooperation, bringing experts from global South as well as North. In June 2024, the International Labour Conference (ILC) adopted a Resolution on Decent Work and the Care Economy, prompting the creation of the South4Care platform as part of a 2024–2030 Plan of Action. Designed as a South–South and Triangular Cooperation hub, South-4-Care facilitates knowledge exchange, capacity-building, and the sharing of policy innovations among developing countries to advance decent work in the care economy. The platform embodies the principles of South–South Cooperation, enabling countries in the Global South to learn from one another’s experiences, adapt solutions to their contexts, and strengthen policy responses to care-economy challenges. The "South4Care Learning Hub (the First edition in the Arab States region)" aimed to strengthen the capacity of ILO constituents in addressing persistent decent work deficits for paid care workers in the Arab States, particularly among migrant domestic workers, and strengthening national care policies and systems to address various care needs. It sought to achieve this by positioning the ILO as a key lead and knowledge partner and using the 5R Framework to help constituents recognize, reduce, and redistribute unpaid care work, while also working to reward and represent paid care workers through improved policies and legislation. This knowledge sharing and capacity building event combined online and in-person segments where key concepts related to gender equality, care economy and decent work were covered during the online segment in early September, which was followed by the in-person segment in mid-September. This allowed the participants to have meaningful discussions and exchanges on how different countries have been tackling various challenges related to care. The event also provided Arabic/English interpretation for all plenary sessions and for most of technical tracks, which made South-South exchange and peer learning possible.

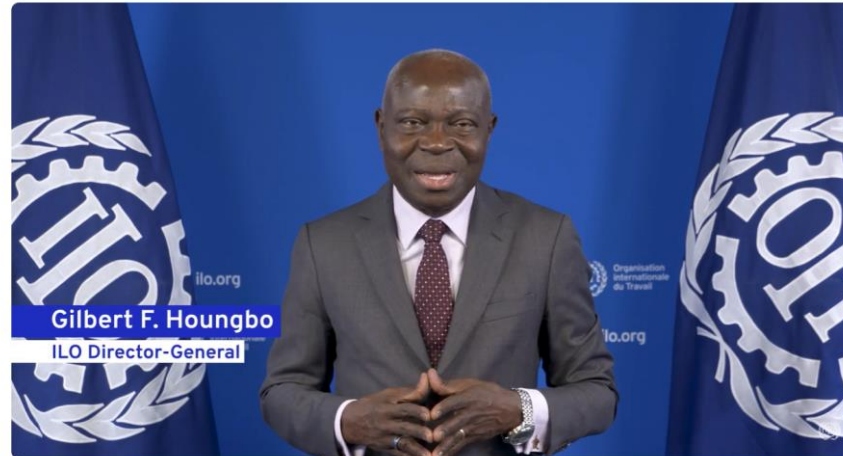
	This peer-to-peer approach allowed Arab State constituents to directly learn from the successful models of South Africa, Bangladesh, Japan, Moldova, and Indonesia to name a few. In addition to the inspiring plenary sessions, the event also offered 10 technical tracks where participants had the opportunity to deep dive into the topics of their interests to learn further and have more interactions. The participatory format fostered honest dialogue about shared challenges and adaptable solutions, moving beyond theoretical policy discussion. Because of the topic of the meeting, this event also saw many female participants in the region where female representation is limited. This provided a valuable opportunity for women representatives to connect with their counterparts in different regions, exchange and explore possible partnerships for the future.
Innovation	The design of the online segment was adjusted slightly to ensure good engagement and buy-in by the participants from the Arab States region where the discussion on the care economy especially among ILO constituents remains sensitive. Specifically for the Arabic speaking participants, one session was introduced to cover topics of equality, masculinity and engagement of men, which created a good basis for the participants to join the in-person segment and interact with participants from other regions. designed carefully to ensure adjusted particularly to The ILO's transformative 5R Framework and relevant international labour standards remained as key guiding framework and instruments to promote better understanding and action in the care economy.
South-South Sustainability	Sustainability was embedded by focusing on capacity building and network creation. Through the opportunities for the participants to share experience and discuss solutions based on global and local experiences, the participants developed good rapport, which will be the good basis for maintaining contacts for future collaboration. The knowledge products produced will continue to be a key resource for ongoing advocacy.
South-South Adaptability	The good practice is highly adaptable. The core model—using research, a peer-learning workshop, and national follow-up—can be replicated in any region, and the selection of champion countries can be tailored to address specific regional challenges. For instance, Brazil's secretariat for Care Economy, Uruguay's model is highly adaptable for middle-income countries seeking to build integrated systems, while South Korea's insurance model offers a roadmap for countries anticipating rapid population ageing. The experience of the social security systems of Oman and Jordan in financing care policies are pertinent for countries with incipient public care policies and systems.
South-South Results	1. Positioned the ILO as the key knowledge partner on care work in the region. 2. Produced a regional situational analysis overview on childcare, elderly care and domestic workers, , providing an unprecedented evidence base. 3. Enhanced the capacity of over 40 policymakers from Arab States to formulate rights-based care policies. 4. Inspired follow-up national dialogues in three countries to adapt lessons learned into draft legislation, particularly focusing on the rights of domestic workers. 5. Established a lasting partnership network between Arab States, including GCC, Brazil. 6. Launched and disseminated a South-South online Platform, South-4-Care Platform, to showcase illustrative practices of countries at different levels of development. 7. Fostered peer-to-peer exchanges between ministries of labour, women's affairs, and social development across Arab States, leading to concrete South-South cooperation initiatives on care economy policies.

	8. Strengthened collaboration with UN agencies, workers' and employers' organizations, and civil society actors, ensuring a tripartite and multi-stakeholder approach to advancing care policies. 9. Generated visibility and global recognition of the Arab States' contributions to the care economy agenda through international fora, including COP, HLC on South-South Cooperation, and ILO Governing Body discussions. 10. Developed a set of practical policy tools and guidelines on financing, regulation, and quality assurance in the care sector, now serving as references for ongoing reforms. 11. Contributed to positioning care work as a central pillar in gender-responsive just transitions and social justice frameworks, influencing the integration of care in national development strategies and SDG reporting.
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Funding Sources	The initiative was primarily funded through the ILO's Regular Budgetary Technical Cooperation (RBTC-SSTC) fund, with a total budget of USD 100,000, and was co-funded by multiple sources. This includes 55,300 USD from GEDI/WORKQUALITY RB, 69,232 USD from ILO-Sida's partnership programme (GEDI portion), 12,017 USD from the project Promoting workers' rights and gender equality at work in Africa – Phase II (Outcome 2 - GEDI); USD 2,324 from an RBSA project in Brazil; USD 2,375 from an RBSA project in Mexico; USD 2,000 from the Kenya PPDP project. An estimated total of around USD 6,500 to cover travel costs for 2 participants from Moldova, 3 from Cambodia, 3 from Sri Lanka, 1 from India, 1 from Uzbekistan from multiple TC and RBSA projects. . To make the event possible, the ILO Regional Office for Arab States also provided USD57,000 through RBTC Turin. The ILO Doha Project Office also contributed USD20,000. In addition, various projects in the Arab States region made financial contribution to support the participation of constituents (amount to approximately USD20,000) and the ILO's Fairway Project (USD 10,000). Altogether, the total funding mobilized for the initiative amounted to around USD 356,000 .
Materials	Materials and Web-links Materials: 1. Final Research Report: "The Care Economy in the Arab States: A Situational Analysis and Policy Review" 2. Short summary Report with key findings and policy recommendations. 3. A short documentary video showcasing the SSTC exchange and participant testimonials. 4. Pictures of the event: Launch of South4Care Flickr. Web-link: South-4-Care Platform

[ILO Director-General Gilbert F.Houngbo video message for the launch of the South-4-Care Platform](#)

[ILO inaugural session of South-4-Care Platform with Global Partners to Advance Decent Work in the Care Economy through South-South and Triangular Cooperation – South-South Meeting Point](#)

[New South4Care Platform launched to advance decent work in the care economy | International Labour Organization](#)



ILO Director-General Gilbert F.Houngbo video message for the launch of the South-4-Care Platform
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