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Matters arising out of the work of the 112th Session (2024) of the International Labour Conference

Follow-up to the resolution concerning decent work and the care economy

Purpose of the document

This document proposes a plan of action on decent work and the care economy for the period 2024–30 to give effect to the resolution concerning decent work and the care economy adopted by the International Labour Conference at its 112th Session in June 2024. The Governing Body is invited to provide guidance on the proposed plan of action and on the holding of a tripartite meeting on paternity and parental protection, and other care leave, in the first quarter of 2026, and requests the Director-General to consider its guidance in implementing the plan of action (see the draft decision in paragraph 36).

Relevant strategic objective: All.

Main relevant outcome: Outcome 5 for 2024–25: Gender equality and equality of treatment and opportunities for all.

Policy implications: The plan of action will guide the Office's work in the area of the care economy for the period 2024–30.

Legal implications: None.

Financial implications: Yes.

Follow-up action required: Implementation of the plan of action, taking into account the guidance provided by the Governing Body.

Author unit: Conditions of Work and Equality Department (WORKQUALITY).

Related documents: [ILC.112/Resolution V](#); [ILC.112/Record No. 8A](#); [ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work](#); [Programme and Budget for 2024–25](#); Programme and Budget proposals for 2026–27; [GB.349/INS/3/2](#); [GB.349/LILS/1](#).

► Background and context

1. At its 112th Session (2024), the International Labour Conference held a general discussion on decent work and the care economy. This discussion led to the adoption of a resolution and conclusions reaffirming the necessity for urgent action to ensure decent work in the care economy and promote decent work for all by ensuring their access to care. Governments, employers and workers shaped a common understanding of the care economy as comprising both paid and unpaid care work, and emphasized the inextricable links between decent work, gender equality, just transition, sustainable development and the care economy.
2. Paid and unpaid care work is essential to all other work. A well-functioning and robust care economy contributes to a healthier present and future workforce, creates jobs, supports businesses, enhances productivity and promotes gender equality.
3. The care economy is fast-growing and creates and enables employment opportunities. The care workforce is heterogeneous and requires different levels of skills and specialized knowledge. While some care workers are well-paid and highly skilled, many care workers, especially migrant and domestic workers, are low paid and lack social and labour protections. Community health workers are often not recognized as workers.
4. Women perform a major share of unpaid and paid care work in the care economy, which is characterized by ethnic, racial and gender-based occupational segregation.
5. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of the care economy while exacerbating the existing decent work deficits of care workers, including long working hours, low pay, exposure to discrimination and health and safety risks, including violence and harassment. It also exacerbated the disproportionate share of unpaid care work carried out by women and girls.
6. The conclusions underscore that just as labour is not a commodity, labour in the care economy is not a commodity. The conclusions also highlight the progress made due to the efforts of governments, employers, and workers including through ratification of international labour standards relevant to the care economy, and social dialogue, as well as employer-led initiatives, to promote family-friendly workplaces and working arrangements to promote work-life balance and more equal sharing of care responsibilities between women and men. These efforts have contributed to addressing the unequal division of care work between women and men and promoting social co-responsibility among the state, the private sector, families, the social and solidarity economy and communities. However, the conclusions also emphasize that significant gaps remain in public awareness, legislation, policies, funding and implementation of policies in the care economy.
7. Taking these factors into consideration, the Conference charted the way forward for decent work in the care economy. In its resolution, the Conference requested the Director-General to: (a) prepare a plan of action on decent work and the care economy to give effect to the conclusions, for consideration of the Governing Body at its 352nd Session (October–November 2024); (b) communicate the conclusions to relevant international and regional organizations; (c) take into account the conclusions when preparing future programme and budget proposals and mobilizing extrabudgetary resources; (d) keep the Governing Body informed of their implementation. Accordingly, the Office has prepared a plan of action that covers the period 2024–30 for consideration by the Governing Body.

► Proposed plan of action

8. The proposed plan of action, in line with the guiding principles set out in the conclusions, recognizes the centrality of a rights-based approach to care and the importance of international labour standards and social dialogue. It emphasizes the primary responsibility of the State for care provision, funding, regulation and ensuring high standards of quality, safety and health for care workers and care recipients.
9. Furthermore, the plan of action aims to promote integrated and coherent strategies to achieve decent work in the care economy, guided by the 5R Framework for Decent Care Work (recognition, reduction and redistribution of unpaid care and reward and representation of care workers).
10. The plan of action comprises four mutually reinforcing components, each with its own outputs. The first component deals with knowledge development, dissemination and communication, while the second relates to technical advisory services and capacity-building for constituents. The third component is on international labour standards-related action and social dialogue and the development of statistical standards and the fourth reaffirms the ILO's global leadership on decent work and the care economy and promoting policy coherence and partnerships.
11. The plan of action gives effect to the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work and its call for a transformative agenda for gender equality. It contributes to the ILO strategy to reduce and prevent inequalities in the world of work for the period 2022–27 (2022); the resolution concerning the second recurrent discussion on labour protection (2023) and the resolution concerning the third recurrent discussion on fundamental principles and rights at work (2024), and the associated follow-up action plans.

Component 1: Knowledge development, dissemination and communication

12. This component aims to foster a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities in advancing decent work in the care economy for evidence-based policy advice and capacity-building of constituents, including in the context of increasing digitalization and use of artificial intelligence, demographic and green transitions and multiple crises, for countries at different levels of development.
13. Component 1 envisages the production and dissemination of data and analyses on all forms of care work and persons who provide care, disaggregated by income, sex, age, race, ethnic origin, migration status, disability, geographical location and other relevant characteristics, whenever possible. Special attention will be given to groups and workers more at risk of discrimination and exclusion, such as migrant workers, tribal and indigenous peoples and domestic workers. Thematic, regional and national trends and analyses on decent work and the care economy in economies at different levels of development, including on coverage gaps and public investments in care and their impacts on gender equality, employment, pay, working conditions, social protection and quality of care service provision, as relevant, will be presented in a series of briefs on the care economy.
14. The Office will further enrich the online ILO Global Care Policy Portal and Investment Simulator, making it a comprehensive resource hub on care policies. It will support costing studies, measuring financing gaps and options to expand fiscal space tailored to the priorities and needs of governments and social partners, to inform national social dialogues and policy formulation.

15. Tools will be developed to assist constituents in implementing gender-responsive macroeconomic policies and mechanisms to ensure fiscal space for care-related investments. Moreover, solutions will be identified for the formalization of informal care jobs and enterprises and the prevention of informalization of formal ones.
16. The Office will develop evidence-based knowledge on the role of public-private partnerships, public and private enterprises, in particular micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, cooperatives and other social and solidarity economy entities, in the provision of and investments in quality care services, care infrastructure, training and employment opportunities. Attention to community-based care provision, including through partnership with indigenous and tribal peoples, and how such provision meets local care needs and just transitions, will be analysed.
17. Responding to the call for enhanced awareness on care issues, the ILO will develop and implement a communication and dissemination strategy on decent work and the care economy, in collaboration with the regional offices. The strategy will, among others, address issues relating to the importance of care work for all other work; the undervaluation of care work; the unequal gender distribution of paid and unpaid care work; advocacy for women's economic empowerment and for changing stereotypes around caregiving roles; and the benefits of investment in the care economy, in collaboration with Member States, employers' and workers' organizations and partners in the United Nations (UN) system.

Component 2: Technical advisory services and capacity-building for constituents

18. This component will focus on the design, implementation and sustainable and adequate financing of integrated and coherent care policies and systems for decent work and gender equality, guided by the 5R Framework for Decent Care Work including through Decent Work Country Programmes.
19. The Office will provide technical assistance on care policies, including care leave policies and services, and on strategies to mainstream care in relevant policy areas, with a focus on gender-responsive employment and macroeconomic policies; active labour market policies and skills; labour protection, including wages, working time, occupational safety and health and strengthened labour inspection for decent work for care workers; universal social protection systems; equality and non-discrimination policies; policies for sustainable enterprises; migration; formalization policies; and just transition and digitalization policies, as relevant to country context.
20. Advisory services will focus on supporting constituents to extend assistance and protection to workers frequently excluded and at risk of discrimination, including intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination. These include migrant care workers, domestic workers, community health and care workers, workers in cooperatives and other social and solidarity economy entities, many of whom work informally. Technical assistance will also consider culturally appropriate services and workforce considerations for indigenous and tribal peoples through community-based approaches. Constituents will be capacitated to strengthen policy support to workers with family responsibilities and care receivers, such as persons with physical and mental illnesses, persons living with HIV and persons with disabilities, with the participation of persons from the groups concerned.
21. The Office will provide technical assistance to support the collection, production and dissemination of meaningful and comprehensive data, disaggregated by sex and other

relevant characteristics, for the measurement of both paid and unpaid care work by Member States, in line with latest international statistical standards. This work will target existing data gaps on care work.

22. With the International Training Centre of the ILO in Turin, the Office will strengthen tripartite constituents' capacities to engage in the design, implementation, monitoring and adequate financing of care policies and systems, adapted to countries at different levels of income. In addition, it will facilitate knowledge-sharing, such as South-South exchanges, including in collaboration with regional institutions such as the Inter-American Centre for Knowledge Development in Vocational Training (ILO/CINTERFOR).
23. The Office will reinforce tripartite constituents' capacities to strengthen all forms of social dialogue in care sectors, including collective bargaining and tripartite cooperation, with a view to ensuring effective policy implementation and labour rights protection.

Component 3: International labour standards-related action, social dialogue and statistical standards

24. The Office will intensify efforts to promote the ratification and implementation of the international labour standards relevant to the care economy, including all fundamental Conventions, as well as those relating to maternity protection, workers with family responsibilities, domestic workers, nursing personnel, and other instruments relevant to the promotion of employment and decent work in the care economy.
25. The Office will assist Member States in following up on the recommendations of the eighth meeting of the Standards Review Mechanism Tripartite Working Group (SRM TWG) on maternity protection. Accordingly, the Office will conduct general and targeted promotion of the ratification and effective implementation of the Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183), especially in Member States where the Maternity Protection Convention, 1919 (No. 3) and the Maternity Protection Convention (Revised), 1952 (No. 103) are currently in force.¹ The Office will also provide technical support and guidance on the application of maternity protection to all women workers.
26. In line with the SRM TWG recommendations and the conclusions adopted by the Conference, the Office will undertake research to be discussed by a tripartite meeting, to be determined by the Governing Body at the earliest date possible, so as to enable the Organization to assess whether there are gaps in the ILO's body of international labour standards related to paternity and parental protection, and other care leave (for sick or critically-ill family members, older persons or persons with disabilities) and, if so, what normative and/or non-normative actions could be appropriate. To this end, the Office has developed, for the consideration of the Governing Body, a proposal to convene a tripartite meeting of experts on care protection in the first quarter of 2026, as set out in Appendix II to this document.
27. Building on the mandate received from the 21st International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS),² the Office has launched a statistical standard-setting process, including a global consultation on the topic of care work statistics, including all relevant unpaid and paid care work, for discussion at the 22nd ICLS in 2028.

¹ GB.349/LILS/1, table 1.

² ICLS/Report III, paras 105, 178.

28. The Office will augment efforts to strengthen all forms of social dialogue as the cornerstone of the design, implementation and financing of policies for decent work and the care economy. Particular attention will be given to promoting tripartite social dialogue for care workers at risk of discrimination and inadequate protection. Efforts in this regard will include promoting the voice and representation of care workers, including domestic workers, community health and care workers and migrant care workers.
29. The Office will assist constituents with the development of sector-specific strategies, policies and guidelines for achieving decent work for care workers in diverse occupations, such as workers in education, early childhood care and education, health and social sectors and domestic workers. These sector-specific strategies will include measures to address maximum limits on working time, occupational safety and health, prevention and tackling of violence and harassment (including gender-based violence and harassment), adequate minimum wages, including in accordance with the principle of equal pay for work of equal value, skills development, recognition and certification and, also, enforcement and monitoring mechanisms.

Component 4: The ILO's global leadership, policy coherence and partnerships

30. This component outlines measures to reinforce the ILO's leading role, partnerships and policy coherence in the multilateral system on the care economy, leveraging the Global Coalition for Social Justice and the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions. It will support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular SDG targets 1.3, 3.3, 5.1, 5.2, 5.4, 8.5, 8.8, 10.2, 10.3, 10.4 and 10.7. Partnerships with UN entities, international financial institutions, international networks and research centres will be strengthened, including through the UN system Transforming Care Systems initiative,³ the Equal Pay International Coalition, the ILO-OECD-WHO Working for Health programme and the International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030.
31. Regional partnerships and initiatives will be leveraged, including with the G20 and its engagement groups, the G7, the African Union, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the Asian Development Bank, the European Commission, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean.
32. Following guidance from the conclusions, a South-South platform, "South4Care", will be launched with relevant partners in order to foster knowledge exchange and capacity-building on care policies in developing countries.
33. The Office will support Member States in monitoring the impacts of climate change and technological change, including artificial intelligence, on paid and unpaid care work, and findings will be integrated as inputs to relevant key international policy processes.
34. The proposed plan of action will rely on resources provided for in the Programme and Budget for 2024-25 and future programme and budget proposals. The Office will also engage in extrabudgetary resource mobilization to meet resource gaps as required.

³ United Nations, "Transforming Care Systems in the Context of the Sustainable Development Goals and Our Common Agenda", UN System Policy Paper, 2024.

35. A list of the high-level outputs of the plan of action for the period 2024–30 is provided in Appendix I to this document.

► Draft decision

36. **The Governing Body:**

- (a) requested the Director-General to take into account its guidance in implementing the proposed plan of action set out in document GB.352/INS/3/2 giving effect to the Conference resolution concerning decent work and the care economy and to draw on the proposed plan of action in preparing future programme and budget proposals;
- (b) approved the holding of a tripartite meeting of experts in the first quarter of 2026 to enable the Organization to assess whether there are gaps in the ILO's body of international labour standards related to paternity and parental protection, and other care leave (for sick or critically-ill family members, older persons or persons with disabilities) and, if so, what normative and/or non-normative actions could be appropriate;
- (c) decided that the cost of the above meeting of experts, which is estimated at US\$389,000, would be financed in the first instance from existing resources attributed under the regular budget to the Conditions of Work and Equality Department, with an estimated amount of US\$300,000 financed from savings that may arise under Part I of the budget for 2026–27 or, failing that, through the use of the provision for unforeseen expenditure, in Part II. Should this not prove possible, the Director-General would propose alternative methods of financing at a later stage in the biennium.

► Appendix I

Plan of action on decent work and the care economy

► High-level outputs of the plan of action

High-level outputs	Corresponding points in the 2024 conclusions (ILC.112/Resolution V)	Programme and Budget outputs (2024–25)	Time frame
Component 1: Knowledge development, dissemination and communication			
Comprehensive research agenda on decent work and the care economy, tailored to countries at different levels of development, developed and rolled out	31(g)	All	2024–30
Series of briefs on the care economy, highlighting thematic and regional spotlights, published	31(g)	All	2024–30
Online ILO Global Care Policy Portal and Investment Simulator maintained and enhanced	21, 30(g), (k), 31(g)	5.2, A.1, A.2	2025–30
Research and tools developed on care policies and for mainstreaming care in employment and macroeconomic, labour and social protection, formalization, enterprise, skills, migration, environmental and non-discrimination policies	30(a), (b), (c), (d), (o)	All	2025–30
Labour market information on the education and health sectors developed	30(c), (d)	1.5	2024–30
Research expanded to monitor the impacts of demographic shifts, climate change and technological change on paid and unpaid care	30(q), 31(h)	3, 5.2, 6, B	2024–30
Research on the impacts of investments in care on employment, productivity and working conditions expanded	21, 23(c), 30(j)	3, 5.2, B	2024–30
Knowledge on the role of public–private partnerships, public and private enterprises, especially micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, social and solidarity economy entities, including cooperatives and community-led initiatives, in the provision and investments in quality care services, care infrastructure, training and employment opportunities developed	25, 26, 27, 30(j), (l), (r)	4, 5.1, 5.2, B	2024–30
Research on skills development that promotes career development and attracts and retains a skilled care workforce developed and best practices shared	31(j)	3.2, 5.2	2024–30

High-level outputs	Corresponding points in the 2024 conclusions (ILC.112/Resolution V)	Programme and Budget outputs (2024–25)	Time frame
Communication and dissemination strategy to promote a common understanding of the care economy and address key issues on decent work and the care economy and gender equality developed and implemented	30, 31(g)	All	2024–30
Component 2: Technical advisory services and capacity-building for constituents			
Technical assistance to constituents for the development, implementation, financing and monitoring of integrated and coherent national care policies and systems for decent work and gender equality guided by the 5R Framework for Decent Care Work			
Technical assistance, including through enhanced Decent Work Country Programmes, to support care policies and systems and for mainstreaming care into relevant public policies, including employment, skills, macroeconomic, formalization, social and labour protection, migration and environmental policies, in line with realities in countries at different levels of development, scaled	30(a), (b), 31(d), (r)	All	2024–30
Policy guidance enhanced to ensure comprehensive maternity protection and care leave and protection policies, access to high-quality, affordable, and accessible care services and measures to facilitate work-life balance, including flexible working time arrangements and adjustments to the organization, time, location and conditions of work to balance paid work and care responsibilities	30(g), (h), (k), 31(d), (e), (m)	5.2, 6.2, 7.1, 7.2, 8.1, 8.2	2024–30
Technical assistance to promote active labour market policies, education and training, upskilling, skills recognition and certification and access to lifelong learning aligned with technological developments, to attract, retain, and develop a skilled care workforce, including across national borders	30(d)	3.2, 3.4, 3.5, 8.2	2024–30
Technical support strengthened to promote formalization of jobs and enterprises, decent job creation and ensure sustainable and adequate financing for care, through socio-economic feasibility and costing studies, measuring financing gaps and options to expand fiscal space, the development of adequate pro-employment macroeconomic policies, both fiscal and monetary, in line with ILO instruments on employment policy and social protection	30(b), (c), (k), 31(k)	3.1, 3.5, 5.2, 7.1, 7.2, 8.1, 8.2	2024–30
Policy guidance enhanced to build and maintain universal social protection systems that provide adequate protection to care workers in all types of employment and recognize unpaid care work	30(i), 31(k)	7.1, 7.2, 8.1, 8.2	2024–30

High-level outputs	Corresponding points in the 2024 conclusions (ILC.112/Resolution V)	Programme and Budget outputs (2024–25)	Time frame
Effective protection of care workers in vulnerable situations, workers with family responsibilities and care receivers			
Care systems and all relevant public policies informed by gender-responsive diagnoses of workers in informal employment in the care economy, in particular domestic workers, childcare, community health and care workers, migrant care workers and workers in cooperatives and other social and solidarity economy entities, and opportunities for formalization identified	30(b), (c), (d), (j), 31(e)	6.3, 7.3, 8.2	2024–30
Constituents' capacities to implement legislative reforms and other measures to ensure effective access to labour and social security, including through labour inspection, for all care workers, in all types of employment, especially those most at risk of insufficient or inadequate protection, strengthened	30(o), (i), (p)	5.2, 6.3, 6.4, 7.1, 7.3, 8.2, 8.3	2024–30
Technical assistance provided to prevent and address all forms of discrimination against care workers, with particular attention to women, migrant workers, racialized groups and persons in situations of vulnerability and develop community-based approaches to care provision for indigenous and tribal peoples	30(l), (n)	5, 6.3, 6.4, 8.2	2024–30
Voice and representation of care worker organizations strengthened, including those of domestic workers, migrant care workers and community health and care workers, organizations of employers of care workers and unpaid family carers, where these exist	30(t)	2.1, 2.2	2024–30
Constituents' capacities to promote policies and legislation for care and support services for care receivers, including participation of persons from the groups concerned, strengthened	30(m), 31(f)	5.1, 5.2	2024–30
Targeted initiatives developed to retain skilled care workers in small island developing States and least developed countries to mitigate the risk of brain drain	30(d), 31(r)	3.2, 5.2, 6.4	2024–30
Measurement of both paid and unpaid care work			
Capacity of national statistics organizations enhanced to close gaps in national data on paid and unpaid care work, including updated ILO global and regional estimates on migrant care workers	28, 30(s), 31(c)	5.1, 5.2, A.1	2024–30
Technical assistance provided to collect and disseminate data on unpaid and paid care work, in line with existing international statistical standards and those being developed	28, 30(s), 31(c)	5.1, 5.2, A.1	2024–30

High-level outputs	Corresponding points in the 2024 conclusions (ILC.112/Resolution V)	Programme and Budget outputs (2024–25)	Time frame
Capacity-building of constituents			
Training programmes developed with the International Training Centre of the ILO on the design, financing, implementation and monitoring of inclusive policies for the care economy and mainstreaming care into other training programmes adapted to regional contexts	31(l)	All	2024–30
Tripartite constituents' capacities to engage in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of national, sectoral and workplace care policies, and all forms of social dialogue, including collective bargaining and tripartite cooperation, reinforced	31(m)	1, 2, 5.2	2024–30
Tripartite constituents' capacities to address the undervaluation of care work and promote women's economic inclusion by challenging gender stereotypes and the unequal gender distribution of paid and unpaid work enhanced	30(e), (f)	5.1, 5.2	2024–30
Tripartite constituents' capacities to design and implement policies to achieve maximum limits on working time, occupational safety and health, prevent and address violence and harassment (including gender-based violence), and adequate minimum wages, including through equal pay for work of equal value, enhanced	22, 30(p)	5, 6	2024–30
Tripartite constituents' capacities to create an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises and develop a conducive environment for social and solidarity economy entities, including gender-responsive policies that promote productivity, investment in education and skills development, and enhanced access to business opportunities, formalization and finance, strengthened	30(j)	2, 3, 4, 5.2	2024–30
Tripartite constituents' capacities to support micro, small and medium-sized enterprises and social and solidarity economy entities, including cooperatives and other community-led initiatives, that deliver quality care services, including through capacity-building, skills development and access to finance, reinforced	30(r), (l)	2, 3, 4, 5.2	2024–30
Constituents' capacity to monitor the impacts of demographic, climate and technological change on care employment and working conditions, including unpaid care work, enhanced	30(q), 31(o), (q)	3, 5.2, 6, B	2024–30

High-level outputs	Corresponding points in the 2024 conclusions (ILC.112/Resolution V)	Programme and Budget outputs (2024–25)	Time frame
Component 3: International labour standards-related action, social dialogue and statistical standards			
Promotion of all fundamental Conventions and international labour standards relevant to the care economy and related capacity-building			
Ratification and effective implementation of international labour standards relevant to the care economy, including all fundamental Conventions, promoted	19, 30(a), 31(a)	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 5.1, 5.2, 6.1, 6.2, 6.4, 7.1, 7.3, 8.1	2024–30
Constituents' capacities for the ratification and effective implementation of all international labour standards relevant to the care economy, including all fundamental Conventions, strengthened	30(a), 31(a)	1.1, 1.3, 1.4, 5.2	2024–29
General and targeted promotion campaigns conducted on the Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183) and technical support and guidance provided on the application of maternity protection to all women workers, including the progressive movement from direct employers' liability mechanisms towards social security schemes for financing of maternity benefits *	30(a), 31(a)	1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 1.5, 5.2, 7.1, 7.2, 8.1, 8.2	2024–30
Research and tripartite dialogue on paternity, parental and care protection, including leave			
Research to assess whether there are gaps in international labour standards related to paternity and parental protection, and other care leave policies conducted	31(b)	1.4, 5.2, 7, 8.1, 8.2	2025
Tripartite meeting, to be convened by the Governing Body, to discuss research findings to assess gaps and, if so, propose normative and/or non-normative actions, to be convened b	31(b)	1.4, 5.2, 7.1, 7.3, 8.1, 8.2	2026
Development of internationally agreed statistical standards on care work			
New statistical standards to define and measure paid and unpaid care work developed and endorsed by tripartite constituents through a statistical standard-setting process, including a global consultation, hosted and led by the Office, resulting in the harmonization and international comparability of data on care work	10, 30(s), 31(c)	5.1, 5.2, A.1	2024–30

High-level outputs	Corresponding points in the 2024 conclusions (ILC.112/Resolution V)	Programme and Budget outputs (2024–25)	Time frame
Tripartite social dialogue with focus on care workers at risk of discrimination and insufficient or inadequate protection			
Research on key obstacles and challenges for the effective exercise of the right to freedom of association and effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining by all care workers, including those most at risk of exploitation and abuse conducted	30(t), 31(m)	2.2, 2.3, 2.4	2024–30
Constituents' capacities to develop and implement relevant sectoral international labour standards, codes of practice, guidelines and tools relevant to the care economy strengthened	30(p), (t), 31(m)	1.5	2025–30
Component 4: ILO's leadership, policy coherence and partnerships on decent work and the care economy			
Global leadership and partnerships			
Care economy dimension of the Global Coalition for Social Justice developed and promoted by its members, including through strengthened partnerships with United Nations entities, international financial institutions, international networks and research centres	31(n), (p)	5.2	2024–30
A global meeting on policy innovation on decent work and the care economy organized	31(n), (p)	5.2, B	2025–30
South–South platform, “South4Care”, for knowledge exchange and capacity-building in care work created	31(g), (i), (l), (m), (p)	5.2, B	2024–30
Policy coherence			
Policy and promotional work on the Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all (2015) in relation to the care economy further continued	31(o)	3, 5.2, 6, 8.3, B	2024–30
Decent work and gender equality in the care economy integrated in the current and future ILO strategic plan, programme and budget and relevant ILO development cooperation projects	31(q)	5.2, 8, B, C	2024–30
Resource mobilization for ILO work on the care economy increased in line with the priorities set out in the Conference conclusions, including leveraging new and existing donor and partnership networks such as South–South cooperation	31(q)	5.2, 8, B, C	2024–30

* GB.349/LILS/1, table 1

► Appendix II

Background to and justification for the proposal to convene a tripartite meeting on paternity and parental protection, and other care leave

1. At its 349th Session (October–November 2023), the Governing Body took note of the report of the Officers concerning the eighth meeting of the Standards Review Mechanism Tripartite Working Group (SRM TWG) and, in approving its recommendations, requested the Office “to take the necessary action in follow-up to the recommendations of the SRM TWG at this and previous meetings as a matter of institutional priority”¹ and “to prepare research to be discussed by a tripartite meeting, to be determined by the Governing Body at the earliest date possible, so as to enable the Organization to assess whether there are gaps in respect of paternity and parental protection and, if so, what normative and/or non-normative actions could be appropriate”.²
2. At its 112th Session (2024), the International Labour Conference indicated that the Organization should “prepare research to be discussed by a tripartite meeting, to be determined by the Governing Body at the earliest date possible, so as to enable the Organization to assess whether there are gaps in the ILO’s body of international labour standards related to paternity and parental protection, and other care leave (for sick or critically-ill family members, older persons or persons with disabilities) and, if so, what normative and/or non-normative actions could be appropriate”.³
3. Current international labour standards do not explicitly regulate “paternity and parental protection”, namely, individual and non-transferable rights of fathers to time for care (such as a period of job-protected paternity leave to care for the child and the mother around the time of childbirth or adoption; time off for prenatal and postnatal child healthcare; nursing breaks and parental leave after paternity leave) and related legal protections (such as employment protection and non-discrimination, the right to return to work); social protection benefits (such as paternity and parental leave cash benefits; nursing breaks cash benefits) and services (such as childcare). Regulation of other care leave and protections for other family members could also be lacking in the current body of international labour standards.
4. The Office has a long-standing record of policy research and technical assistance to ILO constituents on maternity protection and care leave policy.⁴ ILO research shows that over the past 30 years, recognition of men’s care rights and responsibilities has increased in national legislation and practice worldwide. In 1994, out of the 141 ILO Member States surveyed by the ILO, 38 countries had statutory paternity leave entitlements and 31 countries paid fathers

¹ GB.349/PV(Rev.1), para. 991(d).

² GB.349/PV(Rev.1), para. 991(e).

³ ILC.112/Resolution V, para. 31(b).

⁴ Salient publications include ILO, *Conditions of Work Digest*, 1982; ILO, *Maternity and Work*, 1994; Ida Öun and Gloria Pardo Trujillo, *Maternity at Work: A Review of National Legislation*, (ILO, 2005); ILO, *Maternity and Paternity at Work: Law and Practice Across the World*, 2014; ILO, *Care Work and Care Jobs for the Future of Decent Work*, 2018; Laura Addati, Umberto Cattaneo and Emanuela Pozzan, *Care at work: Investing in Care Leave and Services for a More Gender Equal World of Work*, (ILO, 2022); ILO, “ILO Global Care Policy Portal and Investment Simulator”; ILO, *Achieving gender equality at work*, ILC.111/III(B), 2023; ILO, *Draft outcome of the discussion by the Committee on the Application of Standards of the General Survey: Achieving gender equality at work*, International Labour Conference, 111th Session, 2023.

paternity leave cash benefits. In 2023, 115 out of 185 countries offer statutory paternity leave.⁵ The recognition of a right to paternity and parental protections and other care leave in international labour standards has enormous potential to encourage a more equal sharing of unpaid care work among caregivers, promote work-family balance, support diverse care needs and contribute to equality of opportunity and treatment between women and men.

5. As a follow-up, the Office proposes that a tripartite meeting on paternity and parental protection, and other care leave (for sick or critically-ill family members, older persons or persons with disabilities), be convened in the first quarter of 2026 (23–27 February 2026). This meeting would build on the research that the Office will develop in 2025 and give effect to both the recommendations of the SRM TWG, as decided by the Governing Body, and the Conference conclusions concerning decent work and the care economy. This meeting would provide ILO constituents with the opportunity to: examine the findings of the research to be conducted by the Office on that state of play on the topic as well as assess whether there are gaps in international labour standards related to paternity and parental protection, and other forms of care leave; and if so, identify what normative and/or non-normative actions could be appropriate.
6. The composition, agenda, format and the form of the results of the meeting are proposed in document GB.352/INS/22. If approved, the tripartite meeting will be funded from regular budget and extrabudgetary resources.

⁵ ILO, *Care at Work*, 2022.