



REGIONAL FORUM ON **CARE** **WORK** **IN ASEAN** **COUNTRIES**

Vientiane, Lao-PDR



THE REGIONAL FORUM ON CARE WORK IN ASEAN COUNTRIES TOOK PLACE IN VIENTIANE, LAO-PDR ON JULY 27TH AND 28TH, 2023. THIS FORUM PLAYED A PIVOTAL ROLE IN ADVANCING INITIATIVES TO PROMOTE GENDER-RESPONSIVE AND CARE-SENSITIVE POLICIES AND PROGRAMS IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION. IT WAS JOINTLY CONVENED BY THE ASEAN COMMITTEE ON WOMEN (AWC) THROUGH LAO PDR AS INCUMBENT ACW CHAIR, OXFAM, UNESCAP, AND THE ASEAN SECRETARIAT. REPRESENTATIVES FROM 7 OUT OF THE 10 ASEAN MEMBER STATES PARTICIPATED IN PERSON, WHILE 2 MEMBER STATES JOINED THE FORUM ONLINE.

The forum contributed significantly to operationalizing the [ASEAN Comprehensive Framework on the Care Economy](#), urging member states to align with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly Goal 5.4 which focuses on recognizing and valuing unpaid care and domestic work.

The Regional Forum included five panels that highlighted some of the more urgent priority areas:

- Care Responsive Policy Ecosystem: From Infrastructure to Services;
- Care Workforce: Key Considerations and Policy Strides Made;
- Maternity Protection to Childcare;
- Data and Evidence Building on Care and
- Fostering Strategic Partnerships on Care.

These panels featured participants from different member states and technical experts from our partners such as IDWF, IWRAP, and AMRC. We also welcomed representatives from IFIs like the World Bank and UN agencies like UNESCAP and UN Women to highlight some of the urgent action areas.

The forum included space for member states to share best practices and innovative policy advances made towards addressing care. Each of the member states shared a range of innovative policy and programme initiatives currently being undertaken in their countries. This exchange of insights demonstrated the potential for knowledge sharing and cross-learning.



During the session on data and evidence building, we presented a suite of Oxfam tools related to care, including the rapid care analysis, Household Care Survey, Care Policy Scorecard, and the Care Principles and Barometer.

A set of recommendations to advance care policy momentum in the region were fine-tuned during the second day of the forum and are set for formal endorsement by all member states in August 2023.

In a significant stride towards fostering transformative collaborations, the forum introduced the Global Alliance for Care in Asia. The member states learnt about the effectiveness of the alliance in Latin America and also gained insight into the global advocacy work on care. Through the introduction of the alliance in Asia, we hope to facilitate stronger partnerships on care in Asia.

The Regional Forum on Care Work in ASEAN countries stood as a pivotal platform for in-depth discourse and collaborative action, shaping the trajectory of care-related policies and programs across the region.



Participating stakeholders reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening the care economy in ASEAN. The forum facilitated policy dialogue and knowledge exchange among ASEAN member states and stakeholders, fostering a robust and sustainable care sector. The event highlighted the essential need for comprehensive care-related data to inform decision-making. Additionally, discussions pinpointed aging demographics as a significant challenge in Asia's care landscape.

The forum played a pivotal role in advancing the ASEAN Comprehensive Framework on the Care Economy, paving the way for key policy recommendations and strategies to be carried forward during Lao PDR's ASEAN chairmanship in 2024. The event not only nurtured strategic partnerships but also reinforced the importance of data-driven approaches, setting a course toward a more inclusive and equitable future.

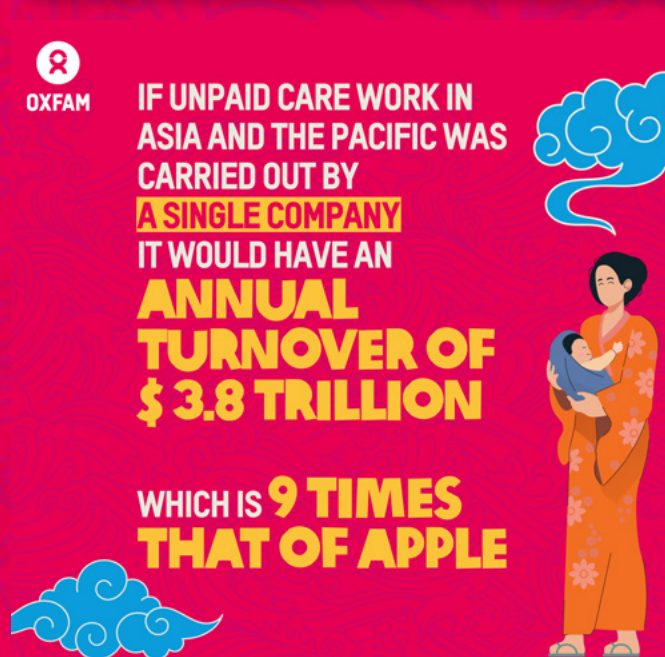
WHAT'S COMING UP?

- ASEAN Women Leadership Conference in June 2024
- National Convening on Care in Laos and Philippines

MEDIA

- Information on the event can be accessed at this [UNESCAP story here](#).
- Local news in Laos: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yDJ4WMmG6Lg>
- The event material (presentations + photos) can be [accessed here](#).

SOCIAL MEDIA



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