

## **LAUNCH OF THE GROWTH AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN (GrOW) PROJECT.**

The Economic Policy Research Centre in collaboration with School of Women and Gender Studies and CARE International in Uganda are organizing the launch of the Growth and Economic Opportunities for Women (GrOW) Project.

Although important strides have been made to reduce gender gaps in education and ensure women's participation in the labour market, inequalities in labour markets outcomes persist. Moreover, women's increasing entry into paid work is not accompanied by a commensurate change in the gendered division of unpaid labour within the home and at the work place. Furthermore, COVID-19 has exposed the structural gender barriers and entrenched gender inequalities in unpaid care work, and its impact has hit women the hardest. Therefore, if unpaid care work is not recognized, redistributed and reduced, it could claw back the progress made on gender equality.

The event will provide a platform to launch the GrOW project under the theme ***"From Promises to Actions; shifting gender norms and public perceptions about unpaid care work in workplaces and families in Uganda."*** It will also bring together key state and non-state actors to deliberate on the existing models (POWER Model) for shifting gender/social norms and public perceptions about unpaid care work in Uganda. This three-year project is supported by the International Development Research Centre, and will be implemented in collaboration with the School of Women and Gender Studies, Makerere University and CARE, International in Uganda.

## CONCEPT NOTE

### **From Promises to Actions: Shifting gender norms and public perceptions about unpaid care work in workplaces and families in Uganda**

#### **1. Introduction**

Whereas progress has been made to increase women's participation in Uganda's labour market, most women still work in the informal sector or as unpaid family labour. Evidence from the growth and Economic Opportunities for Women (GrOW) program suggests that occupational and sectoral segregation along gender lines has increased in many countries in Africa, regardless of changes in per capita incomes. Moreover women's increasing entry into paid work has not been accompanied by a commensurate change in the gendered division of unpaid labour within the home and at workplace, leading to women's "time poverty." There is little evidence that women have moved out of traditional activities or have diversified the types of paid work they engage in, as is the case elsewhere. Although important strides have been made to reduce gender gaps in education, inequalities in labour market outcomes persist. There is still significant work to be done in achieving gender equality and women's economic empowerment.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the structural gender barriers and entrenched gender inequalities in unpaid care work; and its impact is expected to hit women the hardest. The increased gender-based violence witnessed around the world and the added burden of unpaid care work will further compound gender-based vulnerabilities. There is risk that the combined impact could claw back progress made on gender equality.

Therefore, with support from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) under the GrOW East Africa initiative, Makerere University's School of Women and Gender Studies, Economic Policy Research Centre and Care International in Uganda will undertake a 3-year collaborative Project. This project will implement an in-depth evaluative and action research to provide evidence, practical tools and guidance to inform policies and actions to build a better and more equal world for Ugandan women and girls.

The project seeks to establish the mechanisms for changing the gender and social norms, public perceptions and attitudes related to unpaid Care work in a cost-

effective way. Specifically, the Project seeks to test a combination of approaches under the existing models (POWER model) that have demonstrated effectiveness in shifting gender and social norms associated with Intimate Partner Violence. Using the POWER model that is aligned to the socio-ecological model, **the Project will identify the key drivers and risk factors for the norms and behavior that increase the burden of unpaid care work for women at the individual, family, community and institutional levels.**

The model will facilitate the visualization of the institutional structures where rigid stereotypical and discriminatory gender ideologies and norms are often perpetuated and govern the distribution of resources related to unpaid care work. Therefore, the project will design interventions that seek to actively examine, question, and change the rigid gender and social norms and perceptions to contribute to recognition, redistribution, reduction and representation (4Rs) of unpaid care work at all levels of the women's socio-ecology. Further, the project will forge strategic partnerships with key stakeholders especially Government of Uganda, religious leaders and cultural leaders to ensure the uptake of the research evidence and scalability of the POWER model interventions in Uganda's development agenda.

It is against this background that EPRC in close collaboration with Makerere University School of Women and Gender Studies, and Care International is organizing to formally launch the project as an avenue for uptake and scalability of the POWER model interventions in Uganda's development agenda.

## **2. Purpose of the launch**

Under the theme ***"From Promises to Actions: Shifting gender norms and public perceptions about unpaid care work in workplaces and families in Uganda"***, the Project launch will provide a platform to create awareness, encourage buy-in and forge strategic partnerships with key stakeholders. It will also provide an avenue to discuss the challenges of unpaid care work and the opportunities for recognizing redistributing and reducing unpaid care work.

The specific objectives of the launch are to identify:

- i) The major impediments to redistribution and recognition of unpaid care work in Uganda.

- ii) The opportunities for recognizing, redistributing and reducing unpaid care work.
- iii) Role of religious and cultural institutions in addressing the negative social and gender norms that perpetuate unequal division of unpaid care work in Uganda.
- iv) Strategies that have been put in place to address unpaid care work both at global and national levels.
- v) Roles of policy makers (parliament) and what they require to address unpaid care work.
- vi) Role of budgeting (gender-sensitive budgeting) in capturing and addressing unpaid care work.

The target audience for this launch are government of Uganda (Ministries, Departments and Agencies), religious leaders, cultural leaders and civil society organizations.

### **3. The expected outcomes and outputs**

#### **Outcomes**

- i) Creating awareness about the Project and the modalities of implementation.
- ii) An understanding of the role of different player such as policymakers, religious and cultural institutions among others in addressing the negative social and gender norms that perpetuate unequal division of unpaid care work in Uganda.
- iii) Launch and stakeholder buy-in into the IDRC Project.

#### **Outputs**

This launch will generate several outputs

- i) A detailed report on the proceedings and outcomes of the launch,
- ii) Blog(s) discussing some of the topical issues of the launch, and;
- iii) Media appearances will be made and sound bites for radio will be availed to further the discussion.

#### **4. Modalities**

The launch will take place at Protea Hotel Kampala starting at 11:00 am-1:00 pm. The first hour of the event will be broadcast live on TV while the entire launch will be streamed live on Facebook and Twitter for the general public. In addition some participants will attend the event virtually on zoom.

The event will feature different panelists that will discuss the specific objectives listed in section 2. The panel members will observe social distancing at the venue and the audience will have the opportunity to watch the launch live on NTV (11:00 am-12:00 pm), YouTube and other social media platforms.