



# Rethinking Social Protection and The Care Economy

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Presented at Queen's International Institute on Social Policy  
*Building Back Better:  
Forging a Post-Pandemic Social Contract that Works for All*  
September 2, 2020

# COVID-19 has exposed

1. Our economy's extensive dependence on care.
2. Our hitherto disregard towards and neglect of care work's vital contribution in supporting market economy and promoting economic growth and development.
3. The entrenched social, economic, gender and racial inequalities that are exacerbated by our disregard and devaluation of care.
4. Need to integrate care in economic thinking and economic theory.

# What is the Care Economy

*The care economy* refers to the economic sector related to the provisions of care and services for children, young and older people, and people with disabilities and chronic illness.

- Broadly it includes health care, education, and personal, social, and other services, all of which contribute to nurturing and reproduction of the past (retired workers), present and future labour force.
- It includes both paid and unpaid work done within formal and informal sectors.

# Paid and Unpaid Sectors within the Care Economy

## Unpaid Care Sector

- Household, community and volunteer caregiving
- Unpaid family members, relatives, friends, neighbors, volunteers, etc.

## Paid Care Sector

- Private and public care, health, education services
- Informal and formal paid workers including doctors, teachers, nurses, daycare center workers, personal service workers, nursing care aides, household help, etc.

# Value of unpaid care work

- The economic value of unpaid care work (pre-pandemic) differ from country to country, ranging from It accounts for up to 40% of national GDP, about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of that value comes from women's unpaid care work.
  - in Canada, it accounts for 25.6% of GDP.
  - Globally, unpaid care work amounts to 9.0% of global GDP, or equivalent of US\$ 11 trillion in purchasing power parity (PPP) This represents a total of 11 trillion US\$ in purchasing power in 2011.
    - Of this women's unpaid care work came to 6.6% of global GDP (8 trillion US\$ PPP), and men's came to 2.4% (3 trillion US\$ PPP). (ILO 2018)

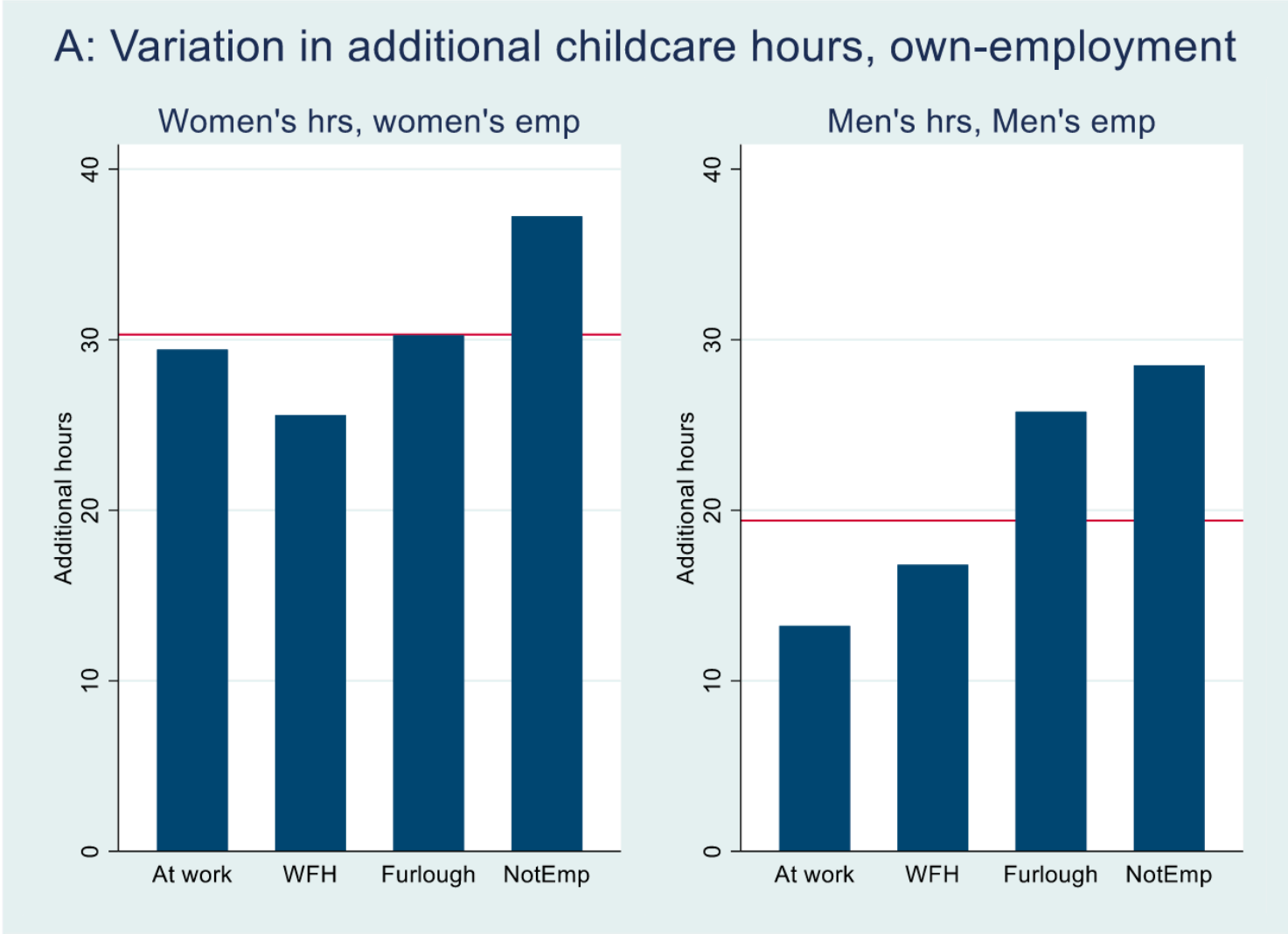
## Data shows that...

- Full or partial lockdown measures have affected about 2.7 billion workers (81% of global workforce) globally (ILO, 2020).
- Women and communities of colour are more adversely affected by the pandemic.
- COVID-19 recession is projected to result in prolonged decline in women's incomes and labour market participation (UN, 2020)

## studies show that...

- During the pandemic, most families have experienced increased unpaid care work.
  - women are spending more time caring for children in the US, UK and Germany (Adams-Prassl et. al. 2020).
  - in the UK, both parents are doing more childcare work, but mothers are spending more time than fathers (Seville and Smith, 2020); fathers have doubled their time spent on childcare after they lost their job (Andrew et. al. 2020).
  - in South Korea, both mothers and fathers spent more time caring for their children, but mothers spent more time than fathers.

**Figure 1: Additional hours' childcare (total per week), by post-COVID19 employment status**

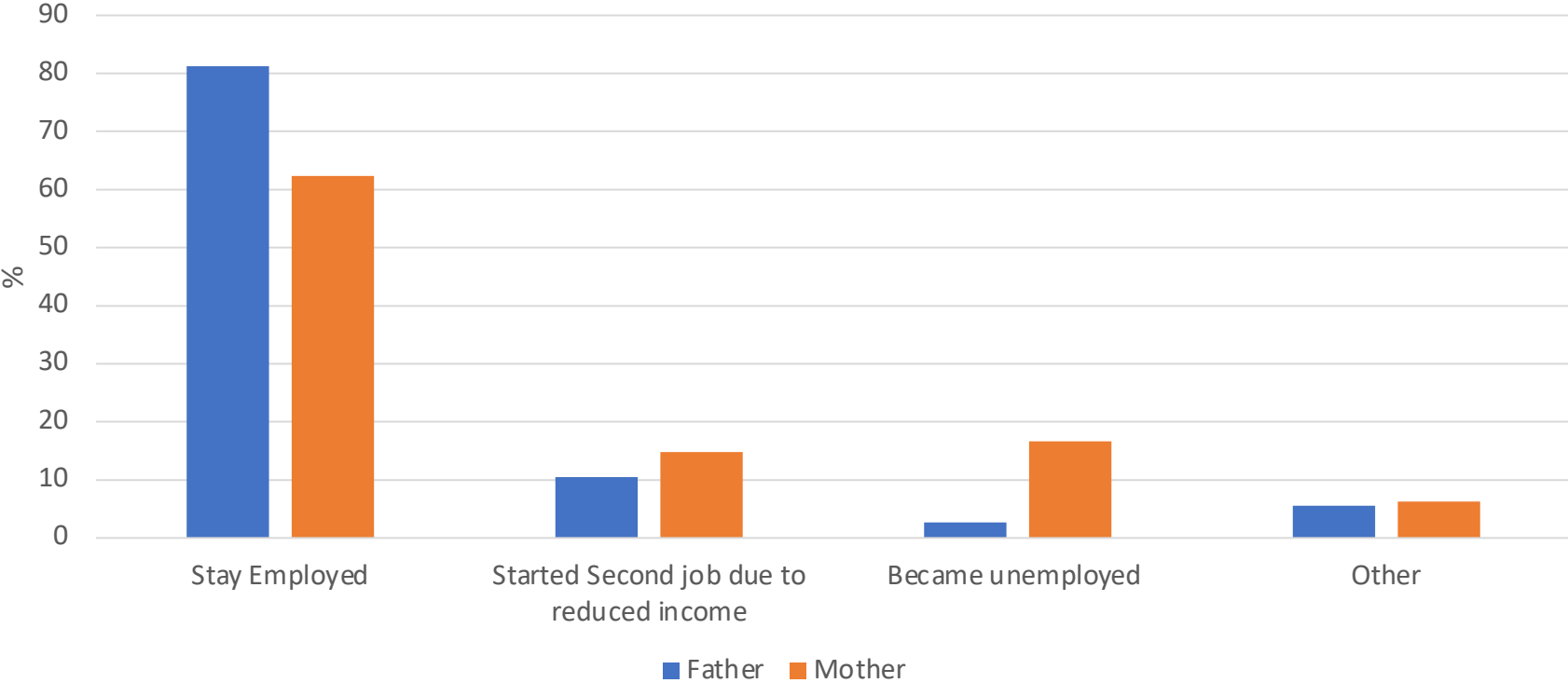


source: Sevilla and Smith, 2020.



# preliminary results from the COVID-19 and care work in South Korea Survey

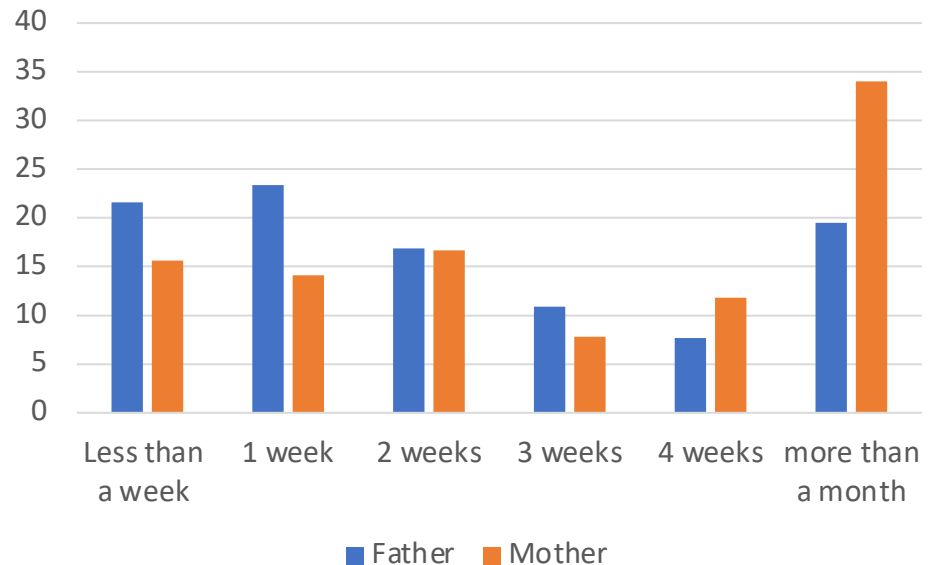
## Change in employment after Covid-19 by gender



# preliminary results from the COVID-19 and care work in South Korea Survey

- During the Social Distancing, who worked at home longer?

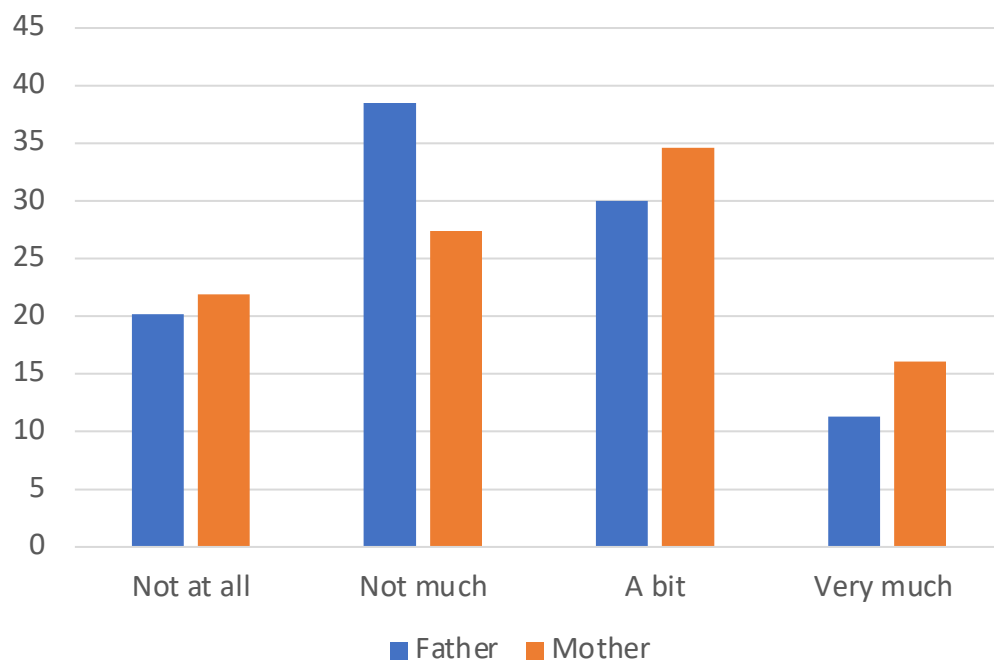
Lengths of time spent working at home during the Social Distancing period by gender



# preliminary results from the COVID-19 and care work in South Korea Survey

- Concern about career disadvantages and employment penalties due to childcare while working at home

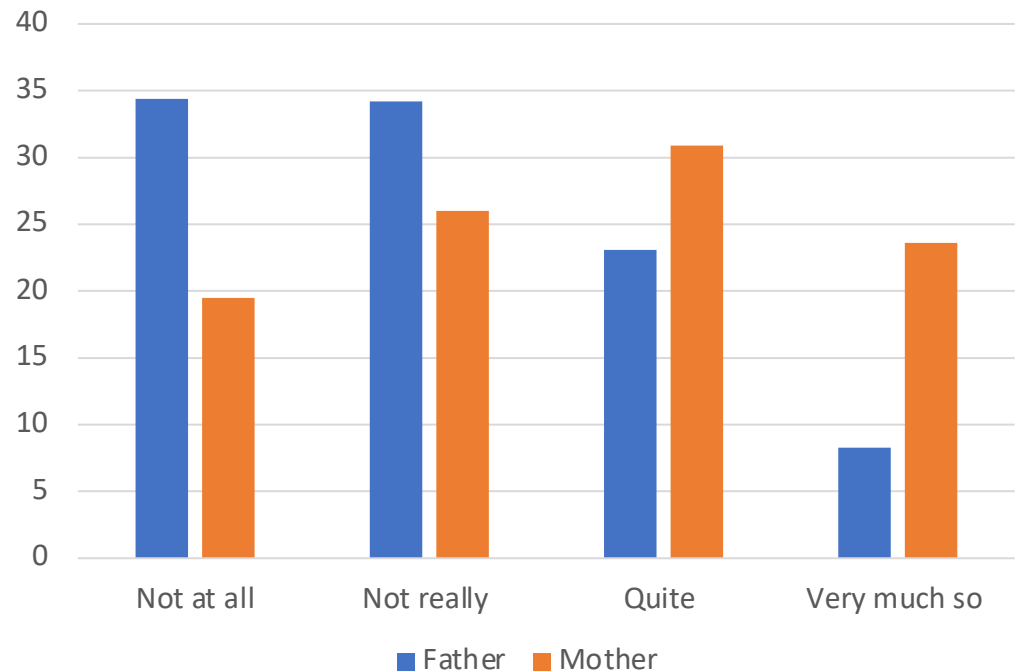
% of people who were concerned about disadvantages due to childcare while working at home



# preliminary results from the COVID-19 and care work in South Korea Survey

- Considered Quitting a Job during the Covid-19 social distancing

% of considering quitting a job during the social distancing due to childcare burden



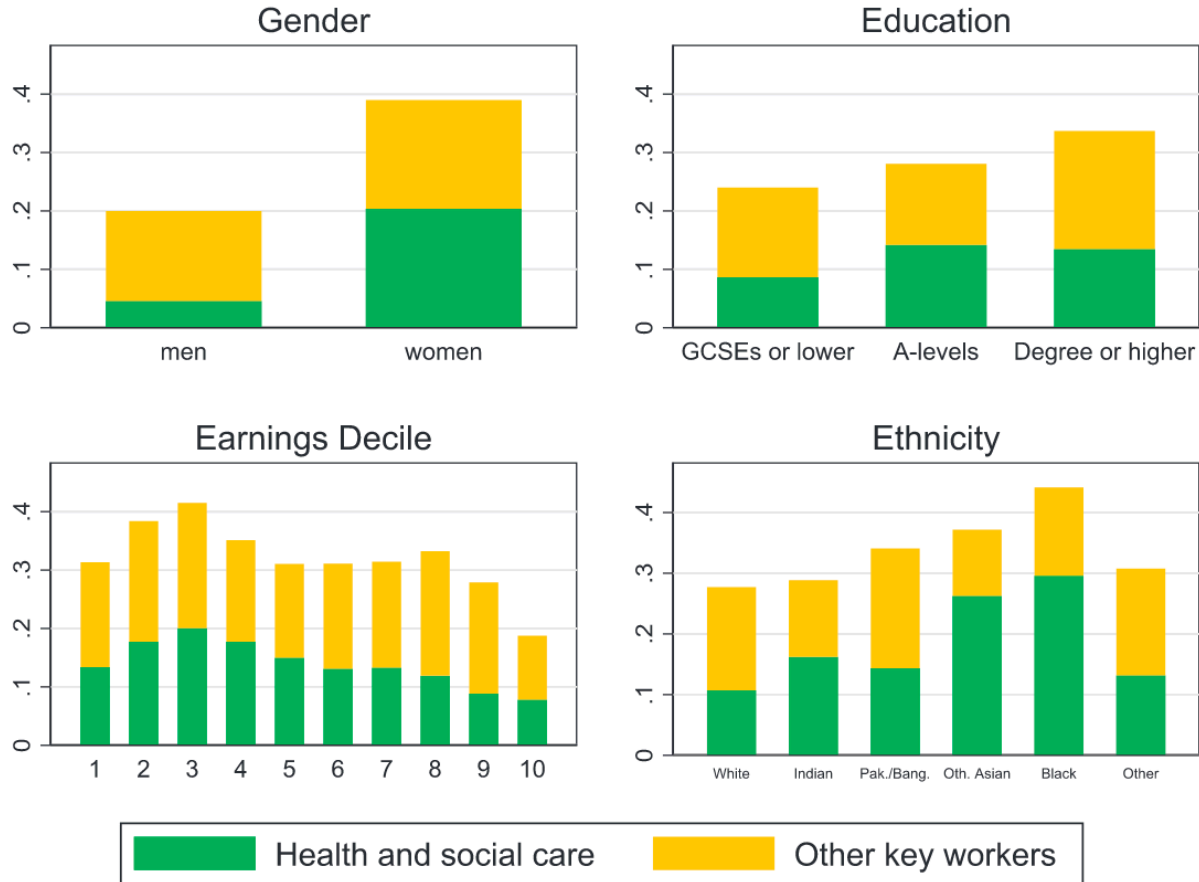
# But it's not just childcare

- Family's care work also increased with respect to long-term care too. Reports show that:
  - In the US and Canada, many families moved their older family members out of the LTC homes and cared for them at home.
  - In EU and Japan, closures of community-based LTC centres and reduced social care services meant families had to provide more care for their older members (Lorenz-Dant, 2020; Japan Times, 2020).
  - A UK survey found 70% of unpaid carers are providing more care due to COVID-19 (Carers UK, 2020).
    - 35% providing more care because of the closure of local services or reduced care services.
    - unpaid carers are spending on average 10 additional hours of care a week

# COVID-19's Unequal Impact

FIGURE 6

*Share of key workers among individuals employed in sectors not in lockdown, by socio-demographic and socio-economic group*



source: Blundell et. al. 2020.

## summary

The COVID-19 pandemic has:

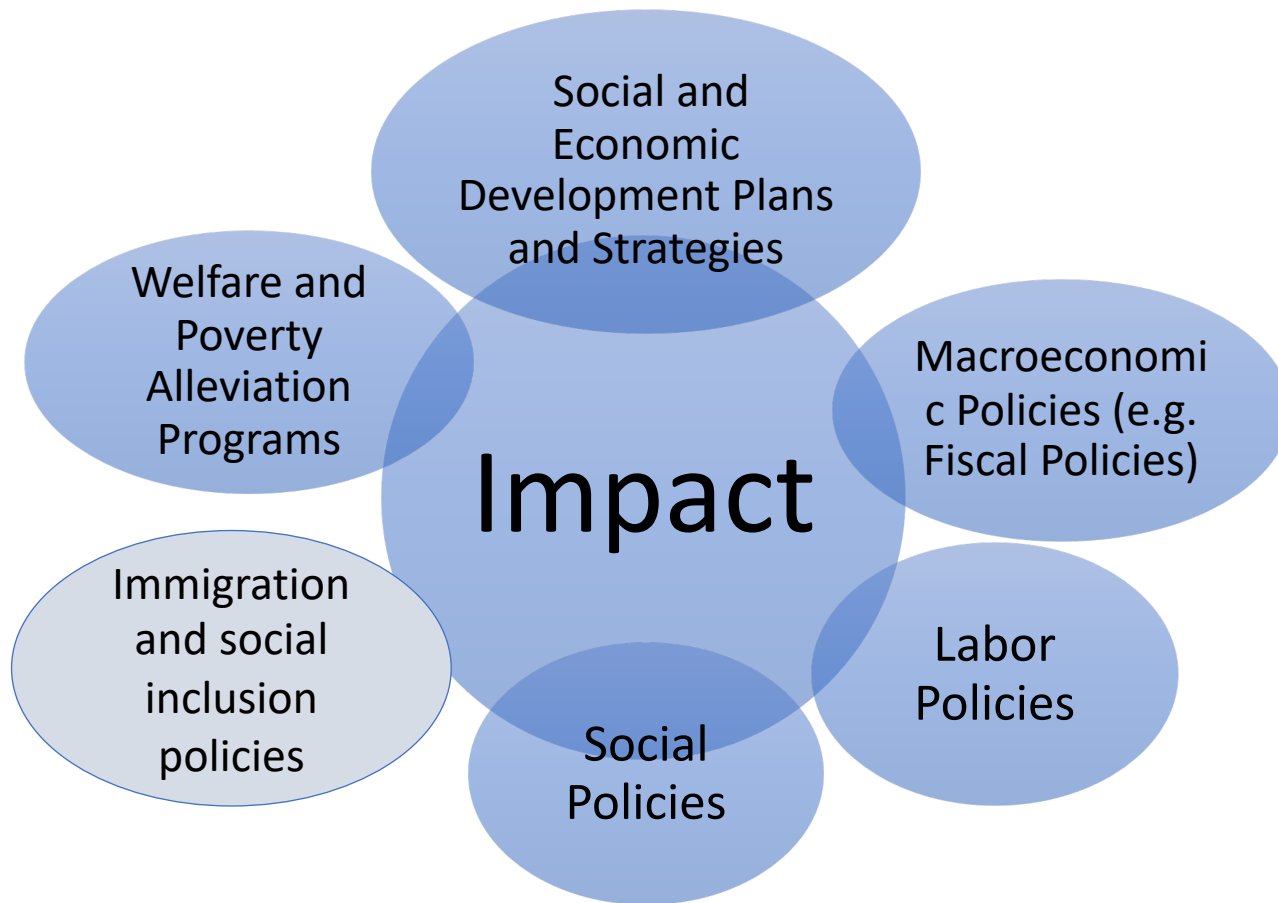
1. Exposed care work's vital contributions in supporting market economy and promoting economic growth and development.
2. Exacerbated the pre-existing social, economic, gender and racial inequalities drawn by care and care work.
3. Need to integrate care in economic thinking and economic theory.

# Moving forward

- The need to rethink care and care work, and the care economy:
  - integrate care in economic thinking
  - 4-Rs of care – recognize, reduce, redistribute, and revalue
- Develop national care systems
  - support workers with care responsibilities
  - universal social care systems that provide equal access to quality care
  - invest in social and care infrastructure
- Revalue work of care
- Reform labour market policy to better integrate the care economy



# Integration of the Care Economy in Policy Formulation and Analysis



# Thank you!

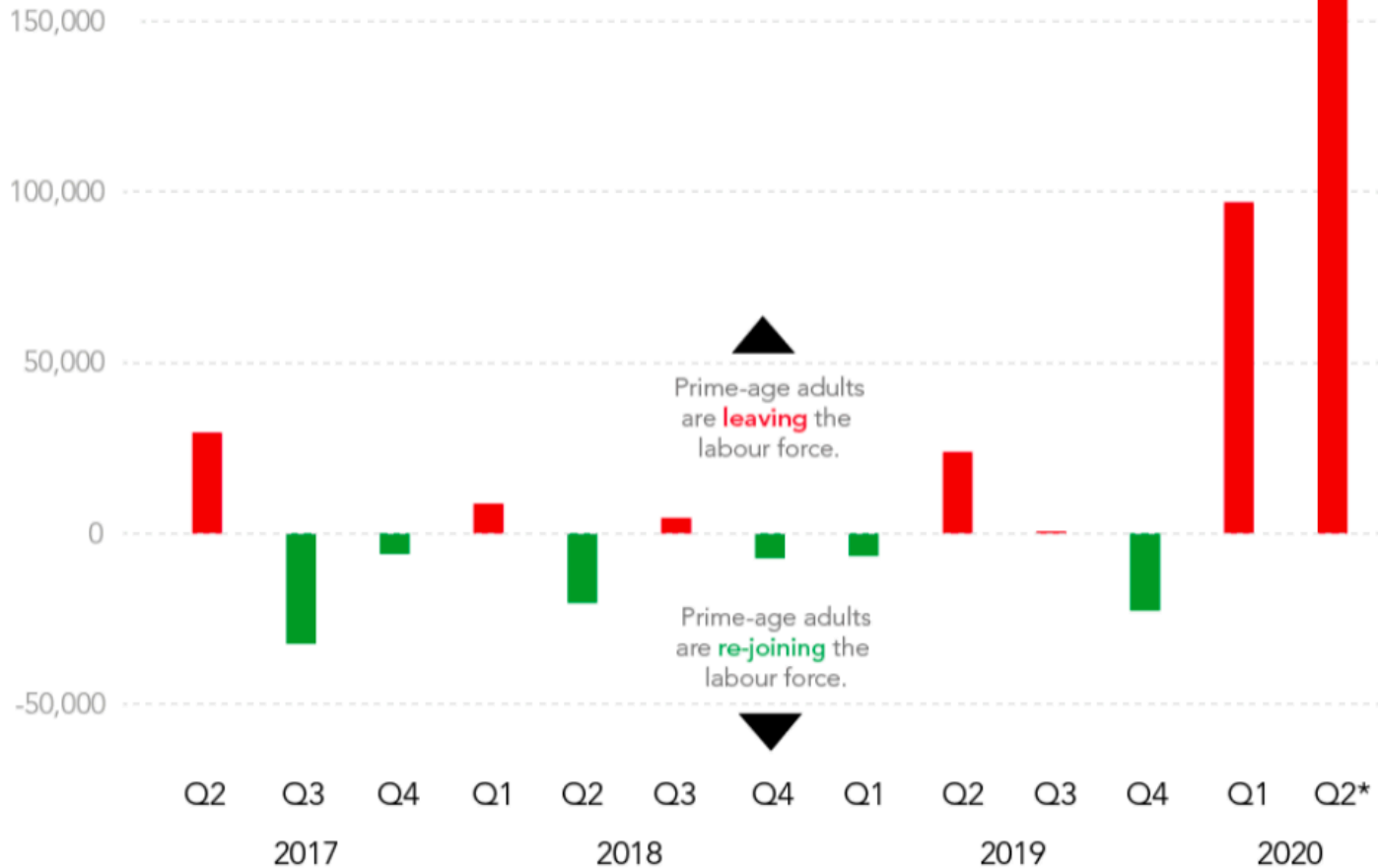


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The number of prime-age workers who have given up employment has spiked, the majority of whom cite caregiving and family obligations for quitting the labour force.

Figure: Net quarterly changes in working age population outside the labour force



Source: Author's own calculation with DOSM Labour Force Surveys (2020)

\*Data includes only figure for only April 2020, actual statistic for full quarter may be higher.

source: Mukundan, 2020, UNDP