

#HowICare Workplace Campaign Partner Toolkit

Launching Thursday, June 18, before Father's Day 2020



Join us in showing each other how you care for your children – as well as your family, your community, and yourself – and in advocating for support for all parents and caregivers

The [#HowICare Campaign](#), launching June 18, 2020, is led by Promundo and Oxfam as an international project of MenCare: A Global Fatherhood Campaign, active in more than 55 countries. A data-informed social media campaign, #HowICare aims to shed a light on the realities, difficulties, and disparities of providing care – specifically in caring for children, in order to advocate for additional support for caregivers – including the parents and care workers who are most impacted – during the COVID-19 crisis and beyond. It also aims to activate men as

individuals, employers, and advocates in ensuring that care is a collective responsibility: shared equally and supported by structures and policies. This international campaign will feature new, rapid response polling data from the US, Canada, UK, Philippines, and Kenya.

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The #HowICare Campaign

We are in an unprecedented position to re-think what it means to take care of our loved ones, our communities, and ourselves. The responsibility of parenting (as well as other unpaid care responsibilities) – which women around the world take on at a greater rate – are shifting and increasing. Our circles of care are expanding too. This shift, brought on by the spread of COVID-19, has been accompanied by stress, confusion, and uncertainty. It's also bringing many of us back to what matters, to who matters, and to how we can support one another.

Globally, we know that women carry out three times the amount of household and child care that men do (women also make up more than 80 percent of paid care workers, from health services to early childhood). **Now more than ever we need a radical shift:** in who does the care work at home – with men taking on an equal share – in how we support those who do the care work within our communities, and in how we support parents and caregivers to care for children – particularly those who are most impacted, including: single parents, people of color (particularly in the Global North), essential workers, and low-income families. The work of caring for children – and others – needs to be valued, paid, supported, and fully equal in terms of men doing their fair and equal share, both in paid and unpaid care work.

Join us June 18, 2020 in advance of Father's Day (in many countries): #HowICare, led by Promundo and Oxfam, is an international project of MenCare: A Global Fatherhood Campaign. It will build on the expertise of more than 100 partners in 55+ countries, and it aims to shed light on the ways individuals around the world are **going above and beyond** to make sure their families are taken care of, to **create a global dialogue and sense of community**, and to **advocate for policy change** and funding to support parents and all caregivers. This moment and Father's Day also provides a time in particular for men – as individuals, employers, and advocates – to join as full partners in ensuring that care is a collective responsibility: shared equally and supported by structures and policies.

When: Launching Thursday, June 18, 2020, *one week of action*

Where: Twitter using #HowICare and @MenCareGlobal
Tag: @Promundo_US, @OxfamAmerica, @Oxfam

Secondary Hashtags: #paidleave #childcare #COVID19 #caregiving #carework
#mencarecommitment #paternityleave

What: Individuals and organizations, and employers – from around the world – will share how they are caring for children – as well families and communities – amidst COVID-19; and to call for additional policy support for parents and caregivers around the world, using #HowICare.

Who can participate and how?

For one week, **launching Thursday, June 18** through **Wednesday, June 24** – in the lead up to and following Father's Day (June 21, in many countries):

We are asking individuals, organizations, and employers to join us on Twitter, using **#HowICare** and tagging @MenCareGlobal (as well as @Promundo_US, @Oxfam, and @OxfamAmerica when you can).

[Download #HowICare graphics and messaging.](#)

[Visit the #HowICare campaign landing page.](#)

We are asking you to share:

Stories: Share your personal reflections about how your care responsibilities – particularly when it comes to caring for children – have shifted during the COVID-19 pandemic, and what support you need to be the best parent or caregiver you can be. Ask your colleagues who are parents, to share as well.

Statistics: Share new, #HowICare polling data from the US, UK, Canada, Philippines, and Kenya (forthcoming), or other national or international statistics that highlight the realities, difficulties, and disparities parents and caregivers of children are facing during COVID-19.

Policy Asks: Call for the supportive policies all parents and caregivers need, specifically those who are most impacted by COVID-19 such as: paid time off, flexible scheduling, and childcare provisions; and call for the goal of men carrying out half of the world's care work. Share those steps you are taking within your own workplace, to support parents and caregivers.

See specific guidance below for organizations and individuals on how to participate.

The Asks

Join us in advocating to accelerate men's uptake of 50 percent of the unpaid care work and government policies to support all caregivers. Call for your government to put in place the changes in policies, and to support the changes in attitudes and behaviors that lead to care being valued, supported, reduced, and shared equally, and to motivate men to do an equitable share of the unpaid care work by 2030. See [The MenCare Commitment](#) for more details.

Furthermore, to support those who are taking care of children – and providing other forms of care – here are actions you can call for and adapt to your national, or local context:

- 1. Call for all individuals to have access to paid sick and family and medical leave at work and strengthen and expand workers' protections to include caregiving needs; *and share if you provide this leave in your workplace.***



- **Why:** All individuals deserve access to paid sick leave to care for children and other family members and loved ones. Childcare arrangements are likely to be less reliable in the current climate, which will leave many individuals, particularly single parents, with the difficult choice of staying home with their child or losing their job. Historically these responsibilities have been born by women; we also need men to share in providing care – and in advocating for this support for all.
- **What:** Paid leave should be available to (1) care for a family member who is self-isolating, (2) care for a child when schools are closed or childcare providers are unavailable due to COVID-19, or (3) care for a family member who is an individual with a disability or senior citizen whose place of care or direct care provider is unavailable.

2. Ensure that the amount of paid leave is increased, paid at 100%, and can be taken for a wide range of reasons; and share if you provide this support in your workplace.

#HowICare



The amount of paid leave needs to be increased, paid at 100%, and available for a wide range of reasons.

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- **Why:** Several months of school and childcare provider closures mean that the current amount of paid leave is not sufficient to meet child care needs, particularly for single parents. One-hundred percent wage replacement means that individuals don't have to make tough financial decisions to care for themselves and their families.
- **What:** Individuals should be able to take leave intermittently and in short increments (hours or days) as needed. This flexibility is particularly more equitable vis-a-vis workers with

disabilities or chronic health conditions who require ongoing care. It also supports more equally shared caregiving between parents. Wage replacement rate of 100% for low-income workers and a decent rate for other workers ensures that workers—particularly women, who are most likely to take time off from work to care for others in their family—do not suffer losses to their wages due to increased unpaid care responsibilities they face during COVID-19. We also must encourage, support, and oblige men to take this leave to equally share in care responsibilities.

3. Call for equal, fully paid, non-transferable parental leave for all parents, as a supplement to maternity leave, not an alternative; and family leave for all; and share if you provide this leave in your workplace.



- **Why:** Parental leave is crucial for all parents to provide care for their children; and we need all parents, including men, to take it. Nowhere in the world are men taking the full leave even when leave is available; policies like parental leave, and shifts in norms are needed to support women, men, and all caregivers in having access to, and taking their full leave.
- **What:** Ensure governments and employers offer equal, fully paid, non-transferable parental leave for all parents, as well as embed paternity leave in national policies as a supplement to maternity leave, not an alternative. Extend this leave beyond the first months of a child's life. And when leave is offered, advocate for men in particular, to take it.

4. Call for governments to take immediate action to ensure that existing childcare infrastructures survive the COVID-19 pandemic; *and share if you provide or support childcare services in your workplace.*



- **Why:** Systems of childcare are on the verge of collapse the world over. Access to affordable childcare for low-income parents is already a challenge that will be made worse by COVID-19: essential workers are in particular need of childcare services. Prioritizing government investment in affordable childcare for low-income communities is essential to our economies and our societies.
- **What:** Call for government-support to sustain high-quality childcare that facilitates the full participation in economic activities for all parents.

5. Call for governments to challenge harmful norms and sexist beliefs – particularly when it comes to the notion of care being women’s responsibility alone; and share if you have taken action in your workplace.

#HowICare

Governments must **change harmful norms**
and **challenge the notion of care** being a
woman's responsibility alone.

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- **Why:** Harmful norms and sexist beliefs that see care work as the responsibility of women and girls lead to an unequal, gendered distribution of care work and perpetuate economic and gender inequality, inequalities which have already been exacerbated during the COVID-19 crisis.
- **What:** Governments need to invest resources to challenge these harmful norms and sexist beliefs, including through advertising, public communication and legislation. Further, men need to step up to equally fulfill their responsibilities on care work to address the disproportionate amount of care done by women within households and communities.

6. Ensure flexibility in working hours and conditions as well as schedule control; and share if you provide this flexibility in your workplace.

#HowICare

Employees need **flexible working hours** and conditions as well as **schedule control**.

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- **Why:** Increased, and sometimes unpredictable caregiving responsibilities mean that many parents and caregivers in the workforce may benefit from flexible work schedules, including the ability to work nonstandard hours and to telework. Alternative schedules can help parents and caregivers organize their employment schedules around their care responsibilities and alleviate work-family stress.
- **What:** Scheduling flexibility, must be paired with schedule control; workers who face unpredictable schedules and do not have input on their working hours can find it especially hard to balance caregiving and work.

7. Call for social protection programs should support caregivers and recognize care as work.

#HowICare

We need **social protection programs**
to support caregivers and recognize
care as work.

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- **Why:** Many caregivers forego paid work to provide the unpaid work of care. As a result, they often miss out on benefits of paid employment aside from income, such as health insurance, retirement plans, social security, disability insurance, unemployment benefits and others. Government programs that are meant to provide safety nets should not be exclusively oriented towards supporting paid employment, but should also recognize the important and complementary role that unpaid care work provides society.
- **What:** Social protection programs (which may include cash transfers or providing income support for shorter-term and longer-term periods of unemployment) should benefit parents and caregivers in recognition of their critical role to society and for the work of care. Policies such as employment protection or unemployment insurance do not directly help unpaid caregivers, even though they may suffer from economic downturns and shocks. Per capita cash payments – government-funded “stimulus payments” are preferable from a care perspective, and should be targeted to those most in need.

Guidance for Organizations:

Join us in calling for action – around the world – to galvanize pressure on governments to support policies that address challenges all parents and caregivers are facing: such as paid time off, flexible scheduling, and childcare provisions, and to achieve the goal of men carrying out half of the world’s care work.

We also invite you to share what you are doing, within your own workplace, to support parents and caregivers.

Step 1: Draw on the Evidence and Adapt Our Policy Asks

Call for the policy and structural support all parents and caregivers need – particularly those who are most impacted by COVID-19, including: single parents, people of color (particularly in the Global North), essential workers, and low-income families – to be able to care for their children and families.

Adapt the policy asks above, using national and global data to inform your ask – such as from the [State of the World's Fathers](#) report or [Time to care: Unpaid and underpaid care work and the global inequality crisis](#). This international campaign will feature new, rapid response polling data in the United States, Canada, UK, Philippines, and Kenya on COVID-19 and care.

Step 2: Create

Take a minute to snap a photo or take a short video of yourself, your colleague; or find a photo or use a graphic along with your call to action. [Download #HowICare graphics and messaging](#).

Step 3: Upload

Share out on Twitter. Tag another organization, a policymaker if you are able, use #HowICare – and tag @MenCareGlobal

Sample #HowICare Tweets for Organizations:

- We must pass policies to support parents and caregivers, including fully paid & non-transferable #parentalleave. As businesses, we can be a positive example. #HowICare @MenCareGlobal
- We need need men to do their equal share of all caregiving. We encourage our male employees who are new fathers to take the parental leave that we provide for them. #HowICare @MenCareGlobal
- It's time for governments to invest in care and motivate men to do their equitable share of unpaid care. At our workplace – we ask new dads when they will take their leave, not if they will. #HowICare @MenCareGlobal
- In light of #COVID19, workers are left without guaranteed #paidleave for #childcare. We need governments to support affordable childcare for all. #HowICare @MenCareGlobal
- We need policies that allow family members to take the necessary leave and adapt their working arrangements to meet their #caregiving needs. We have extended our sick leave policy to support our colleagues during #COVID19. #HowICare @MenCareGlobal

Guidance for Individuals:

Step 1: Reflect

Ask yourself, "How has the spread of COVID-19 changed the way I care for my children and family?" "How has it changed the way I care for myself?" "What are the new challenges I'm facing in providing care?"

Think about what you've learned in adapting to a new reality, and what advice you might share with others facing a similar situation. The way we think about caring for children – and for others – is changing or what it means to care is changing for all of us. As an employer, ask your colleagues – especially those who are parents – to share their own stories.

By sharing your story, you can help shed a light on the realities we are experiencing globally – to help bring about change.

Step 2: Create

Take a minute to snap a photo or take a short video of yourself, or your family member in action. [Download #HowICare graphics and messaging.](#)

Step 3: Upload

Share out on Twitter. Use #HowICare, tag your friends and @MenCareGlobal

Sample #HowICare Tweets for Individuals:

Sample 1:



School looks different these days. This is #HowICare #stayhome #homeschooling @MenCareGlobal

Sample 2:



Doing my best to take care of my newborn, and asking you all to #StayHome too, if you can. #HowICare @MenCareGlobal

Sample 3:



We are staying sane by taking socially distant walks. #HowICare @MenCareGlobal

Sample 4:



We have more dishes to do now than ever before, but doing my part to make sure they're taken care of for my family.

#HowICare #StayHome @MenCareGlobal

Sample 5:



I signed a petition to guarantee 100% paid sick leave.

#HowICare @MenCareGlobal

The research

The #HowICare poll is a national rapid response poll, created by Oxfam and Promundo, building off of decades of research focused on unpaid care, masculinities, and gender equality, which aims to assess how COVID-19 and the associated economic crisis are affecting people's unpaid care responsibilities and attitudes. Rapid response polling data will be featured from the United States, Canada, UK, Philippines, and Kenya.

The poll will illuminate timely and valuable information on individuals' experiences of providing unpaid care during this period, including: the magnitude of COVID-19 and lockdown-related domestic and care work increases; how households are distributing those increases by gender and generation; and the most significant health and wellbeing impacts of the above. It will include information about how grandparents, children, and single-sex partnerships and households are all managing the same dynamics. The initial findings will feed into a short report and the #HowICare social media campaign to go live before Father's Day in many countries, on Thursday, June 18. Although it's too soon to know, this disruptive moment could be an inflection

point, changing or influencing attitudes and beliefs on important issues, including health care, childcare, household responsibilities.

About the partners

About MenCare

MenCare is a global fatherhood campaign active in more than 55 countries on five continents, coordinated by Promundo and Sonke Gender Justice. Our mission is to promote men's involvement as equitable, nonviolent fathers and caregivers in order to achieve family well-being, gender equality, and better health for mothers, fathers, and children. We aim for men to be allies in supporting women's social and economic equality, in part by taking on more responsibility for childcare and domestic work. We believe that true equality will only be reached when men are taking on 50 percent of the world's child care and domestic work. See www.men-care.org

About Promundo

Founded in Brazil in 1997, Promundo works to promote gender equality and create a world free from violence by engaging men and boys in partnership with women, girls, and individuals of all gender identities. Promundo is a global consortium with members in the United States, Brazil, Portugal, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Chile that collaborate to achieve this mission by conducting cutting-edge research that builds the knowledge base on masculinities and gender equality; developing, evaluating, and scaling up high-impact interventions and programs; and carrying out national and international campaigns and advocacy initiatives to prevent violence and promote gender equality. For more information, see: www.promundoglobal.org

About Oxfam

Oxfam is a global organization working to end the injustice of poverty. We help people build better futures for themselves, hold the powerful accountable, and save lives in disasters. Oxfam provides grants and technical support to local organizations around the world. Together with these partners, we support long-term solutions that help poor communities grow nutritious food, access land and clean water, and obtain decent work and fair wages. Local to global, Oxfam uses advocacy to tackle the systems, policies, and practices that keep people trapped in poverty. We take on inequality, climate justice, gender justice, and inequities in the food chain, and we advocate for the basic human rights and dignity of survivors of conflicts and disasters. We challenge governments, multinational companies, international organizations, and other actors to use their vast power and influence to improve the lives of poor and vulnerable people. Oxfam works with local people to lead humanitarian responses that provide immediate relief during conflicts and disasters, and to build resilience against future threats. For more information see: www.oxfamamerica.org/about