

# FEMINIST VISIONS OF THE FUTURE OF WOMEN'S WORK

A systemic exploration of the past, present,  
and future of women at work in Canada

By Stephanie Kwan

Submitted to OCAD University in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of Design in Strategic Foresight + Innovation  
Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2021

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# ABSTRACT

We are still far from achieving gender equality at work, as our modern workplace is designed by men for men. Women's economic participation and prosperity face systemic barriers and are further threatened by the digitization and automation that drive the future of work. These technological advances, along with demographic shifts, social movements, and political factors, lead to new disruptive employment systems. However, the impacts and discussion around the future of work are often gender-blind.

This research uses a systemic lens to explore the past, present, and future of women's work. A systemic analysis of gender equality in the workplace reveals how our workplace, governance, social, and economic structures create systemic barriers to undervalue women's work. Strategic foresight is used to explore the trends shaping the future of work using a gendered lens, and scenarios help us envision how our systems can evolve to value women's work. Risks and opportunities from each scenario informed insights that can help us design our preferred future, where women can fully participate in the workplace and be valued for their contributions.

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# 01 INTRODUCTION



# CONTEXT: WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?



## Gender Equality in the Workplace

Our modern workplace is designed by men, for men, and does not serve the needs of 21st-century women. Patriarchal social norms and entrenched stereotypes create a persistent economic inequality between men and women, making it nearly impossible to power progress towards a fairer world (Grantham, Stefov, & Tiessen, 2019). There has been significant progress in women's rights and equality over the past century, but we are still far from achieving equality, especially in the workforce. The World Economic Forum suggests that it will take 257 years to close the economic gender gap (Schifter, 2020). Although some organizations are committed to shattering the glass-ceiling, the structural inequalities embedded within workplaces and society impact women's ability to achieve equal pay.

Women still earn less than men; in 2018, Canadian women earned on average 87 cents for every dollar earned by men, and this gap is even wider for women of colour (Monsebraaten, 2020). A McKinsey report on *Women in the Workplace* indicates that 48% of women make up entry-level corporate positions, while only 21% of C-suite leadership positions (Thomas & Lee, 2019). Women still face biases in hiring and promotion rates, discriminatory laws and a growing unpaid care burden (Abbott & Mohapatra, 2019). Furthermore, working mothers continue to suffer a "motherhood penalty" and time poverty, which limits their chances of career advancement and reinforces the perception that their paid labour is secondary to that of men (Daibes, 2020). All these systemic constraints to gender equality need to be considered when thinking about the future of work. Especially with the disruption of COVID-19, women are at risk of falling further behind in workforce participation, equal pay and leadership roles.

## The Future of Work

The nature of work is rapidly changing. We are undergoing fundamental shifts to how we work, when and where work happens, and why we are doing it. Globalization, technological advances in automation and AI, social movements, demographic shifts and geopolitical distributions are leading to the emergence of new employment models. "These shifts will alter employee-employer relationships, economic mobility and wages", and pose unique implications for women (Abbott & Mohapatra, 2019).

By 2030, McKinsey projects as many as "160 million women globally will need to transition across occupations and sectors or fundamentally change how they work" (Madgavkar et al., 2019). This brings new challenges, especially for women, as they have less flexibility and mobility due to care work (Hutt, 2020). While some companies have implemented policies to advance gender equality, very few have considered the implications of the changing job landscape for women (Schifter, 2020). If we collectively fail to consider and ultimately address the impact the future of work will have on women, the wage gap will continue to grow and they will be further left behind.

## COVID-19's Impact

The COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately forced women to leave the workforce to fulfil care duties. This has resulted in economic losses that have rolled back three decades of advances in women's labour force participation. An RBC report noted that between February and October 2020, 20,600 Canadian women fell out of the labour force while nearly 68,000 men joined (Desjardins & Freestone, 2020). "The pandemic has spawned national recognition that care work is essential and underpins our daily lives and economy.

However, it has also exposed the low social value attached to care work and, ultimately, women's work" (Faraday, 2020).

On the other hand, the global pandemic has caused us to "vault five years forward in consumer and business digital adoption" (Baig, Hall, Jenkins, Lamarre, & McCarthy, 2020). The World Economic Forum's *The Future of Jobs Report 2020* also noted that "84% of employers are accelerating their digitalization agenda, and 50% of employers intend to accelerate the automation of jobs" (Haynes, 2021). This has drastically changed the way we live and work, increasing concerns about the inclusion and security of women's work.

## What's Next? Feminist Perspective for the Future of Work

Women's economic participation and prosperity in the workforce are becoming more complex amid the digitization and automation that is driving the future of work. Given the urgency and complexity of the challenges ahead, we need collective action to break down existing barriers and inequalities for women, reassess the notion of work, and redefine the relationship between paid and unpaid work. This represents an opportunity to rebuild our systems for women, future-proof gender parity efforts, and collectively shape a future of work that finally works for women.

# PROJECT FRAMING

*"Women have always worked unpaid, underpaid, under-appreciated  
and invisible, forming the backbone of our society and economy"  
(Criado-Perez, 2020)*

Multiple intersecting systems impact women's inequality in the workplace that create barriers to women's economic empowerment. A preliminary literature review has revealed that changing workplace practices and policies alone cannot lead to equality without addressing other systemic barriers. Now more than ever, we must challenge existing systems and collectively demand change at all levels of the system. With disruptive changes on the horizon that will impact how we work, we must prioritize redesigning systems that are inclusive, equitable and leave no woman behind.

## Research Question

What is the value of women's  
labour in the future of work  
and its implication for women's  
economic participation and prosperity?

# MY MOTIVATION: WHY AM I DOING THIS?



Coming from a corporate business background, I have always experienced gender bias in the workplace. I accepted the patriarchal systemic barriers as something that had to be endured in a professional setting. At the onset of my career, I had to “act like men” and pay attention to golf and hockey to land jobs. I was working 70-hour work-weeks, and I saw the barriers that women face in a corporate setting; the powerful women syndrome, the weight of emotional labour in the workplace and the lack of family-friendly policies that make it difficult for working mothers to advance into leadership positions. I have seen female coworkers passed up for promotions simply because they were too modest compared to their male counterparts.

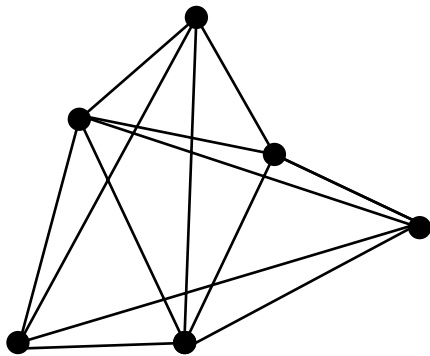
I never thought twice about these injustices during my corporate days. I happily wore my neoliberal straight-jacket, leaned in and climbed up the corporate ladder towards the next promotion. Something changed a few years ago when I began a new job and started to have more work-life balance. Finally having time to myself to reflect led to an existential crisis, which resulted in me leaving the corporate world to pursue my Master of Design in Strategic Foresight and Innovation at OCAD University. I hope to use this research project as an opportunity to dive deeper into the obvious, critically reflect on my journey, and become a better feminist.

# RESEARCH GOALS

This research study falls under the following domains:

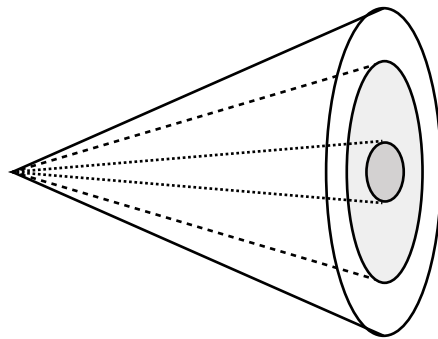
- Feminist theory and critical theory
- Diversity, equity and inclusion
- Intersectional feminism
- Future of work
- Digitization and automation

There is an urgent need for systemic change as women's equality in the workplace is threatened by the pandemic and is neglected in conversations about the future of work. This research does not intend to solve this wicked problem. It is diagnostic and exploratory, and aims to contribute to existing research around accountability, transparency and the urgency of designing a future of work that works for women. This research should be read by people of all genders, academics, government agencies, feminist organizations, and the general public. The goal of this research is twofold:



## **Systems thinking:**

To contribute to the vast gender equality literature by using a systemic lens on concepts typically examined in isolation. Contributions are additive, complementary, and mutually reinforcing.



## **Futures thinking:**

To empower feminist thinkers to strategize on how to build power and provide an aspirational guide to help envision plausible interventions, innovations, opportunities, and risks that the future of work holds for women.

## 02 RESEARCH DESIGN

# METHODOLOGY

This research encompasses a systemic analysis of gender equality in the workplace and uses strategic foresight to explore the value of women's work in the year 2040.

## **Part 1 of the report**

provides an understanding of the value of women's work by examining the tensions between care and capital and its influences on women's economic participation and prosperity. Through the research process, it became apparent that the strategies for gender equality are already extensively researched and outlined by our government, management consultancies and advocacy groups. The challenge is understanding the broader system in which it exists. As a result, the research focus shifted from defining and designing solutions towards understanding the interconnected systems that perpetuate these inequalities.

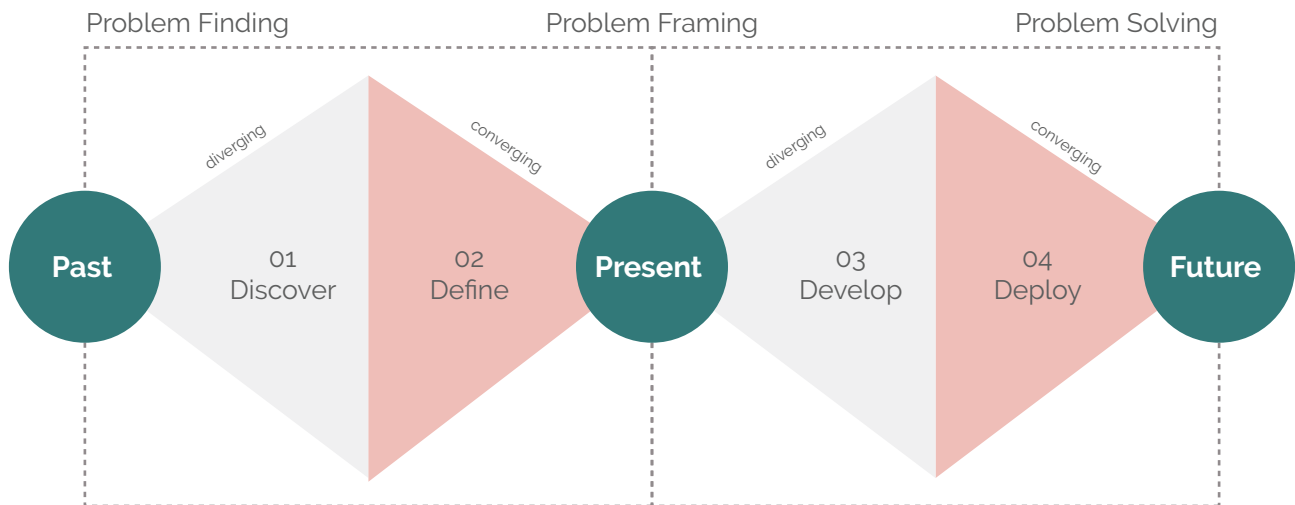
## **Part 2 of the report**

aims to provoke new thinking about the future of work and its implications for women's economic participation and prosperity. It identifies key trends shaping the future of work that are analyzed using a gendered lens. These trends inform the development of plausible future scenarios that encourage visioning of how our systems can evolve to value women's work. This section is concluded by reviewing risks and opportunities that help us design our preferred future - a future where women can fully participate in the workplace and be valued for their contributions.



# Problem Finding, Framing, and Solving

This project uses a combination of methods from design thinking, systemic design and strategic foresight. The methodology follows an iterative double diamond process of divergence and convergence, moving from problem finding to framing then problem-solving. Sub research questions guide each phase of this research as shown in Table 1.



**Figure 1:** Project methodology based on United Kingdom's Design Council Diamond Model

## Phase 1 - Discover the Past:

An extensive literature review was conducted to explore diverse perspectives and domains to investigate the research area and to develop an understanding of women's work, gender equality and the future of work.

## Phase 2 - Define the Present:

Findings from Phase 1 and interviews were synthesized using various system tools to understand systemic influences that impact gender equality in the workplace.

## Phase 3 - Envision the Futures:

Strategic foresight tools were used to identify trends that will shape the future of work and to develop future scenarios that explore the value of women's labour in the future of work.

## Phase 4 - Insights:

Scenarios were reviewed to identify associated vulnerabilities, risks and opportunities for the future of work for women.



# Guiding Questions, Research Methods, and Tools

Part	Phase	Guiding Questions	Primary Research	Secondary Research
1	Discover (past)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How did we get here?</li> <li>• How do we value women's (un) paid labour in the workplace</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Literature review</li> </ul>
	Define (present)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do various systems impact women's ability to access the paid workforce?</li> <li>• What are the systemic barriers that propagate gender inequality?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Iterative inquiry</li> <li>• Influence map</li> <li>• Causal loops</li> <li>• Causal layered analysis</li> </ul>
2	Develop (future)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What trends and drivers are shaping the future of work for women?</li> <li>• What are the futures of work and its implications for women?</li> <li>• How do these futures prioritize equity, care, and collaboration?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Horizon scan</li> <li>• Trend analysis using a gendered lens</li> <li>• Scenario development using Dator's Generic Images of the Futures</li> <li>• Causal layered analysis for each scenario</li> </ul>	
	Deploy (future-proof)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What strategies help women fully participate in work and be valued for their contributions?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic analysis and learnings</li> <li>• Future research areas</li> </ul>	

**Table 1:** Research guiding questions

# RESEARCH APPROACH

## Primary Research

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with two groups of stakeholders; experts in gender equality and working women. A total number of nine people were interviewed for this project.

**Expert Interviews:** Semi-structured interviews were conducted with two experts who lead gender advocacy practices in Toronto.

**Participant Interviews:** Semi-structured interviews were conducted with seven participants who identify as women and are mid-career professionals in the design, business, and tech industry in Canada. These women may or may not have care duties (childcare, eldercare, or household duties) and come from diverse ages and ethnicities.

## Secondary Research

An extensive literature review was conducted on diverse perspectives and domains to build foundational knowledge and to gain an understanding of gender equality in the workplace. Further research was conducted around the future of work to understand the trends shaping work and what institutions are recommending and actively doing to help bridge employment gaps.

## Research Limitations

The following research limitations are acknowledged:

**Time and resource constraints:** This research was conducted over seven months while balancing employment. The time constraint limited the number of primary research interviews and the depth of secondary research and analysis.

**Research mix:** The interview sample size was limited. Interviews were conducted with participants who were in middle-class heterosexual families. More research is required for families where at least one parent identifies as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex or queer.

**Expert vs. participatory mindset:** The majority of this research did not include direct participation and co-creation with the community. Participatory foresight workshops were not held due to time constraints rather than the desire to take an expert-led approach.

**Data limitations:** There is limited access to recent and accurate data for labour force participation and the gender wage gap.

**Research bias:** My lived experiences and biases are a limitation. I am a privileged, middle-class queer Asian woman that was born in Hong Kong and raised in Canada. I do not have childcare or eldercare responsibilities, and I am left-leaning in my political views.

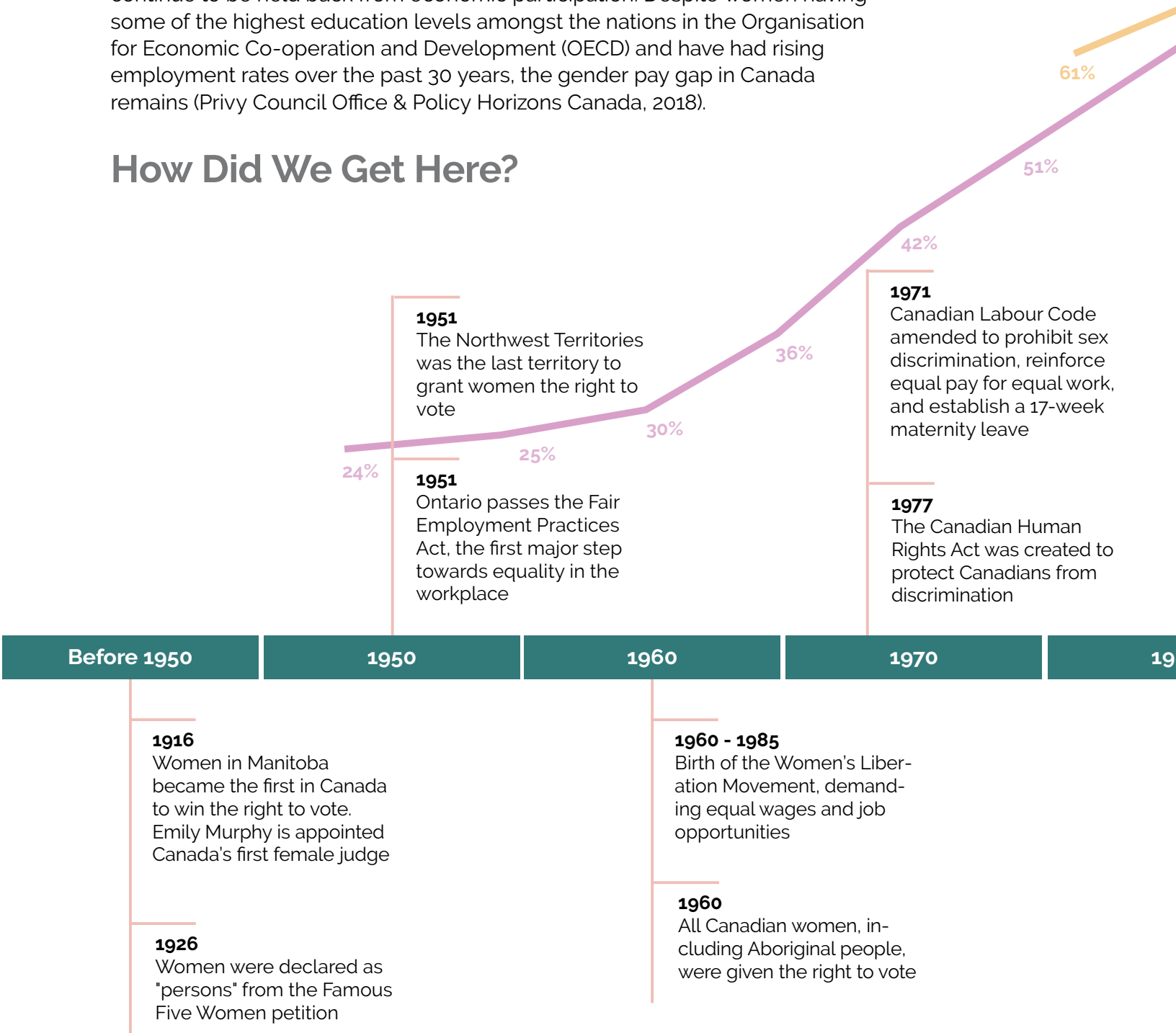
# PART 1

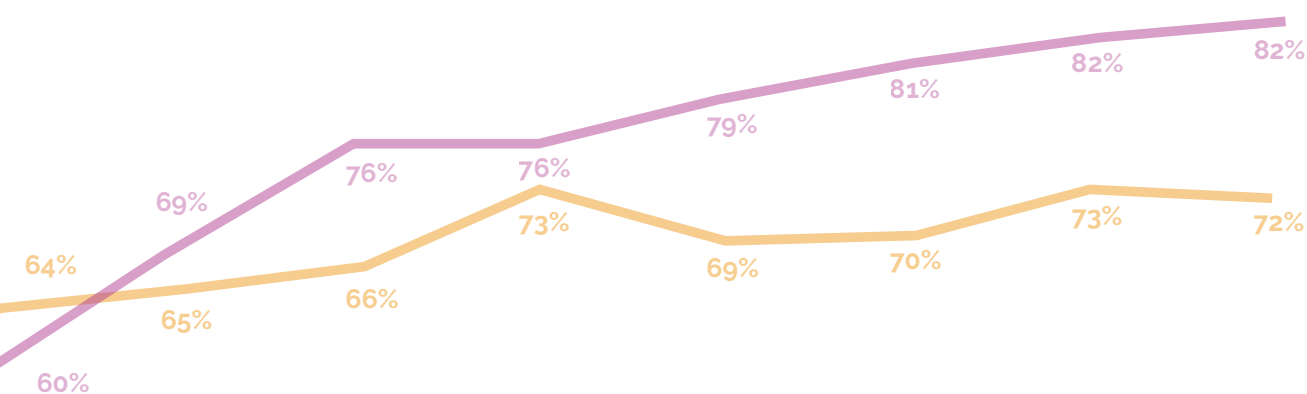
## 03 UNDERSTANDING THE PAST how we got here

# HISTORICAL TIMELINE

Over the past century, women have undoubtedly made progress in the workplace. But gender inequality remains and many women in Canada continue to be held back from economic participation. Despite women having some of the highest education levels amongst the nations in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and have had rising employment rates over the past 30 years, the gender pay gap in Canada remains (Privy Council Office & Policy Horizons Canada, 2018).

## How Did We Get Here?





**Women in the labour force:** labour force participation rates of women aged 25 to 54 (Government of Canada, 2018)

**Gender pay ratio:** calculated from average annual earnings of full time, full year workers aged 15 and older with women's earnings divided by men's earnings (Government of Canada, 2019)

#### 2015

Ontario Securities Commission implemented a "comply or explain" rule for listed companies to disclose gender diversity information

#### 1993

Kim Campbell became the first female Prime Minister of Canada for less than five months

#### 2019

Karen Jensen, first-ever Canada's Pay Equity Commissioner

80 1990 2000 2010 Present

#### 1983

The Canadian Human Rights Act prohibits sexual harassment in workplaces

#### 1985

Section 15 and 28 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms came into effect, establishing the constitutional right to equality

#### 2001

Canadian Human Rights Commission recommends a pay equity system and a task force was appointed

#### 2009

For the first time ever, there were more women than men in the labour market

**Figure 2:** Timeline of women's progress in Canada (Government of Canada, 2017), (Government of Canada, 2021), (Moyser, 2019), (Statistics Canada 2018).

# IMPORTANCE OF INTERSECTIONAL FEMINISM

In order to advance gender equality in the workplace in Canada, it is crucial to understand that it is not just about closing the wage and labour participation gaps between men and women. We also need to consider other identities, such as race, class, sexuality, ability, indigeneity, age, and much more, that have huge impacts on inequality (Canadian Women's Foundation). In 1989, Kimberlé Crenshaw, an American legal scholar, coined the term intersectional feminism "as a prism for seeing the way in which various forms of inequality often operate together and exacerbate each other" (UN Women, 2020). To advocate for women's work, we must use an intersectional approach to understanding the challenges that diverse women face, as some groups may face different or more significant barriers than others. Furthermore, we must also use an intersectional feminist political approach to respond and act upon that data in order to create transformative futures that advance equality for all.



Photo by Lindsey LaMont on Unsplash

# GENDER WAGE GAP

The historic timeline shows a decreasing gender wage gap, along with an increase in women's labour force participation. Women earn \$0.87 for every dollar earned by men (Statcan, 2019) when comparing the hourly wages of full-time work to that of men. Indigenous, racialized, immigrant, and disabled women have it even worse. According to 2016 census data, racialized women working full-time earn \$0.67 for every dollar earned by men (Canadian Women's Foundation, 2018). However, this gender wage gap represents an undercalculation of women's real poverty as it does not factor in that women work significantly fewer hours than men do, due to unpaid care duties (Faraday, 2021).

## Robust Employment Legislation

The labour laws needed to stop gender equality in the workplace in Canada have been established for many years. Canada's first equal pay legislation passed in 1951, which was the first significant step towards gender equality, making it illegal to pay men and women different salaries for the same job (Doolittle & Wang, 2021). It has been 50 years since the government amended the Canadian Labour Code to prohibit sex discrimination.

The wage gap is just a symptom of a larger problem. The power gap between men and women is the real culprit which puts women into default caretaker roles and therefore forcing them to perform more unpaid care work instead of taking paid labour opportunities.

## The Government's Diminishing Role in Care Support

The International Labour Organization (ILO) defines care work as consisting of the activities "involved in meeting the physical, psychological, and emotional needs of adults and children". Care work reproduces and maintains our society and is critical for our economy and society's functioning. "The state, market, community, and household are all involved in delivering care in some shape or form" (Faraday et al., 2020).

A Canadian Women's Foundation report on *Women, Decent Work and Canada's Fractured Care* describes the shift in care work's responsibility with the rise and fall of the post-war welfare state. "The rise of the welfare state through the 20th century led governments to reduce inequalities through the provision of common public goods, including care work support" (Faraday et al., 2020). The expansion of public service and access to care as a right was fundamental in providing employment opportunities for women.

Then "the era of rapid policy innovation and institution building peaked in the mid-1970s", that pushed the neoliberal agenda. This led to "shifts towards 'free markets', decreased state regulation, lower taxes and cuts to welfare state programming" (Faraday et al., 2020).



## Neoliberal Policies and the Privatization of Care

Canada's social infrastructure has been scaled back over the past 25 years, as the government has withdrawn responsibility for care work. This withdrawal has created opportunities for the privatization of care. As a result, women are struggling to fill the gaps, as they are either picking up care labour that is no longer publicly provided or being priced out of the private sector due to high childcare costs.

The OECD reported that childcare costs in Canada are among the highest in the world, with an average dual income family spending as high as 22% of their net income (Evans, 2016). It comes as no surprise that the gender labour participation gap is highest in census metropolitan areas with high daycare fees. Toronto has the highest childcare fees in Canada with a gender employment gap of 12.6% vs. a national average of 7.8% (Moyser, 2017).

Today's economic priorities and neoliberal policies are based on the progressive dismantling of social contracts and increased precarity. "Non-monetized labour, such as care, is treated as valueless and effectively pushed into invisibility" (Catlow, Ferrari, Falconer, Drasin, & Coto, 2020).

"Women's disproportionate share of unpaid care work in the household remains the largest barrier to participation in labour markets, hindering access to quality jobs, better working conditions and higher earnings" (Faraday et al., 2020).



Photo by Julien Pouplard on Unsplash



# LABOUR PARTICIPATION

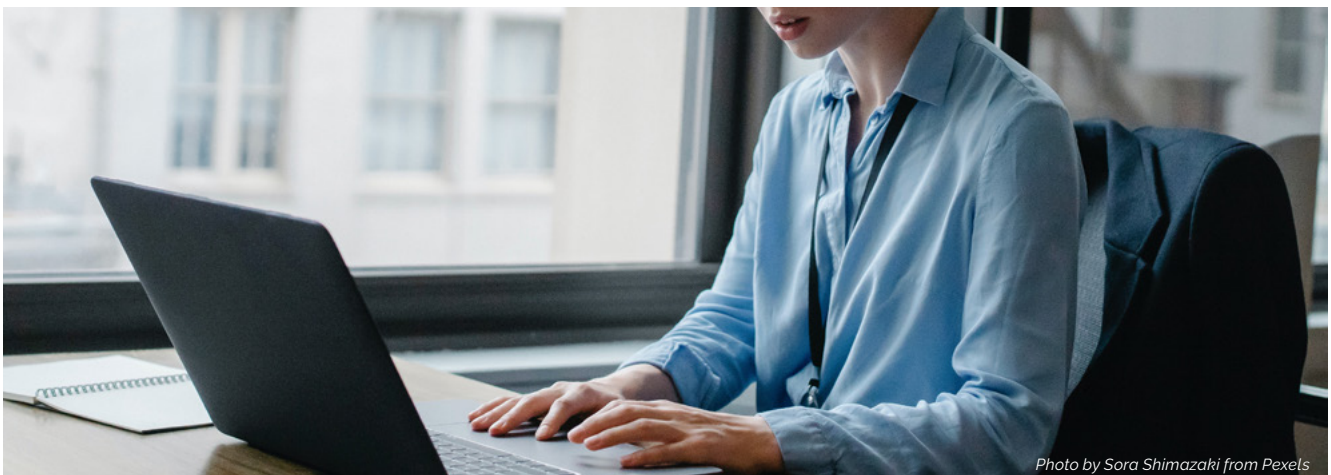
## Women in the Workplace

The historical timeline shows that Canadian women's participation in the paid workforce have seen remarkable changes since the 1950s. The labour force participation rate for women aged 25 to 54 went from 23.5% in 1953 to 81.9% in 2014 (Statistics Canada, 2018). Despite these great strides, there is still work to be done.

“Today, men still drastically outnumber, outrank, and outearn women despite women making up just under half of the workforce”  
(Doolittle & Wang, 2021).

Many workplace policies and structures have been created over the decades by men for men. The modern workplace needs a complete redesign to accommodate women; this may include reassessing whose voices are heard and valued, how recruiting practices are structured, how performance is measured and awarded in the workplace, how workplace culture impacts work, etc. This also applies to the physical structures of the workspace, including the lack of mothers' rooms, default building temperatures that cater to men's bodies, and technologies designed with standard male sizes (Houlis, 2020). Workplace policies and structures that do not account for women's needs reinforce gender inequality.

Although women make up just under half of the workforce, they continue to be underrepresented in leadership positions. Women hold only 25% of vice-president positions and 15% of CEO positions in Canada. This gender gap gets wider for top positions, and women's likelihood of being promoted to the next level is smaller than men's (Evans, 2017). It is important for more women to take on leadership positions, as it will inspire other girls and women, increase opportunities for mentorship, and influence holistic decision-making to pave the way towards gender equality in the workplace.



## The Role of Women in Society

Women are the primary caretakers of children and elders, and the gatekeepers of social reproduction work in every country of the world. However, the roles of women are changing as more women enter the paid labour workforce. In 2009, women actually outnumbered men in the Canadian workforce (The Canadian Press, 2009). While most women are now income earners, they still do most domestic chores and unpaid care work, even if some responsibilities are shared with their partner. Our society uses gender as a primary frame to see the world and gender bias is ingrained in everything we do. Change happens slowly, and requires a shift in monolithic thinking around existing gender roles and what constitutes women's and men's work.

## SUMMARY

This section explored women's progress in the workplace and how government policies and economic priorities have impacted when women work and how women's work is valued. It is clear that women's role in society and in the workplace is slowly changing, but progress is still needed as existing workplace policies and gender norms are created for men, and neglect the needs of women.

The next chapter dives deeper into how our current systems perpetuate these inequalities and create barriers for women's economic participation and prosperity.

## 04 SENSEMAKING THE PRESENT

### where are we now

# FRAMING THE SYSTEM

Gender inequality in the workplace and its impact on women's economic participation and prosperity is a complex problem that spans across multiple systems. After an extensive literature review of diverse domains, the first step is to define the system boundary for this research, and to identify which systems are within the scope of this research project.

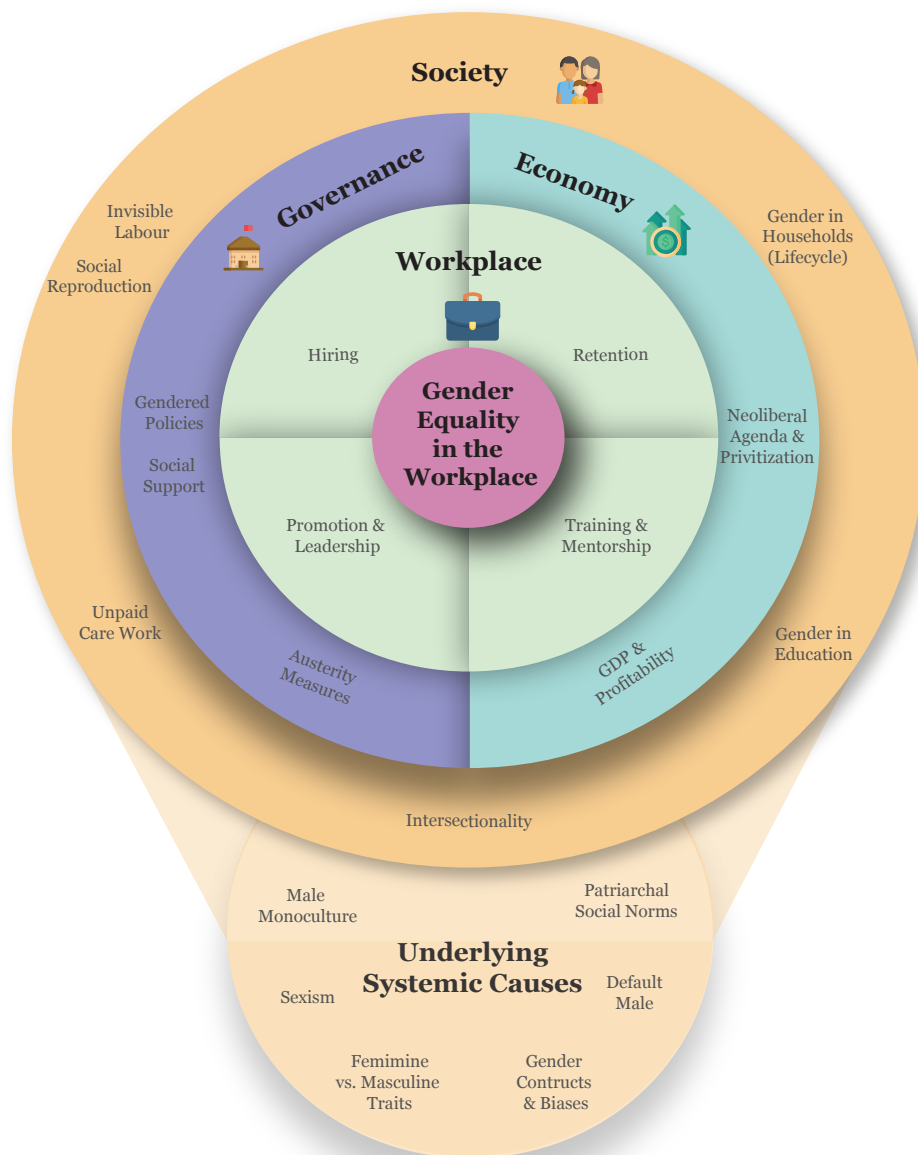
A systemic design tool called the **iterative inquiry** was used to help frame the system boundary. Gharajedaghi's Iterative Processes of Inquiry synthesizes an understanding of the whole of a system by investigating the whole from multiple perspectives and interrogating the interrelationships between those perspectives (Gharajedaghi, 2011). Refer to [Appendix A](#) for more details.

After completing this inquiry process, it became apparent that this research could not focus solely on our workplace system, as our governance models, economic structure, and society all have significant influences that impact a woman's ability to work and thrive in the paid workforce. As such, the scope of this research project includes the analysis and synthesis of the four systems that impact women's work. This is how the following systems relate to and can contribute to gender equality in the workplace:

- **Workplace system:** can achieve gender equality by redesigning policies that meet women's needs, increasing women's participation across all levels of the organization (especially in leadership and board positions), and reducing the gender pay gap.
- **Governance system:** can provide social infrastructure for care work and reduce the unpaid care burden for women, and also regulate gender equality and pay regulations in the labour market.
- **Economic system:** can increase economic growth, productivity and GDP to improve the standard of living and quality of life. However existing economic systems can also be challenged and restructured to reduce inequity.
- **Social system:** can remove invisible systemic barriers and gender bias to increase women's equal participation in the paid workforce, and also reduce and redistribute women's unpaid care work burden.

# THE VISUAL FRAMEWORK

This visual framework represents the four systems that were identified, with gender equality in the workplace centered at the core. The next sections provide an overview of how each of these systems impact women's work and the systemic problems within each that influence women's economic participation and prosperity. First, the workplace system reviews how organizational practices, policies, and structures create invisible barriers for women. Next, the governance system reviews how the provision of care impacts women. Afterwards, the economic system reviews how modern economic priorities oppress women. Lastly, the social system reviews how gender stereotypes impact when women work and how their work is valued.



**Figure 3:** Visual systems framework for women's work.  
From Stephanie Kwan, developed for this MRP.

# 01 WORKPLACE SYSTEM

**We are asking:** What do gender, voice, and power look like in the workplace? What hidden aspects within the system perpetuate workplace inequities for women?

## Overview

The current workplace is designed by men for men, and grossly neglects the needs of women. Institutional and implicit male biases are woven into organizational policies, structures and culture, making it difficult for women to be equitably recognized and valued for their contributions. The following examines the organizational practices and structures that create barriers for women:

### Hiring - Inclusion & Diversity

- Systemic and structural issues perpetuate hiring biases, often driven by network-based and affinity-based recruitment, based on people who “fit” into the culture (Pickering, 2020).
- There is a lack of diversified workforces and women representation at every level. Some organizations increase female inclusion by quota-based targets and “diversity hirings” (Stein, 2016).
- There is significant organizational lip service for diversity and commitments to elevating women. However, the lack of transparency and accountability is a significant hurdle in achieving gender equality (Espinosa, 2020).

### Retention - Work & Job Design

- There are growing calls to adapt work and job design to accommodate women's needs. This includes providing family-friendly policies (equitable parental leaves) and care facilities to employees by offering subsidized childcare services.
- A lack of flexibility also hinders women's ability to participate in the workforce. Some companies are now offering remote work, flexible hours, and compressed work weeks to accommodate employee's needs.

### Mentorship & Promotion

- The lack of female mentorship and role models leads to isolation and results in women navigating “mysterious” career paths due to a lack of sponsorship or advocacy for promotions (Stein, 2016).
- There is a performance evaluation bias due to performance visibility, where employees who seem busier are likely to be offered promotions, equating performance with perception and facetime (Gallup, 2016).
- Women often are assigned more negative attributes during performance reviews and receive criticism that men simply do not, such as being bossy, aggressive, emotional and irrational (Criado-Perez, 2020).
- “Choice architecture that requires women to apply for promotions via self-nomination or negotiation of higher salaries results in fewer women opting to compete.” (Kaplan, 2020). This system of advancement encourages risk-takers and negatively impacts women as they are socially conditioned to be more risk-averse.
- The belief of meritocracy results in the hiring of fewer women because they are deemed less qualified. “For a vast majority of hiring decisions, meritocracy is an insidious myth covering institutional white male bias. If Silicon Valley meritocracy is a religion, its God is a white male Harvard dropout” (Kaplan, 2020).

## Leadership

- There is a lack of women in leadership positions and a need for leaders to champion gender equality that goes beyond the status quo.
- Women are often judged as inferior leaders as they do not exhibit male leadership qualities (Stein, 2016).
- There are invisible barriers often known as the glass and concrete ceiling (applies to women of colour), that prevent women from being promoted to leadership positions.

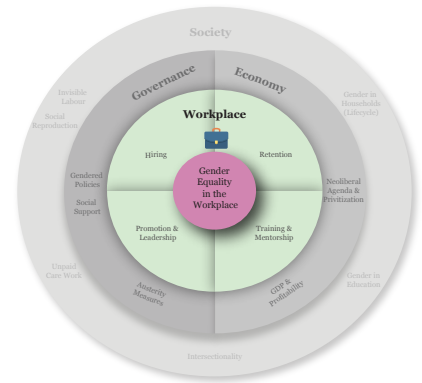


Figure 4: Workplace system

## Systemic Problems

Women's experience at work is undeniably different from that of men. The current workplace system reinforces gender inequality, prioritizes productivity over people, and frequently causes burnout and chronic illnesses. Late-capitalism working conditions can be harmful to all workers, but especially to women.

### Workplace Culture

Organizational policies alone cannot resolve the workplace's pervasive cultural problems as systemic bias is subtle (Diehl, 2020). Research shows that "this requires a journey of unlearning and relearning from both sexes, as women are just as biased as men" (Kaplan, 2020). Furthermore, we need men as allies to eradicate zero-sum thinking and to encourage men to join and even lead the conversation of gender equality within the workplace.

*"Women feel they have to prove more to get what they deserve, whereas men don't feel they have to prove anything. They'll say, these are the things I'll commit to, pay me now and I'll prove to you after. This is the opposite for women." - Interviewee*

*"As a woman, you have to make sure you are excellent in your work to be taken seriously. A man can be 80% competent, whereas a woman needs to be 120% competent. We also need to fight the stereotype, as there are parts of us that we have to disguise and shut off so we can fit into the mould." - Interviewee*

### Exposing the Invisible Barrier - Confirmation & Double Standard Bias

Research shows that women are held to a higher standard and must outperform men to receive similar recognition. Women's accomplishments are neither acknowledged nor remembered and are often asked to prove it again and again, where men are assumed to be competent from the outset. (William, 2015)

### The Problem with the Male Default

The traditional definition of work and worker no longer holds. The current definition of work leads to career penalties and pay gaps, as work today is designed for the household where one person works for pay, and the other does unpaid care work. The current ideal worker is the default male on duty 24/7, which perpetuates a work culture of longer hours/facetime and off-hour informal networking events that influence professional development and promotions (Criado-Perez, 2020).



This male privilege dominates the workplace, as seen through the perpetuation of the “boys club” and the rise in “bro-culture” in startups where toxic masculinity is pervasive.

*“You definitely start to notice trends, like who gets invited to which meetings, gets put in which role, and who gets access to certain projects.” - Interviewee*

## **Sexism Still Exists in the Workplace**

Workplaces have sexual and anti-harassment policies, but those do not cover covert, hidden and subtle sexism. The ways women experience misogyny in the workplace can include unmerited gender labelling (too bossy or emotional), role stereotyping (women as note-takers), or an expectation and preoccupation that women exhibit pleasing physical appearances (Priestley, 2019). Gender power dynamics also leads to the devaluation of women's voices, including being talked over or having your ideas taken by men and 'mansplaining'. As a result, meetings, work sessions, and boardrooms continue to be challenging spaces for women's voices to be heard (Rae, 2019).

*“When leaders in an organization are called out for bad behaviour, they take steps to protect themselves from negative repercussions, rather than address the root cause of the issue, which is the bad behaviour.” - Interviewee*

## **Exposing the Invisible Barrier - Tug of War**

Research shows internalized misogyny in women can also perpetuate biases towards other women, creating unhealthy competition between women (William, 2015).

## **Feminine Traits & Emotional Labour in the Workplace**

In the workplace, women are viewed as feminine, often associated with being soft or weak, whereas leadership attributes are often associated with masculine traits. Our modern workplace has failed to measure and value these “soft” feminine traits of compassion, empathy, and supportiveness. Furthermore, women are socialized to be modest and perfect, which often makes them undervalue their work and be overly critical. Research shows that women, on average, are more risk-averse and have a greater fear of failure than men, who are risk-takers and ask for outsized raises, promotions, and are more likely to pursue stretched opportunities (Stein, 2016).

*“I've been told a number of times that I needed to not be as feminine, and also to be more feminine. I've been told by female executives to drop femininity. And then, on the other side, it would be great if you dressed up a little bit more by male executives, you should be wearing you know pantyhose with that skirt.” - Interviewee*

Women also perform emotional labour in the workplace, which is often invisible and unacknowledged. This can include being assigned additional roles such as mentoring, office housekeeping, and administrative work.



### Exposing the Invisible Barrier - The Tightrope / Double Bind

"Damned if you do, damned if you don't." Women walk a tightrope between masculine and feminine traits (William, 2015). Women face a likeability penalty where they are penalized when exhibiting "male qualities." For example, when women are assertive, they are too bossy (Agarwal, 2018).

### Gender Pay Gap

There is a predominance and unspoken acceptance of pay inequality, where women make 87 cents on the dollar of men. Professor Sarah Kaplan posits that Ontario's 1987 Pay Equity Act is state of the art, where the violation of equal pay for equal work likely accounts for only 5% of the wage gap. The majority of the wage gap begins at the birth of the first child, with 80% of the gender wage gap attributed to motherhood. Even when women return to the workforce, they often switch to more flexible careers to accommodate care duties. The highest-paying jobs are typically ones with the least amount of flexibility. "It is clear that our current work design penalizes women, as they are the ones who have to interrupt their career for care work. As a result, pay transparency and legislation will never close the wage gap due to women's care work expectations" (Kaplan, 2018).

*"When a woman decides to leave to build her family and to go on mat leave, that's when you see men climb up faster and then women almost do a restart when they come back from the leave." - Interviewee*

### Exposing the Invisible Barrier - The Motherhood Penalty

When women become mothers, their earnings may slow, decrease or stop as they become the primary caregiver. They face a financial penalty in their base income, lost bonuses, stock vesting, billable hours, etc. (Rae, 2019). As a result, many women put off motherhood due to career penalties and fear of the baby track (the path that brings motherhood to the forefront and pushes career to back burner).

## Summary

This workplace system analysis explored the many barriers that stem from organizational hiring, retention, promotion and leadership practices. The current system also reinforces gender inequality as the current workplace is designed for the male default, which gives rise to sexism, perpetuation of gender norms, and the gender pay gap. The next system analysis explores the government's role in the provision of care and how it impacts women.

## 02 GOVERNANCE SYSTEM

**We are asking:** Who is responsible for the provision of care? How do we advocate for care-related policies?

### Overview

What is the relationship between our governance system and gender inequality? The Canadian government has robust labour practices to ensure fair wages. However, it provides nominal care support for families, ultimately taking women away from the workforce.

#### Government-Provided Social Infrastructure and Support

The government needs to provide more provision of childcare and invest in care-supported infrastructure and services. Currently, there is an inadequate supply of affordable, accessible, high-quality childcare. This is a failure by design as no level of government is responsible for childcare, and Canadians are still waiting for the national childcare strategy that was promised 50 years ago (please refer to [Federal 2021 budget](#) for the latest update). Quebec research shows spending on childcare is beneficial, with a return of \$5 for every \$1 invested through a ripple effect of more women earning, spending and paying taxes (Monsebraaten, 2020). Within Ontario, it is estimated that every public dollar invested in childcare leads to a \$2.47 benefit due to increased working hours and wages (Gender Wage Gap Strategy Steering Committee, 2016). There is an urgent need to address and support unpaid care work to stop the erosion of women's economic and social rights.

#### Ontario Labour Standards

In Ontario, equal pay for equal work and pay equity are found in two pieces of legislation. The Employment Standards Act, 2000 covers equal pay for equal work, and requires women and men to receive equal pay when they do the same job. The Pay Equity Act covers equal pay for work of equal value, which requires employers to pay female jobs at least the same as male jobs if they are of comparable value (Gender Wage Gap Strategy Steering Committee, 2016).

#### Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+)

Gender-based analysis is mandated for all federal governments to adopt gender-inclusive policies. It ensures that all genders' differential impacts are considered when policies, programs, and legislation is developed. GBA+ helps close gaps between diverse groups of people to achieve gender equality in Canada (Government of Canada, 2020).

### Systemic Problems

#### Austerity Measures

The perceived cost of providing care support becomes a significant barrier that blocks the advancement of women's equality. Governments typically cut budgets for child daycare centres, community services, and youth clubs in the name of austerity and public sector savings. The need for caregiving does not disappear. It just gets pushed back into the homes. In 2018, the Liberal government committed to a universal child-care system in Ontario, but it was subsequently cut to decrease the provincial deficit (Monsebraaten, 2020). We can no longer fight deficits through austerity as it has gendered impacts that inherently disadvantage women.

## Lagging Policies and Social Systems

Social programs such as EI, childcare and parental leave reinforce traditional gender roles (Criado-Perez, 2020). There is a mismatch between public programs and shifting social and labour values. The public systems reflect an old model of earning and caring based on the traditional unencumbered worker, which reinforces gender roles. Typically, the eligibility to social benefits are tied to full-time employment, which leaves many without access as employment models have evolved towards part-time, gig positions. Here is a brief overview on how existing policies perpetuate gender inequality:

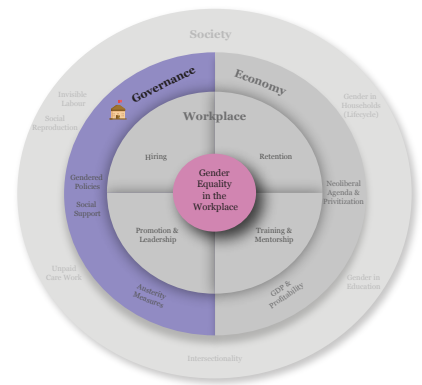


Figure 5: Governance system

## Employment Insurance (EI)

- EI is designed for the ideal worker who follows a set life course and is “based on the number of hours worked and attached to the labour market which privileges workers who have had secure long-term work” (Sommerfreund, 2017).
- EI only benefits those who qualify and neglects precarious workers, part-time, gig workers, micro workers, all of which are roles mostly held by women.

## Parental Leave

- Parental leave delivered under EI can be paid up to \$595 per week for a maximum of 40 weeks; however, on average, 40% of mothers are excluded from these benefits due to not meeting the eligibility criteria based on the number of hours worked and attachment to the labour market (Sommerfreund, 2017).

## Retirement Savings

- “Contributory schemes by the workplace are based on earnings over a period of time, as such, temporary earnings can lower overall pensions” (Sommerfreund, 2017). “Men are also more likely to benefit from RRSP and pension income splitting, despite women being more likely to be single parents, earn less income, and live longer” (Kaplan & Roy, 2020).

## Income Taxes

- “Gender-biased tax credits where tax expenditures are disproportionately distributed along gender lines with tax deductions, credits, breaks and loopholes. These special tax benefits are worth more to men with higher incomes than women, as women receive smaller dollar payoffs” (Kaplan & Roy, 2020). In the *Feminist Economic Recovery Plan for Canada* report, it was noted that men received 70.3% of \$52.3 billion in total personal income tax cuts made between 1997 and 2016 while women as a group received just 29.7% of that set of cuts.

## Summary

This governance system analysis explored the lack of government-provided social support and the use of GBA+ to develop gender-inclusive policies. A GBA+ lens should also be used to reevaluate existing policies and social systems that reinforce traditional gender roles. These inadvertently disadvantage women and impact their ability to participate in paid labour. The next system analysis explores how our economic systems and priorities oppress women.

## 03 ECONOMIC SYSTEM

**We are asking:** Who is the economy designed to benefit? How might we reduce the economic barriers to advance gender equality for women?

### Overview

Neoliberal policies discourage governments from investing in public infrastructure and social systems, opening up opportunities for the privatization of care (Faraday, 2020). Patriarchy and misogyny are fundamentally embedded in how our society is structured, how we find value, and how our government funds expenditures. As a result, social reproduction has shifted from being supported by the government, into the current commodification of care (Sommerfreund, 2017).

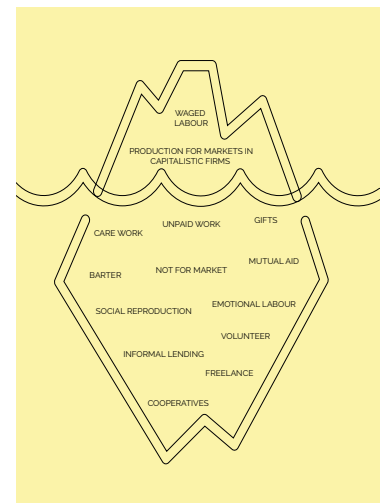
The privatization of care has led to the rise of a “post-mom” economy, with technologies and platforms being used to commodify the social reproduction work done by mothers. This is seen through the emergence of apps created by “tech-bros” that extend the maternal mandate to all forms of care: Uber (“Mom, drive me”), TaskRabbit (“Mom, clean my room”), and Doordash (“Mom, I’m hungry”). These apps create precarious forms of gig work that seem to escape recognition and continue to perpetuate the devaluation of social reproduction labour (Sharma, 2018).

### Modern Economic Priorities

“Modern capitalism has long rewarded the ideal worker and is obsessed with the productivity of waged labour while skipping over the unpaid work that makes it all possible. Mainstream economics does not just ignore the core economy; it also overlooks how much the paid economy depends on it” (Raworth, 2017).

*“The most important assumptions of a model are not in the equation, but what is not in them.” - John Sterman, systems thinker (Raworth, 2017)*

Gibson Graham’s “Economic Iceberg” shows how waged labour in a capitalist society is placed at the top, while a significant part remains invisible. “If we only value things that can be measured, we are blind to a whole ecosystem of value” (Catlow, Ferrari, Falconer, Drasin, & Coto, 2020). Fay Faraday (2021) noted that as long as we keep using flawed metrics to evaluate the health of our communities, we are going to have terrible self-defeating policies.



**Figure 6:** The Iceberg Model as described by J.K. Gibson Graham, redrawn by Bianca Elzenbaumer / Brave New Alps, 2018, CC by 2.0. (Catlow et al., 2020)

### Systemic Problems

#### Leaving the Informal Care Economy Behind

“We have inherited a way of thinking that reproductive labour and care work are not skilled forms of labour” (Catlow, Ferrari, Falconer, Drasin, & Coto, 2020). Unpaid work is not considered work, as it is a non-monetized good. The historic devaluation of caregiving leads to care work being unpaid and often undervalued and exploited. Oxfam International has “conservatively pegged the value of unpaid care work to be at \$10.8 trillion a year globally, which is more than three times the global tech industry” (Oxfam).

## Gender and Economic Inequality

Gender and economic inequality are inextricably linked: when unpaid care work increases, economic opportunities decrease (Grantham, Stefov, & Tiessen, 2019). Women will continue to be disproportionately held back if we do not redesign our systems that push legitimate work into invisibility.

*"There's a lot of growth that happens with work. And when women are told not to work, they will stop growing. The challenges that you get every day, meeting different people, their worldview, and, their skill level, it all stops growing." - Interviewee*

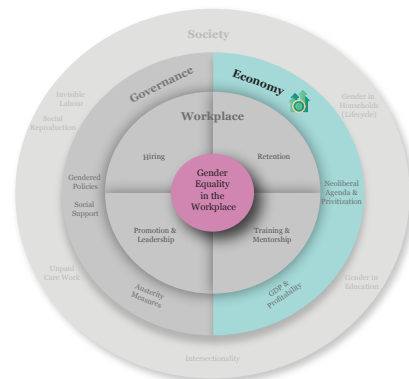


Figure 7: Economic system

## Missed Opportunities for Value Creation

The Global Compact Network noted "the business case for gender equality is to strengthen organizational performance, future proof business, and improve employee engagement and wellness" (Espinosa, 2020). According to McKinsey, gender diversity is correlated with profitability and value creation, as the most gender-diverse companies are 21% more likely to outperform on profitability (Hunt, Yee, Prince, & Dixon-Fyle, 2018).

"Employing women in the workforce also increases economic output and is a crucial avenue to improving GDP at the national level" (Goodman & Kaplan, 2019). A *Power of Parity* McKinsey report noted that Canada could add \$150 billion in incremental GDP (0.6% of GDP growth) in 2026 by tapping into women's potential to contribute to the Canadian economy and its business (Devillard et al., 2017). The economic case includes an increase in GDP and larger societal benefits, such as increased consumer spending and tax revenue, leading to more spending on social infrastructure to support social advancement, ultimately improving Canadians' quality of life.

## Gendered Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Feminist economist Armine Yalnizyan states that there is "no recovery without a she-recovery and no she-recovery without childcare" (Monsebraaten, 2020). The pandemic has highlighted how the government has not adequately prioritized childcare and eldercare services. As a result, women have had to pay the consequences by taking a step back from their careers to perform care work. Women are also at the frontlines of the pandemic, making up 81% of the healthcare and social assistance workforce (Kaplan & Roy, 2020). The unprecedented job loss during COVID-19 has wiped out generations of women's economic gains.

## Summary

This economic system analysis explored how neoliberal policies and our modern economic priorities oppress women, as unpaid care work does not have a monetary value that contributes to GDP and economic growth. Our economic policies leave the informal care economy behind and creates gender and economic inequality for women, as seen through the gendered impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The next system analysis explores how our social systems reinforce gender stereotypes that impact women's work and its value.

# 04 SOCIAL SYSTEM

**We are asking:** How do we change existing gender power dynamics to value women's work?

## Overview

Gender bias manifests itself differently in every situation and occurs differently at individual, organizational, and societal levels. It is also ingrained in both genders and experienced in all life stages. Caroline Criado-Perez defines this problem clearly in her book *The Invisible Woman*. She states the result of this deeply male-dominated culture is that "the male experience and perspective has come to be seen as universal, where the female is niche" (Criado-Perez, 2020).

*"Humanity is male, and man defines women not in herself, but as relative to him." Simone de Beauvoir, 1949 (Criado-Perez, 2020)*

## From the Cradle to the Workplace

### How Gender Stereotypes Follow Women

*"We are born with physiological sex, but we are not born with a gender. That is something ascribed to us by society, including religion, family, school and the economy. Our larger social context determines the gendered attributes that we are socialized into." - Sarah Kaplan (Kaplan, 2020)*

Although gender norms are slowly shifting, they are a widely recognized barrier to women's economic empowerment (Abbott & Mohapatra, 2019). This section uses a work life-cycle framework to explore the effects of social norms and biases at different points in a woman's life. People are socialized to conform to gender role expectations, and these social expectations and subtle messages lead to implicit biases that impact women throughout their lifetime.

### Learning Years: Role Modelling at Home

The gender gap starts in childhood when "girls are taught to be likeable, perfect and pleasing, while boys are encouraged to be strong, confident and brave" (Moon, 2019). This is reinforced at a young age when children learn gender roles through play (girls playing with dolls versus boys with superhero toys). These disparities in messaging contribute to deep gender biases. The result is that girls are more risk-averse and do not have the confidence to compete with boys due to social conditioning. "Parental views and household behaviours also shape children's perspective of gender and career aspirations" (Croft, Schmader, Block, & Baron, 2014). Children may be conditioned into their roles and accept unspoken gender boundaries that are modelled from their parents (Stein, 2016). It is the mother that predominantly does care work which is an expectation that is passed down throughout family systems.

*"I do more of the day-to-day housework, and my husband might do more of the larger renovations and manual work. This could be stemming from my upbringing. I'm used to doing these at home as a child, so it just comes kind of naturally." - Interviewee*



## Learning Years: Gender in Education

Education institutions have failed to acknowledge different learning styles between genders, which has been compounded by a lack of women represented in textbooks and faculty (Stein, 2016). As a result, gender bias in education leads to gendered paths with self-fulfilling prophecies where women experience constrained career choices. There is also an issue of teaching the brilliance bias to boys, as many female geniuses have been written out of history, leading boys to not see women as naturally brilliant. The belief that boys are more brilliant is hard to correct once it is learned as a child, and it further perpetuates in the workforce (Criado-Perez, 2020). Research has also shown that women earn most post-secondary degrees in the US, yet they must work four extra months to make what their white male colleague earned in the same year (Bennett & Blumenstein, 2018).

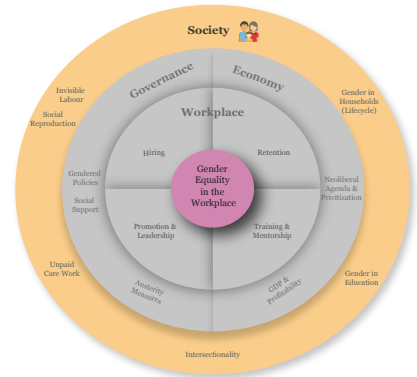


Figure 8: Social system

These gender biases seep into the earning years in multiple ways. First off, it creates self-serving bias and attributions, which can be seen through what happens when men and women succeed. Men would say, "I'm awesome," and women would say, "I'm lucky" (Moon, 2019). "Having self-limited aspirations also creates a psychological glass ceiling, where women undervalue their ability" (Diehl, 2020). This can manifest in several ways: women are uncomfortable talking about money, asking for raises, and are more careful with budgets.

*"Men are way more aggressive and they don't care if they don't meet half of the requirements of the job description. Male candidates are just overly confident, they're not afraid. I feel like they've also not never been told no, whereas women have been told no and they're much more abiding to rules." - Interviewee*

*"On our hiring pages, you'll see that we have a statement that says even if you don't hit all of the requirements, apply anyway. We know that women will often not apply when they don't hit 100%. So it's little nudges that helps." - Interviewee*

## Earning Years: Gender in Households and Its Impact on the Work/Life Cycle

Gender stereotypes matter for economic outcomes. A Harvard implicit bias test shows that nearly 80% of people have some bias by associating women with family and men with career and business (Kaplan, 2020). The patriarchal social norms determine what women can and cannot do and influence the value of jobs and wages more than an individual's personal career choice (Gender Wage Gap Strategy Steering Committee, 2016).

*"Gender norms reinforce misogyny and inequality. We exist in a gendered economy in which women are assumed to owe men sex, care and unpaid housework." - Kate Manne (Weigel, 2017)*

*"The biggest barriers that I've seen are self-imposed. I tell myself that because I am a woman, I cannot do this, as I haven't seen it done before. These implicit biases are developed due to the way I was socialized and raised, and modelled from my parents. As a woman, you are married to your glass ceiling." - Interviewee*

# Systemic Problems

## Gender Binary

Feminist work has always been about challenging the gender binary, and some feminist scholars say that “if you see a binary, it usually hides a hierarchy” (Varon, 2020). In society, there tends to be a false binary between reason and emotion, where reason is coded as male and valuable, and women are stereotypically more emotional and devalued. We need to escape the heteronormative gender binary and stop prescribing beliefs and expectations on individuals regardless of their gender (Varon, 2020).



Photo by Anna Shvets from Pexels

## Invisible Social Reproduction & Emotional Labour

*"Social reproduction marks the unwaged labour of cleaning, cooking, raising children, but also the expectations of feminized care, comfort, and sex that make men's waged work possible." - Silvia Federici (Federici, Richards, 2018)*

Capitalism has diminished the capacity for social reproduction which has resulted in the current crisis of care. The tension between capital (earnings) and care (social reproduction) is inherent in our current society (Fraser, 2016). The most under-acknowledged or invisible form of labour is emotional labour, which refers to the jobs that require people to manage others' feelings at the expense of their own (Aggarwal-Schifellite, 2019).

## Unpaid Care Work

Social norms constrain women's mobility and time. Research shows that women still do most of the unpaid care work, irrespective of the portion of the household income they bring (Criado-Perez, 2020). On average, in Canada, “women spend 1.6 times the amount of time on unpaid care work than men” (Faraday, 2020). Globally, it is three times more than men (Hutt, 2020). There is an urgent need to address the four R's of care work: to recognize, reduce, redistribute, and share care responsibility (Grantham, Stefov, & Tiessen, 2019).



*"There are a lot of compromises while raising a young child, and your needs are different as a woman, than a man. Men often don't have to do any household duties or look after the kids, their responsibilities don't change much. Whereas for women, they're very tied to the way the kids are growing up. And if you can't afford daycare, then you'll have to stay at home. The needs for women, because of their involvement in childbearing, keep changing at different stages of their lives." - Interviewee*

Women hold multiple burdens: the economic burden of waged labour, the reproductive burden of care work, and the productive burden of household work. As a result, women's paid and unpaid care work combines into longer workdays than men's. "Time famine for women shapes their career choices and pushes women out of work" (Kaplan, 2020). It limits women's capacity to engage in paid work, with less flexibility and mobility to work and upskill. A PEW research study found that 42% of mothers reduced their work hours for care duties while only 28% of fathers do (Parker, 2015).

*"I've seen women struggle with depression because you know all your life you are trained and you went to the same college as your husband, but because they had to raise kids, they have to stand back. It takes a huge mental toll to see, a person who was your peer, to see them go higher and higher, and you're just waiting." - Interviewee*

## Summary

This social system analysis explored how gender norms follow women through their learning years to their earning years. This cradle to the workplace analysis reviews how role modelling at home and gender socialization in education impacts how women work. Traditional gender norms lead women to take on more unpaid care work, invisible social reproduction, and emotional labour which hinders women's ability to participate in the paid workforce. The next section explores the interactions and dynamics between the workplace, governance, economic and social systems.

# HOW DO THE SYSTEMS INTERACT?

After review of the four systems, this section explores the interrelationships between the workplace, governance, economic, and social systems and how they all influence women's economic participation and prosperity. **Influence mapping** allows us to identify and capture the important relationships or influences between the elements of each system. It provides a systemic view of the context within which women's work is situated.

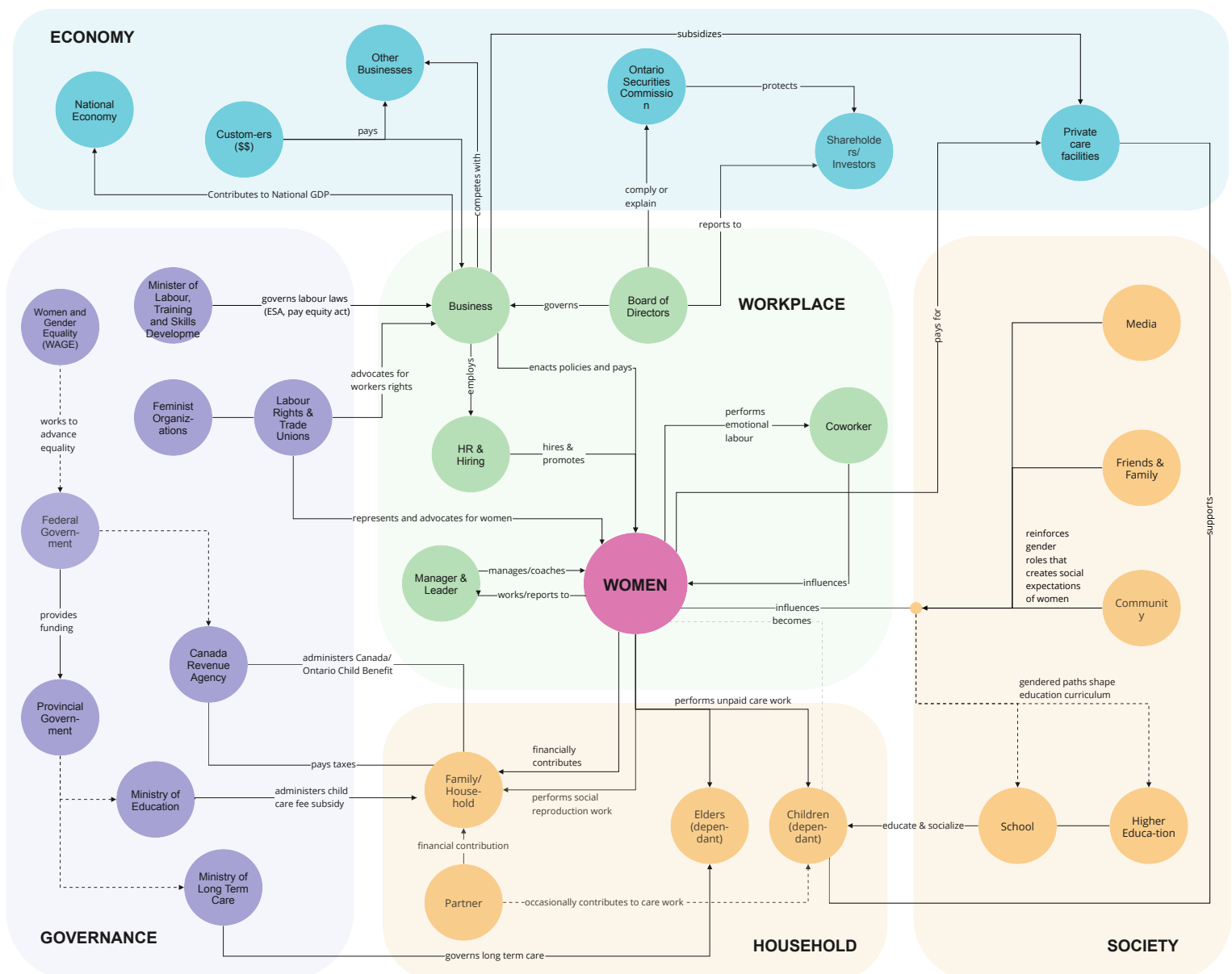


Figure 9: Systems map of women's work

When reviewing the influence map, women in the workplace are situated in the middle of the map; the workplace system (in green) shows the different influences that workplace policies, reporting and governance structures, relationships, and culture have on women. The social system (in orange) is broken down into the household and society. The household is fully dependent on the women for social reproductive labour to maintain the family and care for dependents. Society influences social expectations of women at work and children through education. The governance system (in purple) supports the household through the provision of care that alleviates women's burden, allowing them to participate in the paid workforce. It also governs labour laws that protect employees from discrimination. Lastly, the economy (in blue) influences how for-profit businesses operate, with influences from their shareholders, customers, and competitors. The influence map reinforce the following insights:

- Social reproductive work in the **household** significantly influences a woman's ability to participate in the paid workforce. Solely focusing on the workplace will not contribute to gender equality efforts without changing the expectations of women to perform unpaid care work.
- Our **society** (including but not limited to our community, media, family, and friends) reinforces gender roles that create social expectations for women. These expectations influence how and when women can participate in the paid workforce and shapes our education curriculum which socializes children to conform to the status quo.
- Our provincial and federal **governments** are power influencers that can support households through the provision of childcare and eldercare. The extent of support from governments directly impacts women's capacity for economic participation.
- A business's success largely depends on how the **market economy** is receptive to its offerings; hence consumers have significant leverage in shaping how businesses operate. The economy also functions to maximize economic growth and productivity and does so at the expense of undervaluing social reproductive work that women perform.

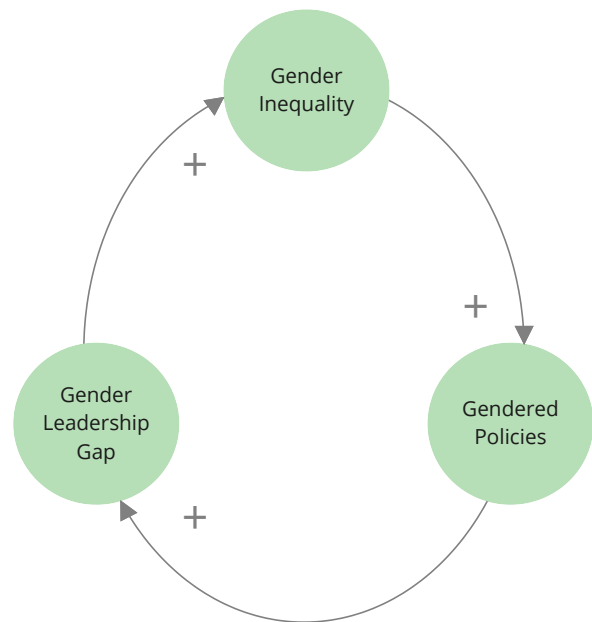
## WHAT ARE THE SYSTEM DYNAMICS?

The influence map provides a high-level understanding of the interrelationships and influences of the four systems that impact women's work. This section dives deeper into specific system dynamics at play and reveals some of the barriers and leverage points to change within the system. These **causal loops** demonstrate the relationships and causality between the workplace, governance, economic, and social systems. The following causal loops explore how our current workplace design and remedies perpetuate gender inequality, how our households and society are structured to reinforce gender norms, and how the lack of a national childcare policy ultimately hinders economic growth.

## Workplace Designed for the Default Male ►

Gender inequality perpetuates the problem with the default male, as our traditional workplaces are designed for the unencumbered worker. "This design failure leads to career penalties and pay gaps for women, as the workplace is designed for the household where someone works for pay, and another who does unpaid care work" (Kaplan, 2020). The default male continues to create gendered policies to perpetuate the 24/7 work culture, face-time recognition, after-work networking, etc. These inherently increase promotion opportunities for men, leading more men to leadership positions and setting up those with care duties for failure.

As a result, women will continue to be left behind unless the workplace is redesigned to accommodate women's needs, with a commitment for diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). More women and people of colour in leadership positions will also drive positive change towards more equitable workplace policies and structures.

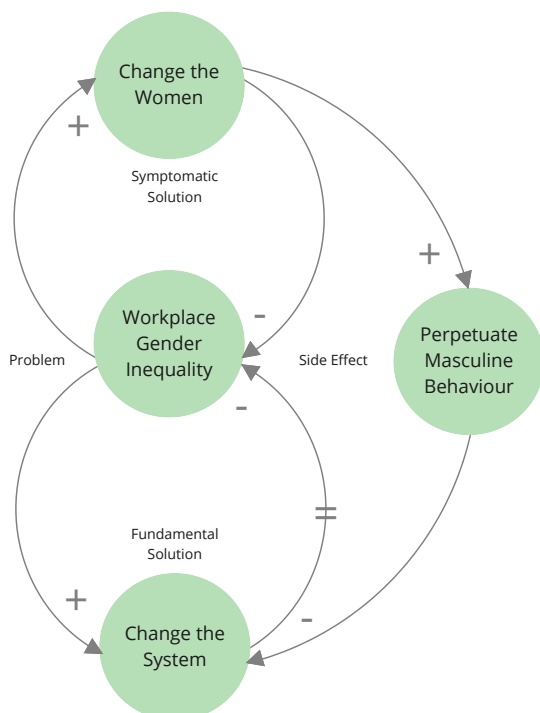


**Figure 10:** Causal loop for Workplace Designed for the Default Male

## Shifting The Burden -

### ◀ Fix The Women, Not The System

"Many workplaces are empowering women to lean in, to speak up, and be assertive. This, however, doesn't fix the systemic issue. It suggests that women can reduce gender inequality by overcoming internal barriers like lack of confidence or risk-aversion. These prompts are problematic as it places the burden of change on women instead of the offending group" (Kaplan, 2020).



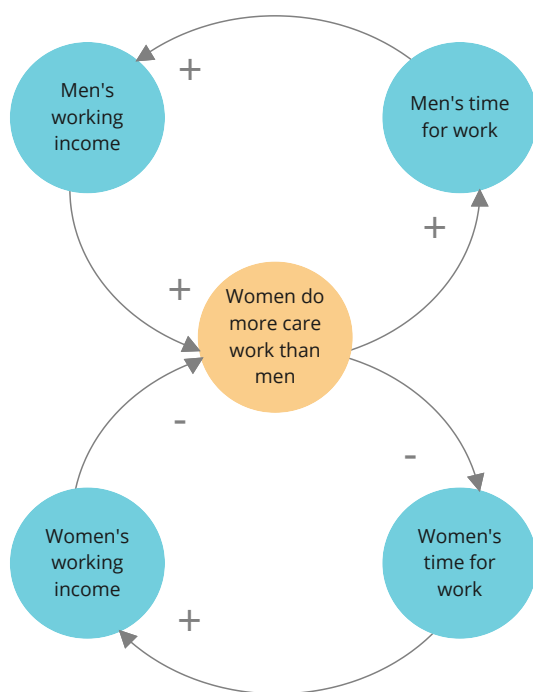
**Figure 11:** Causal loop for Shifting the Burden archetype

This system archetype illustrates the short-term solution of "fixing the women" that shifts the burden on women to develop traditional masculine behaviours to fit into the workplace. These solutions will not support gender equality in the workplace unless DEI commitment is put towards changing actual policies and structures. Instead of telling women to speak up, workplaces should tell men to listen and make space for all voices to be heard.

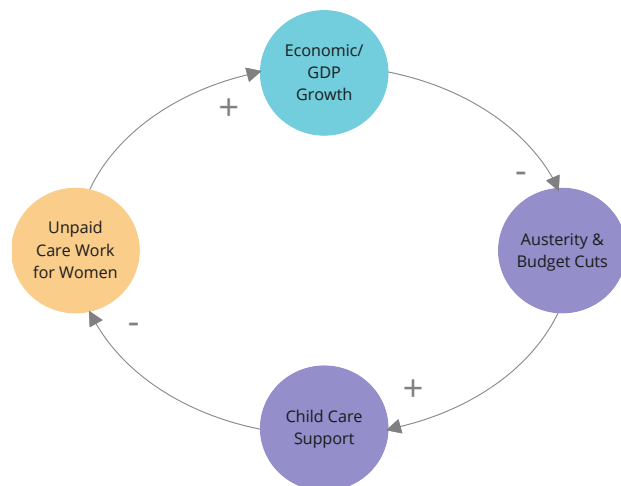
## Success to the Successful - Women's Wages are Secondary ▼

Women perform more care work than men, and their income is typically lower than men's. This pushes women out of their career trajectory as their home situation requires them to do care work, so the household's higher income earner can work more to make more money. Sarah Kaplan (2020) noted that "women don't opt out of work because their male partners earn more; men make more when female partners opt-out."

When women take on more unpaid care work, it allows men to have more time for work, increasing their pay due to the hourly wage premium (Kaplan, 2020). During the COVID-19 pandemic, a significant number of women left the workforce for childcare duties. This impacts their ability to increase earnings at work, thus perpetually putting them in the secondary income earner's role. For women to participate in the paid workforce, households need to "share the care" and distribute care duties equally.



**Figure 12:** Causal loop for Success to the Successful archetype



**Figure 13:** Causal loop for Childcare Policy Pays for Itself

## ▲ National Childcare Policy Pays For Itself

During economic downturns, austerity measures often lead to budget cuts for childcare, community services, and other types of care services. Reduced public provision of childcare services results in women filling in the gaps to perform unpaid care work, by taking a leave of absence from waged labour to fulfil care duties. As a result, there is a negative impact on GDP and economic growth by restricting their ability to perform paid work. This causal loop illustrates that investment in a national childcare policy does not only alleviate women's unpaid care burden, but it also has positive impacts to economic growth as every public dollar invested in childcare leads to increased returns.

In April 2021, the [Federal 2021 budget](#) was released which lays out an expansive jobs and growth plan that is very much a feminist plan. After 50 years of deliberation, the government finally proposed a national childcare system that includes \$30 billion over five years and \$8.3 billion ongoing for early learning and childcare, with a goal of an average fee of \$10 per day for child care by 2026 (Government of Canada, 2021).

# WHAT IS CAUSING THIS?

## CAUSAL LAYERED ANALYSIS

After reviewing the influences and the dynamics within the system, this section dives deeper to review the roots of gender inequality in the workplace using Sohail Inayatullah's Causal Layered Analysis (CLA). The CLA explores the underlying causes and worldviews that contribute to a situation by uncovering the powerful, metaphorical motivations that we believe. It consists of the following layers of analysis (Inayatullah, 2008):

- **Litany:** what is the common understanding (daily headlines) of the problem?
- **Causes:** what are the deeper systems that sustain the problem?
- **Worldview:** what are the paradigms and cultures that feed the problem?
- **Metaphors:** what image depicts the problem (deep stories held and often unconscious)?

### Litany

- Gender wage gap (87 cents on the dollar of men)
- Women's voice is devalued in the workplace
- Lack of women in leadership and board positions
- Women disproportionately impacted by the pandemic due to unpaid care work
- Women work less as they take on more part-time, precarious work for flexibility to do care work

### Causes

- The shift from state-supported care to the commodification of care (women picking up care work as they are priced out)
- Gender bias, sexism, and discrimination create workplaces for the default male
- Care work is invisible and not value. Care does not contribute to GDP and economic growth

### Worldviews

- Patriarchal capitalism and neoliberalism (trickle-down economics)
- Gender norms assigned at birth, with women as the primary caregiver (women's wage is secondary to household)
- Men are born to lead, and women are born to follow

### Metaphors

- "Women's place is at home"
- "Women are the default caregiver"
- "Women are the weaker sex"

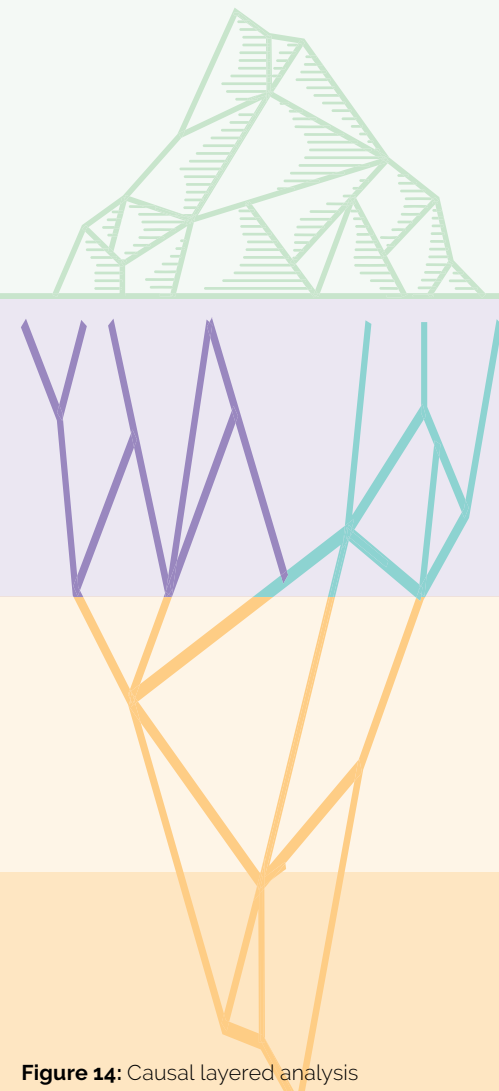


Figure 14: Causal layered analysis

# PART 1 SUMMARY

**Part 1 of the report** explored the past and present of women's work. It provided a systemic understanding of how our workplace, governance, economic, and social systems impact women in the paid workforce. Systems thinking tools were used to reveal existing system dynamics, casualties, and deep-held metaphors and worldviews that influence women's economic participation and prosperity.

**Part 2 of the report** explores the future of women's work. It aims to provoke new thinking by identifying key trends that will shape the future of work, and explores how our current systems can be transformed to create different visions of the future, with varying impacts of how women's labour is valued by society. The section concludes by reviewing insights that are generated by the scenarios that help us design our preferred future where women can fully participate in the workplace and be valued for their contributions.

## PART 2

### 05 ENVISIONING THE FUTURE where can we go



# WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF WORK?

The coming decade will bring significant changes to the nature of work, including **what is work, how and where we work, and by whom work will be done**. The pandemic has accelerated digital transformation beyond anything we could have imagined. These technological advances along with demographic shifts, social movements, and political factors are leading to the emergence of new employment systems that will impact us all (Abbott & Mohapatra, 2019).

Although the future of work discussion has caught global attention, it is, however, often **gender-blind**. Whether it is centered on robots, digitization and the gig economy, demographic changes, demand for digital skills or the care crisis, all of these circumstances have specific implications for women (Florito, Sanfeliu, & Aneja, 2020). We need to look at how these trends may impact women and how they might intersect with existing systemic barriers to either help or further hinder women's economic empowerment (Abbott & Mohapatra, 2019).

## Automation and Work

An RBC report revealed that more than 25% of Canadian jobs will be heavily disrupted by technology in the coming decade, and 50% of occupations will require workers to undergo a significant skills overhaul (RBC, 2018). In Canada, occupations that are at high risk of being impacted include office support, service roles, industrial, electrical and construction trade, and salespeople. Although men and women both face automation-related job transformation (Frenette & Frank, 2020), women face more barriers to learning new skills to accommodate these changes as they perform the majority of the unpaid care work, and have less time and flexibility to upskill. On a global level, McKinsey projects that by 2030, as many as 160 million women will need to make significant transitions between occupations, often into higher skilled roles. However, women face systemic barriers that could impact their ability to successfully make these transitions (Abbott & Mohapatra, 2019).

*"At first glance, it looks like men and women are running the same race into the age of automation, but while the distance may be similar, women are running with a weight around each ankle." - World Economic Forum (Hutt, 2020)*

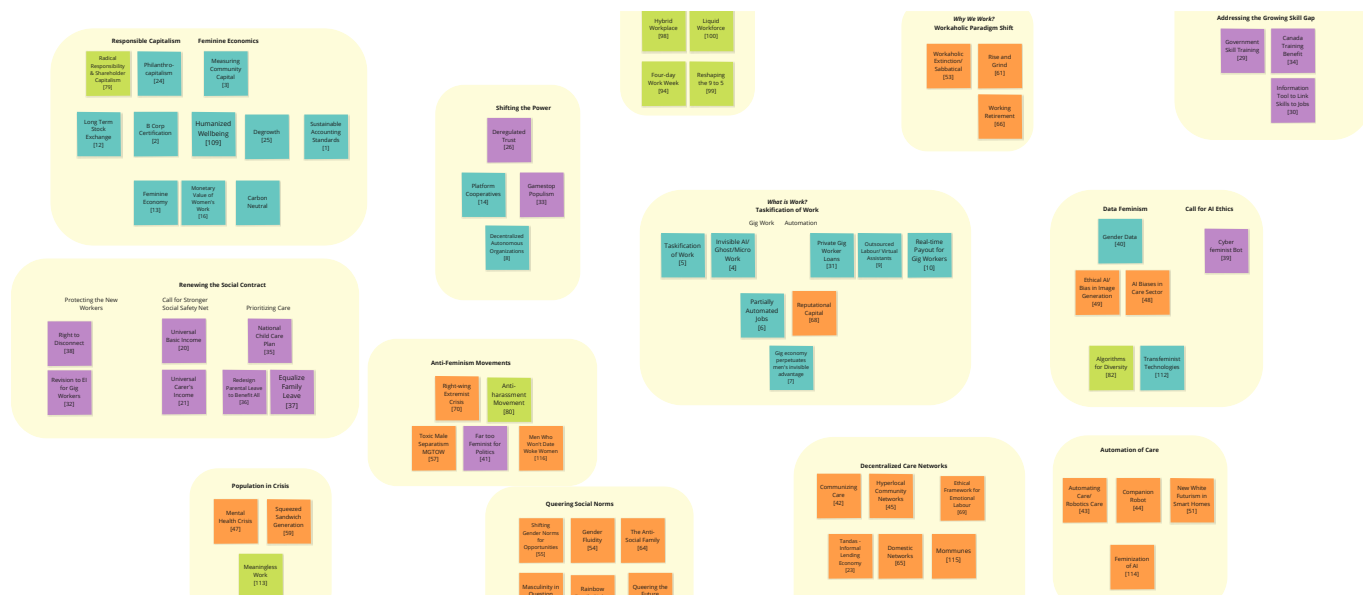
## The Future of Care Work

"While care work as a form of social reproduction has been a central point of study by gender studies scholars, it has remained underexplored in relation to the Fourth Industrial Revolution and its impact on the future of work" (Mishra, 2020). New technologies are expected to displace many jobs, yet care work involves skills that are not likely to be automated. In fact, the care sector will be one of the largest growing areas of work with the aging population and is the most female dominated sector of the economy. The care economy is a key area in the future of work discussion and presents an opportunity to increase visibility and value to work predominantly done by women.

# GENDERED HORIZON SCAN

This section places a **gender lens on the future of work discussion**. This is not intended to be a comprehensive overview of the future of work, nor is it meant to be a prediction of the future. Rather, it is meant to spark exploratory thinking and considerations of how emerging trends can impact the future of work and women. The act of scanning is the foundation of strategic foresight. It represents the process of searching for signals of change and its implications to the area of investigation.

A comprehensive horizon scan was conducted on the domain of work and women's work which generated 120 signals that were reviewed using a gendered lens. Signals were then correlated to **18 key trends and drivers of change** for the future of work for women. These trends were further classified underneath the various systems identified in Part 1: workplace, governance, economy, and social. Furthermore, the economic system was expanded to include environmental trends as they also have significant impacts on women's work over the next 20 years.



**Figure 15:** Thematic groupings of signals into trends using the Miro whiteboard tool

This horizon scan identified the following key trends shaping the current and future state of work for women. It is important to note that these trends will have varying impacts to different groups of workers that occupy different industries and classes.

System	Trend/ Change Driver		Description
Workplace	1	Employee Activism for Corporate Social Justice	Workers are advocating for better rights and accountability for racial and gender justice
	2	Flexible & Liquid Workforce	Reshaping traditional work with a flexible, liquid, and global remote workforce

System	Trend/ Change Driver		Description
Workplace	3	Humanizing Virtual Work	Humanizing remote work to decrease negative work from home impacts
	4	Employee Surveillance	Remote management practices using tattletale workplace surveillance
	5	Workaholic Paradigm Shift	Finding meaning and joy through regular sabbaticals to balance working retirement
Governance	6	Lifelong Learning to Close the Skills Gap	Workers will need to routinely upskill and reskill due to automation and displacement of work
	7	Call to Renew the Social Contract	Growing need to protect the new worker, create a stronger social safety net, and prioritize care
	8	Data Feminism & Ethical AI	Addressing the gender data gap to create responsible, feminist technologies
Economy	9	Human-AI Augmentation	Collaborations between AI and humans may displace or augment work
	10	"Gigification" and Automation of Work	Combination of gig work and automation could create new structural realities for work
	11	Shifting the Power in the Digital Economy	Using the power of technology and collective intelligence to build equitable alternatives
Environment	12	"Responsible" Capitalism	Towards new economic paradigms based on feminist principles of care, sustainability, and collaboration
	13	Climate Catastrophe	Severe climate disruptions lead to an influx of climate refugees and resource wars
Society	14	Population in Crisis	Tackling a mental health and care crisis that is exacerbated by the pandemic
	15	Anti-feminist Movements	Counter movements against feminism led by men who think they are the true victims of gender bias
	16	Queering Social Norms	Fundamental transformations to how we think about gender and family
	17	Decentralized Care Networks	Communizing care through mutual aid and hyperlocal social networks
	18	Partial Automation of Care	Care is on the cusp of unprecedented change with potential for partial automation

**Table 2:** List of trends and change drivers

# Employee Activism for Corporate Social Justice

*Workers are advocating for better rights and accountability for racial and gender justice*

## Overview

The pandemic is paving the way to a new era of employee activism that is transforming the workplace, especially amongst young, part-time gig workers (MacLellan, 2020). As working lives become increasingly precarious, workers have been rediscovering the benefits of collective action (Ro, 2020). Recent years have also highlighted the anti-Indigenous and anti-Black racism that is prevalent in Canada. This is pressuring companies to commit to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives as long-term investments beyond performative acts (Plummer & Saska, 2021).

## Implications

Similar to millennials, Gen Z wants purpose-driven employers, valuing sustainable business practices that give back to communities (Moran, 2019). Employees are holding companies accountable to operate ethically, improve working conditions, and be mindful of the impact their products and services have on all stakeholders. Power systems within organizations may shift to acknowledge institutional racism and colonial practices, addressing privilege, and shifting leadership structures (Solnit, 2021). DEI initiatives may be raised as a top-line agenda item with transparency and metrics that hold leaders accountable. Millennial and Gen Z professionals are avoiding companies without a diverse workforce; DEI is no longer a preference but is a requirement (Miller, 2021).



Photo by Kelly Lacy from Pexels

## Signals

- Companies' public statements and commitments to fight racism are not reflective of what their employees experience, causing widespread reactions and calls for accountability beyond corporate social responsibility (CSR). We are now entering the age of corporate social justice that "reframes CSR to center the focus of any initiative or program on measurable, lived experiences of marginalized groups" (Zheng, 2020).
- Google's new Alphabet Workers Union welcomes contractors and temporary workers, and seeks to influence social issues (Marshall, 2021).
- Significant increase in workplace DEI initiatives, support for Black-owned business, and growing demand for Indigenous-authored content (Brookfield Institute, 2021).
- Chief Diversity Officer is the most in demand and toughest job (Diversity Social, 2021).

## Gendered Implications

To ensure sustained progress, employees are building collective power to advocate for workplace gender and racial equality both within existing institutions and their communities. They are also lobbying for changes to government regulation on issues such as workers' rights in the gig economy, which is made up of 9% of female workers (vs. 7% of men) (Statistics Canada, 2019). Feminism has also been energized during the Trump years and #MeToo movement, with more people fighting for intersectional women's rights and pressure to promote more women and diverse groups into leadership and board positions.

# Flexible & Liquid Workforce

*Reshaping traditional work with a flexible, liquid, and global remote workforce*

## Overview

Physical work offices may be a thing of the past for white collar workers, as the pandemic has accelerated the adoption of remote work and borderless teams. More organizations are adopting hybrid workforce models and moving away from legacy work practices by engaging and recruiting liquid workforces<sup>1</sup> that can shift gears instantaneously to adapt to dynamic market needs (TalentDesk.io, 2018). Work will be regarded as a thing people do, rather than a place people go. The measurement of work may increasingly become about outcome, rather than input.

## Implications

Some employers may create distributed offices as a result of the urban exodus, where workers are moving out of city centres in search of more space. There will also be increased opportunities for employers to outsource work to lower cost jurisdictions, creating unintended consequences to the Canadian employment and tax base (Levitt, 2020). In order to effectively operationalize hybrid workforces, where some employees work in the office or from home, organizations will require a redesign of structure, workflow, and roles. Increased work location flexibility will be enabled by shifting to outcome-based principles and an agile workforce that work around projects, rather than function.

<sup>1</sup> Liquid workforce - to organize and shape teams that are able to rapidly adapt and change depending on the environment



Photo by Anna Shvets from Pexels

## Signals

- Large tech companies, such as Shopify and Salesforce, have transitioned to "work from anywhere" models (Cheng, 202) (Paul, 2021).
- Facebook's Reality Labs is developing an AR/VR tool to "teleport" people into their workplaces (Kiran, 2021).
- 72% of US employees want to work remotely at least two days per week, with 32% preferring to never go to the office (PwC) (Insight, 2021).
- Canada could achieve a four-day work week if workers can increase their productivity (Dawson, 2020).

## Gendered Implications

Some experts believe that flexible work is an equalizer for women, allowing them to maintain full-time jobs during their caregiving years. Furthermore, remote work allows organizations to hire without geographic limitations, casting a wider net that can foster more diversity. However, work from home can create work/family conflict and accelerate inequality by further reducing access to informal in-person networking opportunities (Ibarra et al., 2020). Hybrid workplaces must be designed without unintentionally penalizing those who work from home by not having the same level of access to information and opportunities that are only presented in-person.



# Humanizing Virtual Work

*Humanizing remote work to decrease negative work from home impacts*

## Overview

Remote work creates screen fatigue, mental health, and ergonomic issues. The lack of human connection, especially with our co-workers can cause people to feel isolated and lonely, leading to depression and other health issues (Hazlegreaves, 2020). Some employees may feel the need to work longer hours than those in the office to prove that they can be as productive at home. As the lines between personal and professional life erode, people are struggling to separate responsibilities and create concrete boundaries between work and home. Employees will need tools to keep sane and engaged.

## Implications

The lack of social interaction and prolonged screen time may create long-term negative impacts on some workers' mental health. To humanize the workforce, employers may need to significantly invest in mental wellbeing programs as a direct response to digital-induced burnout (Robinson, 2021). Mandatory offline time, along with minimum vacation requirements and wellness stipends, can protect workers from system overload.



Photo by energypic.com from Pexels

## Signals

- Constant video chat meetings are more draining than in-person conversations. A Stanford study finds that a women's experience with Zoom fatigue is 13.8% higher compared with men due to self-focused attention, which is a heightened awareness of how one comes across in a conversation (Wilson, 2021)
- Chiropractors report a surge in problems as millions of workers have spent months working in non-optimal WFH set-ups (Wilser, 2020).
- Adding a "fake commute" while working from home could help mental health (Cassata, 2020).
- Rise in toxic productivity, a term for unhealthy compulsion to work and the pressure to over-achieve during quarantine (The Economist, 2021)..

## Gendered Implications

Women are more likely to have compounded mental health impacts due to multiple burdens and the disproportionate amounts of unpaid care work. To humanize virtual work by placing employee wellbeing at the forefront, employers need to provide flexible work arrangements that do not penalize women for taking time off for mental health or care duties. Employers need to avoid the pitfall of providing "flexibility" while still expecting the same amount of work to be done under the same timelines. True flexibility means actually listening to your employees and cultivating an environment that meets their individuals needs, so they can thrive emotionally and intellectually.

# Employee Surveillance

*Remote management practices using tattletware workplace surveillance*

## Overview

Remote management practices are used to keep teams on track when they are in remote environments, and can help employers better support remote teams (Forbes Expert Panel, 2020). There is an increase in use of monitoring software and digital surveillance tools to track minute-by-minute activities of employees. These may include tracking browsing history, monitoring how long an employee spends on writing emails, tallying keystrokes and mouse activity, etc. (Slaughter, 2020).

## Implications

Some employers may be using this type of "tattletware" for workplace surveillance to maximize remote work efficiencies, however not all employers use it for that purpose. Some may just need detailed information for billing requirements to justify how many hours are worked by remote employees to charge clients. Using technology to measure employees' happiness may also help managers better understand how employees are feeling and coping with work. This could set new norms for surveillance and privacy, where tools are constantly used to monitor how people work (Slaughter, 2020).



## Signals

- Microsoft's Productivity Score aims to provide visibility into employees' experience so businesses can improve remote work efficiency. The score shows how much employees are using tools, and how to improve the team experience (Carter, 2021).
- India's happiness audits use interactive chatbots to ascertain the mood of employees (Kohli, 2020).
- Moodbeam allows employers to track the emotional state and wellbeing of remote teams (Bearne, 2021).
- People are hiring productivity nannies to watch them work so they can achieve meaningful work through facilitated "deep focus" Zoom sessions (Hunt, 2020).

## Gendered Implications

Using digital surveillance is the equivalent of facetime tracking in the physical workplace. In traditional workplaces, being able to see who is working overtime and how long they stay at the office is proof of how dedicated and hardworking an employee is, which may impact professional development opportunities, promotions, and pay. Using remote tracking tools to monitor an employee's time doing work can negatively affect women as they may be frequently interrupted by children while working from home or have care duties to attend to during working hours.

# Workaholic Paradigm Shift

*Finding meaning and joy through regular sabbaticals to balance working retirement*

## Overview

Individuals are questioning their long-held assumptions and reevaluating personal priorities to focus on family, friends, and hobbies. Routine sabbaticals are slowly emerging for certain professions, taken every few years to enjoy life rather than at the end of a career. Some people are also putting off retirement as they may choose to work longer due to the relief given by these sabbaticals. On the other hand, others may need to work longer due to a lack of retirement savings driven by neoliberal austerity agendas that have stripped funding from both public and corporate pensions (Faraday, 2021). This may shift society's approach to work, as individuals prioritize meaning and breaks throughout their long careers (Brookfield Institute, 2021).

## Implications

The values placed on professional aspirations and our relationship with work are shifting. Individuals may be happier with fewer hours of work, less income, and new work norms (Fukada & Bedford, 2019). The workplace may need to be redesigned to encourage employees to take regular sabbaticals without work penalties. Furthermore, workplaces will need to tackle age discrimination as more people will work beyond traditional retirement years.



Photo by Anna Shvets from Pexels

## Signals

- According to McKinsey, 41% of individuals in advanced economies did not save for retirement. As Canada's population ages, its labour pool will work beyond retirement age (Brookfield Institute, 2021).
- More companies in the United States are offering their employees sabbaticals to pursue their personal interests (Gourani, 2020).
- More Canadians are choosing to put off retirement as it can be isolating and lonely, and can lead to a loss of purpose and identity. Organizational solutions to keep employees working longer include occupational health programs, workplace enhancements, addressing ageism, and pension changes (Brown, 2020).

## Gendered Implications

This workaholic paradigm shift changes how we work, rest, and retire. This creates opportunities for employers to design more accessible work arrangements and to tailor incentives and compensation to various needs. This may include regular sabbaticals, older employees working through retirement, and women taking leave for care duties. Workaholicism is a patriarchal construct that values the number of hours worked; to shift this paradigm is to create more empathetic and compassionate arrangements that work for everyone. As a result, employers will need to review existing performance management systems to recognize and measure the value of work that is based on output, rather than hours worked.



# Lifelong Learning to Close the Skills Gap

*Workers will need to routinely upskill and reskill due to automation and displacement of work*

## Overview

As technological innovations develop faster, workers will need to constantly upskill to keep up with changing work requirements (Horton, 2020). The labour market is changing rapidly and more than half of Canadian workers will require a skills overhaul in the next decade (Murphy, 2021). Effective training and skills programs will be central to helping workers transition to new roles.

## Implications

Canadian workers need a comprehensive resource that links training programs to skills that are required for jobs in the age of automation. This resource could help individuals understand the skills needed for future work and help them find the training that best aligns with their career goals (Bonen & Oschinski, 2021). Micro-learning and micro-credentials will provide short, knowledge-based learning opportunities that are focused on specific future skill-set requirements (Murphy, 2021). Workplaces may use AI-powered adaptive learning to meet workers' needs and increase engagement. This form of personalized learning is done by analyzing the behaviours of learners, what courses they have interacted with the most, and their preferred format for learning (Weir, 2019).



Photo by Mikael Kristenson on Unsplash

## Signals

- The Ontario government pledges \$37M to provide "in-demand" skills training for roles in technology, advanced manufacturing, truck driving, construction, and horticulture (Tsekouras, 2020).
- Canada Training Benefit is a tax credit to help pay for training (Government of Canada, 2019).
- RBC's Upskill is a personalized career tool that anyone can access. It provides career recommendations that match an individual's skills to the jobs of tomorrow (RBC, 2021).

## Gendered Implications

Although men and women both face automation-related job transformation (Frenette & Frank, 2020), women face more barriers to learning new skills. Many women do not have the flexibility and time to upskill due to unpaid care duties. There are opportunities to design better programs to address the skills gap that can help women upskill during job displacement or maternity leave.

# Call to Renew the Social Contract

*Growing need to protect the new worker, create a stronger social safety net, and prioritize care*

## Overview

Canada must renew its social contract to give everyone the opportunity to live a dignified, secure life. Many workers, especially women, are falling through the cracks of our ill-fitting social architecture due to rising inequality, growing unpaid care duties, and an employment standard that does not protect non-traditional workers. Universal basic income (UBI) could help alleviate rising income inequality (Canadian Women's Foundation, 2020), with some arguing that there should be an additional universal caregivers income due to our rapidly ageing society. Due to the growing need for care work, women are looking for more flexible work arrangements which may result in more precarious part-time work.

## Implications

The pandemic has reaffirmed the need for a national public childcare plan. Also, there is a strong economic case for increased social services as they could create new employment income, boost labour force participation, and increase quality of life. Canada could also redesign parental leave systems to enhance gender equality and effectively support both parents while they are taking care of their children (Doucet, Mathieu, & McKay, 2021).



## Signals

- Canadian Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) to transition to employment insurance with new benefits for gig workers (Lim, 2020).
- EU pushes for "right to disconnect" creating new rules for the new work realities of work (Deutsche Welle, 2020).
- Finland has equalized family leave, granting seven months of paid leave to each parent (Wamsley, 2020).
- Some advocates of UBI contend that the gradual conversion of the CERB into UBI is a logical progression (Karimi, 2021). The Government of British Columbia released its expert panel assessment of the feasibility of a basic income pilot in BC. The panel recommended changes to existing social programs instead of pursuing a basic income pilot (BC Gov, 2021).

## Gendered Implications

The pandemic has exposed how systemic discrimination is structurally embedded in our societies. These systems leave many women and people of colour behind, keeping them in poverty or pushing them into precarious work so that they can take care of their children or elderly family members. Systems of oppression like poverty and patriarchy are intertwined, and women often bear the brunt of poverty in Canada (Canadian Women's Foundation, 2020). The government should create employment standards to protect the new worker, and build a strong social safety net through income subsidies, care programs, and parental leave. This will reduce women's poverty and enable them to participate and flourish in the workforce.

# Data Feminism & Ethical AI

*Addressing the gender data gap to create responsible, feminist technologies*

## Overview

The gender data gap is caused by the under-representation of women and people of colour in data sets. Organizations, such as [Data2X](#) mobilizes action for gender data. The increased use of AI, big data, and machine learning will only amplify biases within predictive technologies. Based on various studies and analyses, language and image-generation algorithms are known to be racist and sexist, creating implications for computer-vision applications. Furthermore, women only make up 22% of AI professionals globally, which may result in these technologies further marginalizing disadvantaged groups (Forum Transregionale Studien, 2020).

## Implications

Significant data gaps prevent the understanding of gendered experiences in the labour market. There is a priority to ensure collection methods are unbiased and gender-sensitive. There is demand for more ethical, responsible AI that have feminist values built into their design.

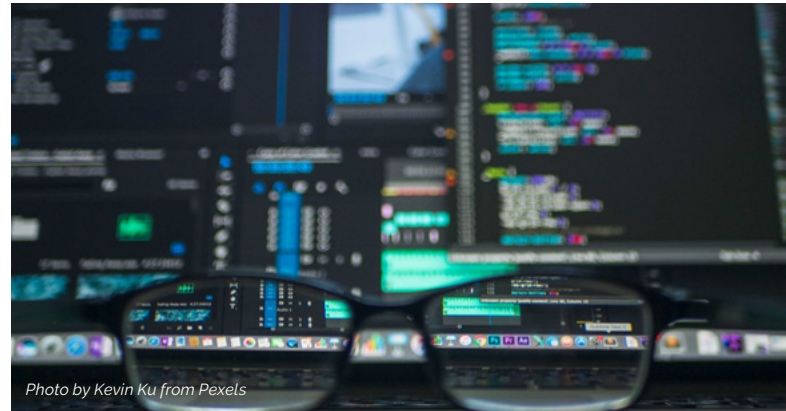


Photo by Kevin Ku from Pexels

## Signals

- An image-generation algorithm saw a cropped photo of US Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and auto completed her wearing a bikini, 53% of the time. When fed a photo of a man, it auto completed him wearing a suit 43% of the time (Hao, 2021).
- Beta, the first cyberfeminist bot, monitors legislation and uses cyber activism to fight for women's rights (Souza, 2018).
- Researchers found that Facebook's algorithms promoted roles to certain users and shows gender bias in job ads (Horwitz, 2021).
- Intel's Bleep is an anti-harassment AI solution that allows users to customize what kind and how much hate speech they want to see. Racism, misogyny, LGBTQ+ hate, etc. can all be customized (Gault, 2021).

## Gendered Implications

Technology is currently designed to help maintain the status quo of patriarchy and social inequality. Increasing the collection of gender data and hiring more women for tech positions will allow us to design algorithms for diversity (Dishman, 2020). The ultimate goal may be to create transfeminist<sup>1</sup> technologies that are designed not only for women by women, but for everyone.

<sup>1</sup> [Transfeminist](#) - the experience and policies that deviate from social gender norms with a long and intertwined history of coalition, mutual aid, practical thinking and liberation. [Transfeminism](#) is a movement by and for trans women who view their liberation to be intrinsically linked to the liberation of all women and beyond.



# Human-AI Augmentation

*Collaborations between AI and humans may displace or augment work*

## Overview

The proliferation of AI and automation may displace or augment existing work. The composition of job displacement could be different for men and women, reflecting differences in the occupations in which they tend to work. Routine physical tasks and cognitive work are highly automatable, but those that require more complex cognitive, social, and emotional skills are less so (Madgavkar et al., 2020). Even jobs that are too complex for complete automation could change dramatically as new technologies enable the automation of particular tasks. As such, any jobs could fall in the "could be partially automated" category (Policy Horizons Canada, 2019).

## Implications

AI will shift the role that humans play in the companies of the future. Partial automation may not replace entire jobs but may change jobs in meaningful ways with humans working alongside machines. As machines increasingly handle physical and cognitive tasks, workers could spend more time managing teams, applying expertise, and interacting with stakeholders (Madgavkar et al., 2020). Cyborg learning, where under-the-skin chips and sensors are implanted in workers, may also be used to boost worker performance and productivity (Egan, 2020). There is also potential to work with AI to learn new skills, which may be a significant factor for upskilling in the future.

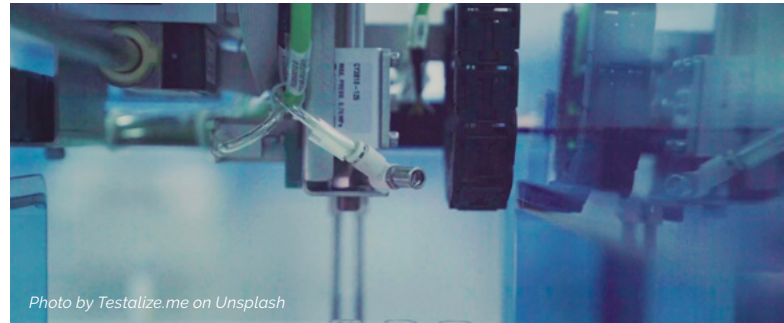


Photo by Testalize.me on Unsplash

## Signals

- GPT-3, OpenAI's language prediction model could revolutionize how businesses use AI. Its use cases range from improving customer service, summarisation and chatbots, automation of tasks, to creating spreadsheets (Caruana, 2020).
- UiPath is one of the leaders in robotic process automation; it raised \$750M at a \$35B valuation. The company uses AI to automate millions of repetitive, mind numbing tasks, to improve productivity and job satisfaction (Azevedo, 2021).
- In Citrix's Work 2035 report, 57% of employees surveyed said that they would have a chip implanted under their skin if it would "significantly enhance their performance and remuneration" (Citrix, 2021).
- Thousands of Swedes inserted microchips under their skin to speed up users' daily routines by allowing them to swipe their hands as access cards for their homes, offices and gyms (Savage, 2018).

## Gendered Implications

The gendered impact of automation is also unclear. While women are more likely to hold university degrees (associated with non-routine work that is difficult to automate), they are less likely to specialize in technology (which may limit their opportunities in an increasingly digital world), and are more likely to work in occupations that are more susceptible to automation (Frenette & Frank, 2020). Research from the Department for Women and Equality found that 44% of women in the paid workforce face a moderate to high risk of job transformation as a result of automation, in contrast to only 33% of men (Frenette & Frank, 2020).

# “Gigification” and Automation of Work

*Combination of gig work and automation could create new structural realities for work*

## Overview

With more jobs being unbundled into tasks, more work can be uploaded to digital task-based platforms, where employers can set the price they are willing to pay for certain tasks. This move from long-term, time-based work to temporary, task-based work provides workers with more flexibility and options for work (Policy Horizons Canada, 2019).

Millions of microworkers (low paid gig workers), earn money on platforms like Amazon Mechanical Turk, where companies outsource small tasks to online crowdworkers (Heaven, 2020).

## Implications

Employment opportunities may decrease as task automation will reduce demand for human labour. The combination of gig work and automation could create new structural realities for work (Policy Horizons Canada, 2019). Furthermore, the proliferation of gig work will increasingly rely on reputational capital to assess job seekers' qualifications without traditional credentials. Advancement of digital identity can create verified reviews and a two-way rating plan could improve transparency within the new gig market.



Photo by Austin Distel on Unsplash

## Signals

- Outsourcing virtual assistants can shift our workforce. The company Invisible, outsources mundane tasks of businesses to foreign worker agents (Heller, 2021).
- Marqeta enables employers to pay gig workers instantly over push-to-debit networks (CB Insights, 2019).
- FinTech company Moves provides private loans without credit checks to gig workers who do not have access to traditional loans (Kirkwood, 2020).
- LinkedIn is building a gig marketplace for white collar work such as consulting, marketing, and writing (Phan, 2021).

## Gendered Implications

Some claim that the added flexibility of gig work could offer opportunities for women to close the labour gap. However, research shows the gig economy may strengthen the “invisible advantage” men have at work, by favoring the activation of stereotypes about “appropriate” jobs for women, and their willingness to bargain. The application of anti-discriminatory labour laws also becomes challenging to enforce on gig platforms as the pay for each “gig” is negotiated between the job seeker and the employer, which is different from traditional worker-employer relations (Galperin, 2018). Furthermore, these work models also present new challenges for women due to increased violence and harassment from unverified employers.

# Shifting the Power in the Digital Economy

*Using the power of technology and collective intelligence to build equitable alternatives*

## Overview

People can no longer trust institutions and governments to protect workers' rights and combat inequality because our capitalist systems are designed to prioritize profit over people. This has led to a rise in worker collectives, unions, and alternative business models that value justice, cooperation, and agency, moving away from existing extractive capitalist models (Pacific Standard, 2017). Platform cooperatives are updating industrial cooperativism in the digital age, presenting worker-owned platforms as ethical alternatives to the current gig economy that operates under an extractive model (Anzilotti, 2018).

## Implications

There may be further use of people-driven decentralized autonomous organizations (DAO), a decentralized, open-source business model that is built on the blockchain. These transactions happen mostly through voting and active participation of interested parties who share common values, missions, and objectives. DAO allows people to pool resources and set the terms of how risks and rewards should be distributed without human intermediaries (Paddison, 2020).



Photo by fauxels from Pexels

## Signals

- Eva is a Montreal-based platform cooperative, they are a “socially acceptable” alternative to the ride-sharing behemoth Uber. At Eva, both drivers and riders can become members and vote at its annual meetings (Tomesco, 2019).
- As Amazon is making billions in the pandemic off the working-class people, a Torontian created the “Not Amazon” website to support local businesses across Canada. There are over 4,000 independent businesses on the site, attracting more than 350,000 visits (Cecco, 2020).

## Gendered Implications

The power of collective intelligence, technology, collaborations, and platforms can coordinate strikes against institutions to build power for the people. Feminist principles must be built into new platform cooperatives and DAO to ensure that existing patriarchal systems are not replicated. There needs to be diverse participations to design structurally equitable and diverse decentralized communities (Thwaites, 2020).



# “Responsible” Capitalism

*Towards new economic paradigms based on feminist principles of sustainability and collaboration*

## Overview

The business ecosystem is evolving, placing more emphasis on radical responsibility and shifting towards stakeholder capitalism that not only serves shareholders, but also customers, suppliers, workers and communities. GDP is no longer seen as the only viable metric for success, as other measures of prosperity include the health of people and the planet (frog, 2021). Philanthrocapitalism<sup>1</sup> on the other hand, is used to deflect the more problematic dimensions of a company's business model. Billionaire-funded philanthropic initiatives are often for public relations, and are a mechanism used to shield income from taxes (Bednar, 2021).

## Implications

This renewed focus on the health of our communities and the planet is driving shifts towards social procurement theory, where the purpose of a marketplace is not to create economic value but to create healthy communities that are measured by community capital (Leung, 2021). We may also see a paradigm shift towards degrowth principles that prioritize quality of life and ecological goals over economic growth (Brookfield Institute, 2021), and a rise in the B Corp movement where businesses address social and environment issues through their business models (Leung, 2021).

<sup>1</sup> [Philanthrocapitalism](#) - reliance on billionaire business people's charity to support public projects. This is when wealthy CEOs pledge to give away parts of their fortune, often to help fix the problems their companies caused.



## Signals

- The UK's economy became the first to make financial climate risk disclosure mandatory by 2025 (Paul Weiss, 2020).
- Launch of long-term stock exchange for companies to build lasting impact for stakeholders (Field, 2020).
- [The World Happiness Report](#) ranks countries by how happy their citizens are.
- Patch, a Canadian startup, is building a platform for negative emissions that automate the process of decarbonizing organizations (The Peak, 2021).

## Gendered Implications

Jennifer Armbrust's Feminist Business School asks if capitalism is an economy that values masculine traits, what would an economy that values feminine traits look like? A feminine economy is a proposal for a holistic vision of a new economic paradigm based on feminist principles of care, sustainability, collaboration, abundance, empathy, etc. (Armbrust, 2019). Valuing women's unpaid care work will be a priority in feminine economics, where women can be compensated accordingly.

# Climate Catastrophe

*Severe climate disruptions will lead to an influx of climate refugees and resource wars*

## Overview

We have seen drastic increases in natural disasters around the world, ranging from wildfires and hurricanes in the United States, heatwaves across Europe, massive hail storms in Calgary, and potential glacial lake floods (Brookfield Institute, 2021). According to Environment and Climate Change Canada, on average, Canada is warming double the global rate, with 2020 being the earth's second-hottest year on record. The Ecological Threat Register also projected that 1.2 billion people could be displaced by 2050, as ecological climate disasters drive mass migration and greater armed conflict (Yeung, 2020).

## Implications

Climate change poses severe challenges to global development and peacefulness, and vulnerable populations are more likely to experience civil unrest, economic collapse, and social fragmentation. As a result, better-resourced countries, such as Canada, will likely face a massive inflow of climate refugees (Yeung, 2020). This will have substantial social and political impacts on Canada, impacting the nature of work, women's ability to work, and public funding that is available. However, there may be potential growth in the green economy industries and disaster management-related services.



Image by Greg Reese from Pixabay

## Signals

- By 2040, it is projected that more than half of the world's projected population (approx, 5.4 billion people) will live in countries facing high to extreme water stress (Yeung, 2020).
- Water joined gold and other commodities traded on Wall Street, and water futures began trading amid fear of scarcity in California (Chipman, 2020).
- Despite the unprecedented economic turbulence during the COVID-19 pandemic, 31% of Canadians rank climate change and global warming as the most extreme issue Canada faces today (Canadian Nuclear Association, 2020).

## Gendered Implications

UNDP conducted the world's biggest survey on the public's opinion of climate change. The survey revealed that Canada has the world's largest gender gap on climate change perception. Canadian women and girls surveyed were 12% more likely to rate climate change as an emergency than men and boys. Globally, there was not a difference (Weber, 2021). Regardless of how we view the threat of climate change, during times of crisis, women are more likely to take a step back from paid work to fulfil care duties and social reproduction work, as shown during the pandemic. As the effects of climate change result in crises (extreme weather events, social/economic disruption, etc.) women's participation in the paid workforce will be more heavily impacted.



# Population in Crisis

*Tackling a mental health and care crisis that is exacerbated by the pandemic*

## Overview

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in an increase in precarious work and a lack of work-life balance for those that work from home, which has negative effects on society's collective mental health (Brookfield Institute, 2021). Furthermore, living through the pandemic may cause varying degrees of anxiety, isolation, and trauma, that is caused by a collective loss of "normalcy" in our routines, social interactions, and certainty about the future (Somos, 2021). Also, the effect of shifting demographics and the pandemic are intensifying pressure on the "sandwich generation", who are providing care for both children and parents (Ro, 2021).

## Implications

Organizations may need to design better workplace structures and policies so that workplace wellness is approached in a holistic way. Companies will need to prioritize the mental health and wellbeing of workers, with a focus on eliminating burnout and providing more meaningful work. This may include providing adequate family flexible policies for care duties, establishing remote work boundaries to create stronger work-life balance, and having mental health check-ins with employees.



*Photo by Andrew Neel from Pexels*

## Signals

- Millennials make up 50% of the workforce and yearn for more meaningful work (Alesso-Bendisch, 2020). Nearly 74% of Americans have quit a job to pursue their passions (Bauman, 2018).
- Multigenerational needs have intensified with a record number of adults moving back home, and elderly parents needing care (Ro, 2021).
- India's courts have developed a "path-breaking" legal framework concerning "robust wages for housework and carework", however it is rewarded only after death (Biswas, 2021).

## Gendered Implications

Women are more likely to provide intensive personal care to older relatives than men are. In the absence of strong government support, women are often left to pick up the slack. This triple duty burden of waged labour, care work, and housework has caused an outsized effect on women's mental health (Kluger, 2020). As shown during the pandemic, CARE International noted that 27% of women reported an increase in mental illness, compared to only 10% of men (Cassata, 2021).

## Anti-feminist Movements

*Counter movements against feminism led by men who think they are the true victims of gender bias*

### Overview

With former U.S. President Trump's rise to office, a surge of extremist anti-feminist hostility has become more visible in far-right movements online. These hate groups are moving towards a diffused system of decentralized radicalization that has become difficult to track (Estes, 2021). Technology has become an invisible guiding hand that perpetuates the discrimination of women.

### Implications

The #MeToo movement, when women worldwide stood up against sexual harassment and assault, created a severe backlash that fueled the manosphere<sup>1</sup>. There is a dangerous rise of men who will not/ refuse to date "woke" women and other extreme toxic male movements. These movements include incels<sup>2</sup> plotting violent revenge on women, pickup artists (PUAs) deploying predatory tactics, and "men going their own way (MGTOW) movement who avoid relationships with women all together (Bates, 2020).

<sup>1</sup> Manosphere - websites, blogs and online forms that promote masculinity and misogyny.

<sup>2</sup> [Incels](#) - Short form for "involuntary celibacy" that become one of the internet's most dangerous subcultures. It started as a support group for the dateless, but is increasingly radicalised online to commit acts of violence against women.



Photo by Andrea Piacquadio from Pexels

### Signals

- A study found a third of young British people believe that feminism marginalizes and demonizes men (Spratt, 2020).
- The City of Paris fined nearly \$110K for appointing too many women to address the gender imbalance at senior levels (Breedon, 2020).
- Men in tech are harassing Timnit Gebru, a Black female AI ethics researcher, after Google fired her in an attempt to silence her work on ethical tech (Goforth, 2021).

### Gender Implications

These misogynistic counter movements against feminism aim "to turn the structural oppression of women on its head, claiming men as the true victims of gender bias" (Bates, 2020). "Men's right's activists" (MRA) claim that social institutions discriminate against men, with other manosphere movements taking it further to believe that society is "feminizing men" or blaming women for their problems (Basu, 2020). Anti-feminism feeds into far-right movements online that are trying to create a bigger public backlash against diversity and gender equality.

## Queering Social Norms

*Fundamental transformations to how we think about gender and family*

### Overview

With more than 12% of U.S. millennials identifying as transgender or gender non-conforming and over half believing that gender is a spectrum, our conversations around gender and sexuality are changing (Kenney, 2020). Workplaces are not keeping up with these shifts and are poorly equipped to support gender-nonconforming employees, inadvertently reinforcing outdated gender norms (Zheng, 2020). Furthermore, the nuclear family still persists as a structure that is central to society, while ignoring other non-traditional families, such as blended, single-parent, cohabitations, and rainbow families<sup>1</sup>.

### Implications

Society is fundamentally transforming how it thinks about gender and family. Gender identity goes beyond traditional norms, and "leaders must create workplace policies that make room for experiences outside of the gender binary and ensure access to resources for people of all gender identities and expressions " (Zheng, 2020). Furthermore, workplaces must be designed to accommodate all types of families.

<sup>1</sup> [Rainbow families](#) - refers to families where a child has at least one parent who identifies themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex or queer (LGBTIQ)



Photo by Sharon McCutcheon on Unsplash

### Signals

- The 2020 EU LGBTQI strategy pledges to recognize the rights of rainbow families for the first time (Picken, 2020).
- There is a steady rise of men turning to masculinity coaching as they question traditional gender roles and are dealing with new expectations of masculinity (Deutsche Welle, 2020).
- There is a rise in platonic parenting, (co-parenting), when people who are not romantically involved decide to raise a child together (Traverso 2018).
- China proposes teaching masculinity to boys as the state is alarmed by changing gender roles, declaring a national "masculinity crisis" (Chan, 2021).

### Gendered Implications

Queerness exists in opposition to prevailing systems and rejects norms, orthodoxy, and continuation futures. As a verb, queering looks into how we can move beyond gender norms, and reject binary thinking to transform our systems and envision alternative ways of doing and being (Policy Horizons Canada, 2021). Queering the future of work can eliminate the heteronormative laws that include the hierarchal value of "gender", thus eliminating the gender bias and systemic barriers that women face.



# Decentralized Care Networks

*Communizing care through mutual aid and hyperlocal social networks*

## Overview

The pandemic sparked mass mutual aid movements that provided groceries and protective supplies to those in need and drew attention to the housing crisis and immigration. Communities took care of themselves by forming kin<sup>1</sup> using the collectivization of domestic, social and reproductive labour as a survival strategy (O'Brien, 2019).

## Implications

There is an emergence of hyper-local community networks that are bottom-up, dynamic forms of organizing localized, walking distance groups. These networks leverage social capital and commonality for mutual aid, connection, and a sense of community (Grainger, 2020). Using technologies and decentralized networks to provide mutual aid for care support may help us take care of ourselves and each other.

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<sup>1</sup> [Kinship](#) - social relationships that form an important part of the lives of all humans in all societies, it can be genetic or adoptive, by marriage, partners or sexual.



## Signals

- Nextdoor, is a hyperlocal social network that sorts users into neighborhood-specific private groups that reward offline interactions and kindness (Grainger, 2020).
- Tandas is an informal economic mechanism in Latin America, where the participants save their money together and access it when needed. Many tandas are organized and led by women, as a response to society that limits their wages and access to capital (Long, 2020).
- Upsurge in single mothers living in "Mommunes" to share costs and childcare duties (Futures Centre, 2020).

## Gendered Implications

Mutual aid is the extension of the community organizing work women of colour have always done to sustain their communities (Fernando, 2021). During socio-economic hardships, is it often the women that form networks to provide some level of economic stability since they are not getting the support that they need from the government. This may come in the form of financial assistance, physical support or even emotional labour. Emotional labour must also be done under an ethical framework by ensuring that it is consensually acknowledged, valued, and reciprocated (Morrigan, 2017).

## Partial Automation of Care

*Care is on the cusp of unprecedented change with potential for partial automation*

### Overview

Demographic changes are increasing the demand for care work. Although care work involves skills that are not likely to be fully automated, innovations such as robotic exoskeletons and care worker digital platforms may improve and radically reshape our care system (Ohrvik-Stott, 2019). Automation implies that careers are displaceable. However, it can also be argued that new caregiving technologies could liberate women from the disproportionate burden of care work (Mishra, 2020).

### Implications

Technology may be used as a liberation to care, not a liberation from care. Some critics argue that technology may help improve people's wellbeing, but it cannot fully replace human care. Furthermore, smart home technologies may also be explored to provide synchronization between domestic and waged labour (Journal of Futures Studies, 2021).

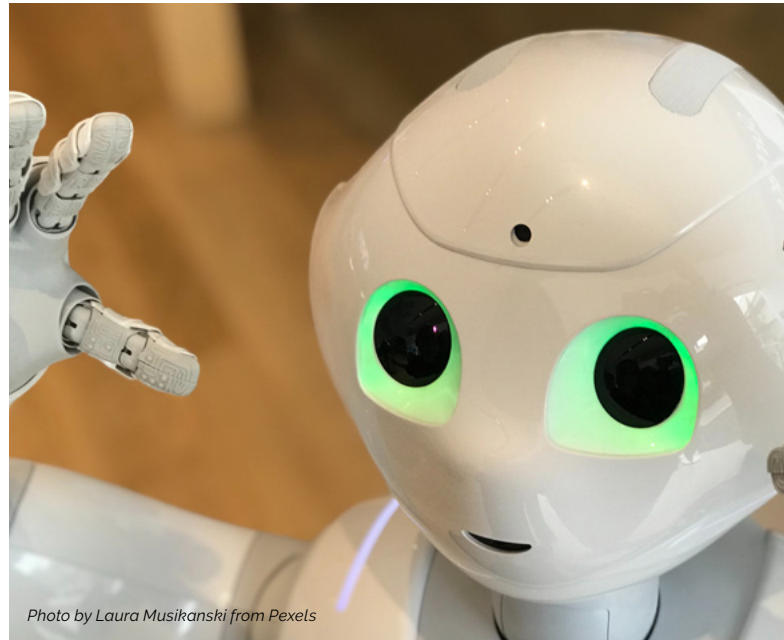


Photo by Laura Musikanski from Pexels

### Signals

- The pandemic has increased the use of robots in nursing homes, acting as companions for lonely elders (Samuel, 2020).
- Robots can help with tasks of caregiving; Secom's My Spoon robot for feeding, Sanyo's electric bathtub robot for washing, and Riken's RIBA robot for lifting (Samuel, 2020).
- The UN criticised big tech companies for setting their virtual assistants to female voices. As a result, Apple removed Siri's female voice as its default and add two new voices (Khaled, 2021).

### Gendered Implications

AI and robotic care work may intentionally or subconsciously reproduce gender stereotypes and reinforce existing social behaviour (Mishra, 2020). The feminization of AI, implies the automation of emotional labour, and plays a proxy to society's embedded patriarchal attitudes about women's natural work (Jotanovic, 2019). Automating care also further emphasizes the undervaluation of care work by women, assuming it can simply be automated and commodified. If the future is going to be automated and feminized, women should be front and center in designing that future.

# SCENARIOS

## possible futures of women's work

Scenarios help us envision possible futures and are meant to be provocative, plausible, and robust.

The trends identified in the previous section are used to inform the development of **four possible futures of work for women in 2040**. These four scenarios are narrative descriptions of what could unfold as our world evolves through various trends and change drivers. It is not science fiction drawn merely from imagination, but rather these scenarios are research-driven and evidence-based, informed by signals of change that we observe today. The goal of scenarios is not to predict the future but rather to provoke new thinking and encourage visioning of more diverse views of the future that we might not necessarily expect. By exploring a broad range of possible futures, we can build better strategies, policies, and innovations to anticipate and prepare for potential future changes.

# METHODOLOGY

## Generic Images of the Futures (Generic Images)

Jim Dator's (2009) Generic Images is a popular scenario development method used by governments and foresight practitioners. Dator posits that each of the millions of images of the futures are variations of one of four generic and fundamentally-different images (Dator, 2009).

- **Growth:** business as usual, status quo growth. This is often the “official” view of the future
- **Collapse:** degradation of systems or return to a lower state of development
- **Discipline:** behaviours to adapt to environmental limits and fair distribution
- **Transformation:** new technology, business, or social factors that change the system

This method was chosen to explore how the value of women's work and gender equality could evolve in alternative futures where women's work may be valued the same as today, less valued, valued in parity to men, or completely transformed. Generic Images provides scaffolding for four differentiated futures to help us examine a wide range of vulnerabilities, challenges, and opportunities that might not have been on our radar. The following matrix of comparators is used to define the underpinning of each scenario. The table below outlines how these forces are expressed in the scenarios created for this research.

**Table 3:**  
Dator's Generic  
Images Forces  
(Dator, 200)

Forces	Grow	Collapse	Discipline	Transform
Population	increasing	declining	diminished	post-human
Environment	devastated	overshot	sustainable	enhanced / artificial
Economy	extractive	survival	regulated	abundance
Governance	democratic	local	social	hyper-democratic
Technology	dominating	limited	flourishing	transformative
Culture	dynamic	oppressed	focused	complex

The scenario archetypes from Generic Images were used to craft the scenario frameworks. It was then enriched by developing the causal layered analysis (CLA) for each scenario. As reviewed in Part 1 of this report on [page 44](#), the current state CLA led to the metaphor of “A woman’s place is at home.” This metaphor was then flipped to reconstruct the future and align with the scenario of Growth, Collapse, Discipline, and Transform.

Current State	Grow	Collapse	Discipline	Transform
a women's place is at home	you are what you make	survival of the fittest	freedom of choice	let everyone flourish

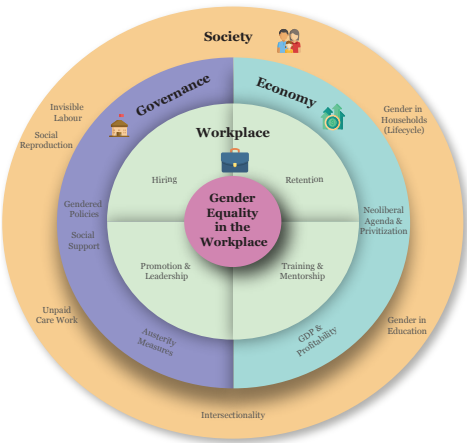
**Table 4:**  
CLA metaphors  
for each Generic  
Images scenario

The flipped metaphors were then used to reconstruct the CLA for these scenarios by building out the world-views and systems causes up to the litany level. Using the CLA to supplement Jim Dator’s Generic Futures provides more context richness for each scenario and ensures internal cohesion within the systems. See [Appendix B](#) for the CLA of all scenarios.

Furthermore, in each scenario, we started with trends from the previous section and explored the potential projections until 2040. Lastly, a backcasting exercise was completed for each scenario to create a timeline of events and conditions that would trigger these drastic shifts to reach that future vision in 2040. See [Appendix C](#) for Miro brainstorm.

## Critical Areas of Focus

The systems review and the trend analysis identified several critical areas of focus that should be discussed. Each scenario uses a systems perspective to highlight the following critical areas:



Workplace	What and how do we work Workplace diversity, equity, and inclusion practices
Governance	Government's involvement in providing social infrastructure and support
Economy	Automation of work and care
Society	Balance of work and caregiving Changes to existing gender roles and bias



**Table 5:** Critical areas of focus for the scenarios

**Figure 16:** Visual systems framework for women’s work.



# SCENARIO SUMMARIES

The following four exploratory scenarios aim to help readers contemplate how the future of work may evolve to impact the value of women's work and women's economic participation and prosperity.

			
<b>Grow</b>	<b>Collapse</b>	<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Transform</b>
<b>The "Woke" Society</b>	<b>The Displaced Caretaker</b>	<b>The Matriarch Model</b>	<b>Transfeminist Liberation</b>
<i>In this scenario, we ask:</i>			
<p>What if hybrid models of working became the norm and 50% of workers are gig workers?</p> <p>What if diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) workplace initiatives became mandatory reporting checkboxes?</p> <p>What if the government tried to renew the social contract and prioritized reskilling the digital economy workforce?</p> <p>What if an egalitarian approach is adopted to help balance care and work?</p>	<p>What if women's economic participation continued to decline after the pandemic?</p> <p>What if AI is used extensively to surveil remote working environments?</p> <p>What if governments used all their resources to get out of deep mental health, economic, and climate crises?</p> <p>What if women are displaced by automation and have no choice but to default into caretaker roles?</p>	<p>What if workplaces were designed to put people first and regular sabbaticals became the norm?</p> <p>What if algorithms were designed to hire for diversity that unleashes new innovative solutions?</p> <p>What if CERB became the basis of a basic income program?</p> <p>What if AI helped redistribute women's invisible labour?</p>	<p>What if industries are fully automated, and you only work for purpose and meaning?</p> <p>What if technology is used to monitor and enhance individual wellbeing and belonging?</p> <p>What if AI and robots did all the work and humans can enjoy the fruits of their labour?</p> <p>What if we were all born non-binary and the very idea of gender becomes absurd?</p>

**Table 6:** Scenario summary

# "WOKE" WORKPLACE

## Overview

In 2040, Canadians are still progressing towards a fairer world and closing the gender and racial wealth gap is still of utmost priority. Businesses are held accountable with new diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) reporting metrics along with mandatory financial climate risk disclosures. However, the partial automation of work and the prevalence of gig work have created many challenges, especially for women. Job displacement and reskilling programs are part of the normal work cycle, and the government has finally stepped in to provide better care support for families. The egalitarian model dominates most households with diminished gender expectations. Yet, the unfortunate reality persists that power remains with the higher income earners, which are often men.

## Key Drivers & Trends

- Employee Activism for Corporate Social Justice
- Flexible & Liquid Workforce
- Lifelong Learning
- Renew the Social Contract
- Human-AI Augmentation
- Gigification of Work
- Responsible Capitalism
- Population in Crisis



Photo from <https://pxhere.com/>

## Backcasting: How might we end up here?

2022	Gig Workers United launches a new campaign to unionize app-based workers. Prop 22 came to Canada, and Uber workers won a court case to classify gig workers as employees.
2024	#WeAreWorthIt social media movement begins as women protest that their value and time is worth the same as men's.
2028	Family leave is equalized, granting six months of paid leave to each parent.
2030	Canada makes financial climate risk and DEI initiative disclosures mandatory for companies. Natural language processing is used to review a company's documentation to provide an environmental, social, and governance (ESG) reputation score.
2033	Government rolls out a work from anywhere (WFA) policy.
2036	Payments Canada (responsible for payment clearing) and Interac (payment solution provider) develop a secure distributed ledger that provides real-time compensation linked to completing work tasks in real-time.

## A Look into 2040

### The Digital Workplace Strives to be Inclusive <sup>1</sup>

Canadians have fully embraced remote work, and a digital-first mentality permeates day-to-day life. Fifty percent of the population now work virtually, and another thirty percent go into the office twice a week. Work predominantly consists of many short-term projects, and specialized workers are hired on contract for each project. It is common to never meet your colleagues in person, as they may live in another province or on a different continent. Virtual work has unlocked the potential of borderless workers, giving people the freedom to choose where they want to live and work. Work from home (WFH) and work from anywhere (WFA) is now the norm for most white-collar industries.

Many workplaces have standardized gender and racial equality reporting, and DEI initiatives are now mandatory checkboxes for not just shareholders but all stakeholders. Canada's security legislation updated the "comply or explain" rule in 2030 to become a "comply" rule requiring mandatory diversity quotas in order to be listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange. This was driven by the corporate social justice movement that has pushed for more equitable workplace policies that include pay transparency, family-friendly policies, and performance evaluation metrics on inclusion, empathy, and collaboration.

<sup>1</sup> "Inclusion" still implies being included in existing patriarchal, capitalist systems that are structurally racist, sexist, ableist, and anti-immigrant.

Even though more women and people of colour are in leadership and board positions (40% makeup), equal representation in small-medium enterprises (SME) and non-media facing companies are still relatively low. Unfortunately, the motherhood penalty still persists, and most women still make less than men due to taking time off work to raise their children.

### **Weak Social Safety Net**

The proliferation of gig work, fueled by underpaid labour, has led to minor updates to employment standards to protect self-employed gig workers. These workers now have access to voluntary employment insurance (EI) benefit programs where they pay into EI for a modest degree of income security (Busby, 2021).

Another major win comes from several court cases that have resulted in gig workers being classified as employees and not contractors, which require businesses to provide access to pro-rated benefits. Despite better access to social programs, many gig workers are still falling through the cracks due to job displacement from automation. Platform cooperatives have also become a new popular form of organizing to create more ethical alternatives to the gig economy. [OpenTransit](#), a Toronto platform cooperative that provides on-demand ride-sharing and food delivery services, has become a major competitor to Uber and UberEats.

As constant upskilling is required to keep pace with automation, the government now provides heavily subsidized training programs to help workers reskill through micro-learning and micro-credentials. However, those with care duties in lower-income households are left behind, as the government's care subsidies and tax credits are not enough to offset the high in-person childcare cost of daycare and eldercare centres. As care work continues to be performed in person and cannot be automated, the service rates have skyrocketed. Families are still frustrated that there are no universal childcare policies that offer affordable and quality childcare.

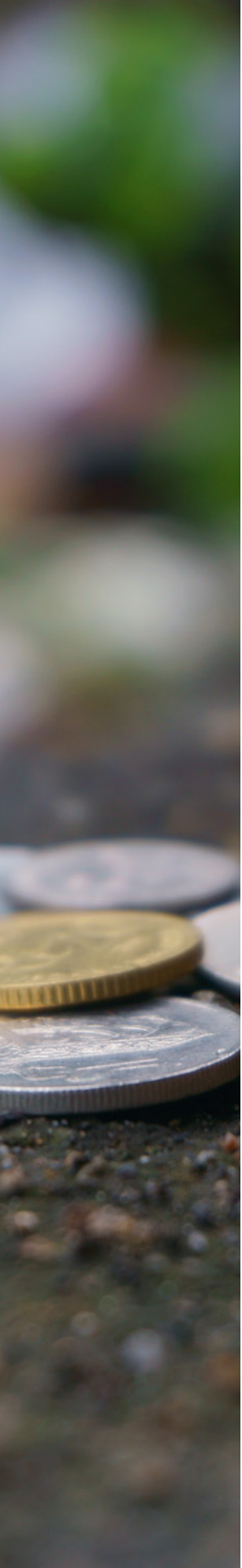
### **Automation Drives Economic Priorities**

The market drives businesses towards mandatory ESG reporting, yet profitability is still the predominant performance indicator. Due to severe climate risks, many large businesses have become carbon neutral by 2035. However, industries are still transitioning towards a green economy with a long road ahead. The rapidly changing digital economy has also created opportunities for many, including the added flexibility of remote work that enables more mothers to work. However, this gain is offset by automation disruption, as 60% of industries that women occupy, specifically in service and administrative roles, are now partially replaced by AI and robots.

Many reskilling programs are now teaching workers to work alongside AI to achieve greater productivity. Those who want a competitive edge also use implanted chips as a new productivity augmentation tool that allows them to be

*Photo by Pok Rie from Pexels*





more efficient at their jobs. Despite significant advances in automation, robotics for care work has yet to be fully embraced, and care performed by humans is still preferred and required.

**Sharing the Care**

Since the government equalized parental leave in 2028, there has been a considerable uptick in fathers' participation in childcare. Both parents now take an equal six months off from work to take advantage of parental benefits, which has led to more modelling of fathers as caretakers. The majority of Millennial and Gen Z households have adopted an egalitarian approach to sharing the care, and traditional gender norms no longer hold. The 2024 #WeAreWorthIt social movement kicked off another era of gender equality, with similar impacts to the #MeToo movement that drove a strong wave of justice, equality, and urgency to address gender issues.

Despite these changes, women still find it challenging to balance care work and their careers, as the division of labour still depends on earning power and income. The need for care is at an all-time high, and women who make less than men are increasingly called to take care of their kids and ageing parents.

**Key Takeaways**

What is the value of women's work?	Women's work is acknowledged, but the dominant patriarchal and capitalist systems still remain and society still undervalues work predominantly performed by women.
What is the gender pay gap?	Diminished, women make 15% less than men.
What is women's prosperity?	Restricted due to earning power.
What is the CLA metaphor?	You are what you make.

# DISPLACED CARETAKER

## Overview

By 2040, millions of Canadian women have permanently dropped out of the workforce. Many who left the paid workforce during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-2021 did not return to work. Furthermore, automation has displaced millions of jobs for women, rolling back gender equality to historic lows since the 1970s, with a labour force participation of only 42%. These major setbacks have put many women into poverty, with significant setbacks that cannot be recovered. Climate impacts, globalization, and the rise of China as an economic power have led to a strained, highly competitive economy that is competing for scarce resources. The country is in the midst of a prolonged recession, during which income inequality has worsened by an alarming degree. Surging unemployment rates have left many without jobs, and the lack of opportunity pushes women back to the default caretaker role. Morale is extremely low, and Canadians are feeling desperate and abandoned by their government. Violent protests are common, and workers often go on strike to demand better working conditions and wages.

## Key Drivers & Trends

- Employee Surveillance
- Lifelong Learning
- Human-AI Augmentation
- Gigification of Work
- Climate Catastrophe
- Population in Crisis
- Anti-Feminist Movements
- Decentralized Care Networks



Photo by Kat Jayne from Pexels

## Backcasting: How might we end up here?<sup>1</sup>

2022	Canada is going through the largest mental health crisis with intensifying pressures on the sandwich generation, leading to increased burnout and stress. Over 60% of adult women are diagnosed with a mental illness.
2024	Trump runs for U.S. presidency and wins, resulting in rising populism that sweeps across North America. Canada is seeing an increase in hate crimes towards women and an extreme backlash towards "woke culture".
2028	China overtakes the United States to become the world's biggest economy. Canadian exports to China are decreasing along with significant competition for scarce resources, causing strain on the Canadian economy.
2030	Many Fortune 500 companies have outsourced entire departments to AI assistance or foreign workers to cut costs.
2033	Robotic process automation and the new GTP-5 displaces human workers, forcing millions to leave the workplace and upskill. There are strikes for free education as it now has become essential to upskill every few years to stay in the workforce.
2036	Rise in communes and communities of families and friends who live together to share childcare duties and costs.

## A Look into 2040

### A Workplace Exclusively for Men

People yearn for stability as the 9-to-5 work week is a thing of the past. Workers now jump from project to project based on tasks that have yet to be automated. Companies embrace remote work to attract the cheapest labour. Intensified global pressures have put companies in constant survival mode, forcing them to innovate, capture market share, and prioritize their bottom line. Surveillance technologies have been used to increase the productivity of remote workers. Now, HR Robocops govern employees with performance reviews and billings tied to how often they speak during meetings, how many words they type, and how long they work. Some companies even have advanced "ergonomic" chair tracking to optimize working conditions. Despite the added flexibility of remote work, the nature, speed, and effect of that work are under extreme mechanistic scrutiny. Meaningful work is hard to come by and many are just desperate for employment.

<sup>1</sup> GPT-5 is a language prediction model that uses deep learning to produce human-like text with extreme accuracy and intelligence. Since GPT-3 from 2020, two additional generations have been released.

With profitability as priority, companies are putting less time, money, and effort into DEI initiatives as they try to stay afloat. As a result, women and people of colour make up only 10% of leadership and board roles, the lowest percentage in decades. Women in the workplace are few and far between, with remote work creating further barriers to their participation. Women are continuously excluded from digital conversations, networking opportunities, and Slack channels where important decisions are made. The old boys club mentality is pervasive in the remote work environment, as many companies follow the invite-only “clubhouse” model, where women have to wait to be asked to join digital channels and often need to prove themselves before they are let in.

### **No Trust in Government**

Economic inequality is more severe than ever, and many women live below the poverty line and rely on social assistance to get by. This financial insecurity has led to a longer road to retirement and has forced many to turn to gig and microwork platforms that often only pay \$2-4 an hour. These extremely precarious situations take advantage of women's labour, as anti-discriminatory labour laws cannot be enforced within these unregulated platforms.

Governments have been in crisis mode for years, and funding has mainly been concentrated on mitigating the impacts of the economic and climate crises. Severe storms and floods have eroded the coastal communities in Atlantic and Western Canada, with adverse effects on vital infrastructure and industries. Furthermore, millions of climate refugees have turned to Canada in the past five years, putting a strain on government resources to provide jobs, housing, and health care for new immigrants.

This state of crisis accompanied by a high unemployment rate has led many women to develop anxiety disorders and major depression. Women are falling through the cracks of the ill-fitted social architecture; those who are gig workers have minimal protection, and there are no care subsidies to help women with unpaid care work. In fact, the government's extreme austerity measures have cut more childcare support programs. The high health care cost of elderly care has also led the government to deploy medical robots to homes and senior care facilities.

### **Obsession with Productivity and GDP**

The market is in a prolonged recession, and businesses have a one-track focus on increasing profitability. Large multinational corporations are reducing headcount and cutting salaries for those without much bargaining power; this, unfortunately, impacts women and people of colour (POC) the most. Some employed women are angry yet afraid to speak up at risk of losing their jobs. Others often feed into the patriarchy by adopting hyper-masculine traits of aggression and cut-throat business practices to stay employed. Several large-scale media movements to boycott these corporations have led to aggressive hiring quotas for women and POC. However, these commitments have been

*Photo by Jeremy Yap on Unsplash*





met with extreme pushback from anti-feminist groups and sparked a rise in the Corporate Men Movement. These groups claim that all lives matter and feminism must be stopped as it marginalizes men by taking away their power.

With fewer women and people of colour in the workforce, especially within STEM positions, gender and racial bias are increasingly magnified in AI and algorithms. This is creating increasingly ageist, ableist, sexist, and racist technologies that govern our society. The impacts of automation and increasing gender bias have pushed many women out of the workforce.

### **Default Caretaker**

The majority of women are unemployed or underemployed and often choose caregiving over their career, not only because they struggle to find employment but also because they feel the most comfortable with social reproduction work. In times of economic hardship, women default to their biological instincts. This regression is pushing women back into default homemaker and caregiver roles. The commodification of the care economy has led to robotic care innovations; however, these technologies are still unaffordable for many households. Because of this, many women rely on hyper-local communities to provide rotation of care and mutual aid.

### **Key Takeaways**

<b>What is the value of women's work?</b>	Women's work is unacknowledged due to more significant socio-economic challenges. Women's work is invisible and valueless due to automation and increased gender inequality.
<b>What is the gender pay gap?</b>	Exacerbated, women make 50% less than men.
<b>What is women's prosperity?</b>	Non-existent.
<b>What is the CLA metaphor?</b>	Survival of the fittest.

# THE MATRIARCH MODEL

## Overview

The year 2040 marks the end of the patriarchy, with society adopting matriarchal business models that value sustainability, justice, and cooperation. This is largely driven by the rise of socially-minded Millennials and Gen Zs who have pushed for change and have held governments and businesses accountable for equality.

The 2020-2021 COVID-19 pandemic fueled a [feminist economic recovery](#), and gender and racial equality became a central focus for businesses in 2022-2023. Organizations designed intentional strategies to bring women back to the workforce by not only increasing women and people of colour in their hiring pipelines but fundamentally changing their organizational practices and policies to foster family and women-friendly work cultures. Governments provided generous tax credits for businesses to rehire women, and new forms of care and social support were prioritized. Ultimately, society now values equity, quality of life, and community over productivity and profitability.

## Key Drivers & Trends

- Employee Activism for Corporate Social Justice
- Flexible & Liquid Workforce
- Humanizing Virtual Work
- Workaholic Paradigm Shift
- Lifelong Learning
- Renew the Social Contract
- Data Feminism & Ethical AI
- Responsible Capitalism
- Queering Social Norms



Photo by Helena Lopes on Unsplash

## Backcasting: How might we end up here?

2022	The global gender gap grew by an <a href="#">extra 36 years</a> due to the pandemic. To combat this, the government provided businesses with subsidies to hire women back to work and to standardize reporting on gender and racial diversity metrics.
2024	Environmental, social, and governance (ESG) funds dominate the stock market, providing 20-30% annual returns.
2026	The government developed a robust legal framework to quantify wages for unpaid care work, which led to creating the Federal Universal Caregiver Benefit.
2030	Many businesses adopt a four-day workweek as more employees are being compensated based on output rather than time.
2032	Housing is unaffordable, with the average Toronto home costing no less than \$2M. The Canadian government introduced a land value tax of 3.91% to slow the rise of property values and to help fund the basic income program.
2035	Canada adopts a free life-long education model to enable more people to reskill due to the impacts of automation.
2036	As more employees take a regular sabbatical, mandatory employment standards now require businesses to provide a sabbatical handbook to outline employee rights and strategies to transition back to work.

## A Look into 2040

### The Workplace Designed for Care

Over the past decade, the meaning and value of work have slowly shifted. Canadians are now motivated by purpose and crave opportunities to connect with nature, build community, and explore passion projects. The workforce thrives off the flexibility that remote work, satellite offices, and project-based tasks provide. However, to attract talent, organizations also need to be flexible in every aspect, allowing individuals to choose when they want to work and what policies and benefits they might need (parental leave for rainbow families, menstrual leave, etc.). As people live more fulfilling lives, the retirement age has also been prolonged, as regular sabbaticals become the norm. Workers often take a 6 to 12-month leave every four years to recharge and reconnect with their passions. As a result, workplaces have adapted to create transparency around roles, skills required, and opportunities post-leave. Shopify, Loblaws, and RBC partnered with the federal government to develop a one-of-a-kind comprehensive skill-to-job training program. Organizations can now bridge individuals returning from sabbatical or parental leave using micro-assignments and training to guarantee future roles. These types of onboarding training programs have been instrumental in eliminating the motherhood penalty.



Diverse teams are now seen as a superpower, as they can unlock innovations to solve social problems for every consumer market. Organizations use AI algorithms to intentionally hire for diversity, and businesses have balanced women and people of colour on leadership and board positions (50% makeup). Diversity compositions of organizations are now key performance indicators that are measured and tied to executives' compensation. In this new age, every business owner and leader must also go through mandatory anti-oppressive, anti-colonialist, and emotional intelligence (EQ) training to create space for all voices to thrive and foster employee wellbeing. Some even say that there is a "women's advantage" as women leaders are more empathetic and compassionate than men.

### **Embracing the Nordic Model with Social Democracy**

The Canadian Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) was a popular antidote during the COVID-19 pandemic. It became a stepping stone towards a permanent basic income program, where citizens who earn under a certain amount are guaranteed regular income. Those under the poverty line, as well as workers who would have been displaced by automation, now have some security. Citizens' trust in the government increased as they finally felt that they were listened to and cared for, and everyone is provided with the opportunity to actualize their potential. To fund this basic income program, the government increased corporate tax rates over a span of 10 years, cracked down on tax evasion with offshore tax havens, and introduced a wealth tax for individuals with a net worth above \$10 million. The business sector and wealthy individuals have pushed back against these initiatives, but despite their best efforts, the government slowly started to increase corporate tax rates to fuel the transition to a greener economy. The United States rolled out their \$2 trillion infrastructure plan in 2022 to transform its infrastructure, and Canada followed suit in order to stay competitive.

A Universal Caregiver Benefit was also rolled out to compensate caretakers for unpaid childcare and eldercare work. New types of balanced parental leave, such as bonding leave and secondary parental leave, were introduced to accommodate different types of families and their needs. This renewed focus to invest in the care economy yielded a greater economic return; with every \$1 invested in care, \$6 went back into the economy. Furthermore, the government introduced free lifelong learning programs to help people, especially women upskill, as automation has eliminated many traditional industries while creating new ones that need workers.

### **Degrowth and Doughnut Economics**

In this new era of considered consumption, there has been a shift from materialistic purchases to meaningful transactions (Khan, 2019). People no longer care for extreme growth and now value slow, sustained growth. Society is moving towards new economic markers of environmental sustainability, wellbeing, and care that put humans and the planet at the forefront, as inspired by the Doughnut economic model. The push for mission-driven innovations



to solve climate challenges has made industries move toward zero-waste, circular business models that respect our planet's boundaries. With this renewed consciousness, people have a newfound appreciation and respect for social reproduction work. Although AI, robotics, and monitoring tech are more prevalent in the care sector, it has yet to replace human interaction fully. Human care work is greatly valued and fairly compensated, either via economic dollars or an alternative care currency widely used for bartering that is accepted on most platforms.

## **We All Need to Care**

Care work is unquestionably recognized and redistributed within households with the help of smart-glasses and smart-home technologies. AI has helped make the invisible labour that women typically perform visible by monitoring the distribution of tasks and setting reminders for care duties. Women no longer have to choose between care work and their career; they can do both just as their partners have historically been able to do. Intentional choices, not expectations, drive household decisions, and women's choices are no longer bound to a caretaker role.

### **Key Takeaways**

<b>What is the value of women's work?</b>	Women's work is recognized and measured. The historically exploited care economy is now acknowledged and valued.
<b>What is the gender pay gap?</b>	Women's wages are at parity with men, largely due to the government's efforts to close the gender and racial economic gap, and the elimination of the motherhood penalty.
<b>What is women's prosperity?</b>	Risen dramatically due to renewed socio-economic consciousness..
<b>What is the CLA metaphor?</b>	Freedom of choice.

# TRANSFEMINIST LIBERATION

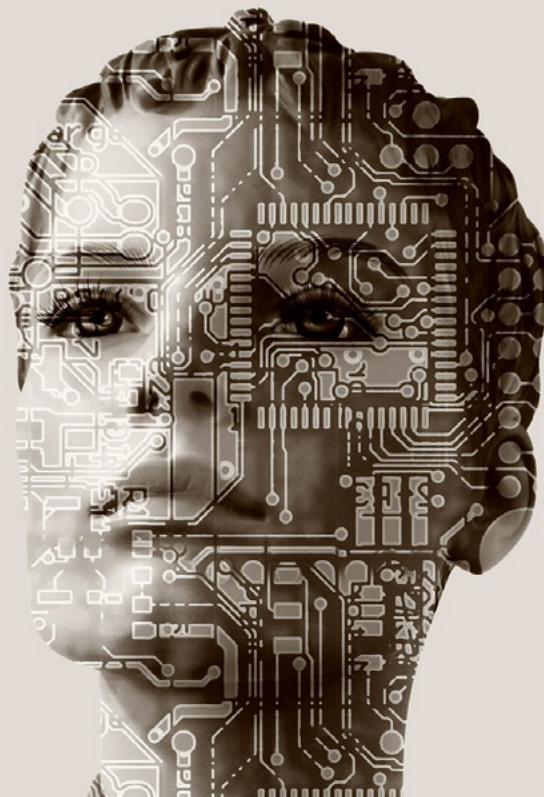
## Overview

In 2040, people in Canada have queered<sup>1</sup> their way towards a transfeminist future, where gender liberation is realized through technologies. This can be seen through the algorithms that command our daily interactions, which are developed with intersectional feminist values and designed to dismantle the matrix of capitalism, hetero-patriarchy, white supremacy, and colonization (Varon, 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated digital transformation for all businesses and consumers, which sparked a fully realized Fourth Industrial Revolution, where automation has taken over our daily lives. Technological advances in energy and labour have transformed our economy where scarcity is replaced by abundance. The transfeminist technologies that govern society have been designed by those who were historically excluded to embody the values of agency, autonomy, empathy, pleasure, and decolonization. This revolution has led to a way of life where all humans belong, live purposefully, and in harmony with AI and robots.

## Key Drivers & Trends

- Flexible & Liquid Workforce
- Humanizing Virtual Work
- Employee Surveillance
- Workaholic Paradigm Shift
- Data Feminism & Ethical AI
- Human-AI Augmentation
- Gigification of Work
- Responsible Capitalism
- Queering Social Norms
- Automation of Care



<sup>1</sup> Queering - looking through the lens of difference and openness to fundamentally transform our system boundaries into something new (Policy Horizons Canada, 2021)



## Backcasting: How might we end up here?

2023	Mandatory gender-based analysis (GBA+) data collection and analysis for all government agencies, institutions and private companies are instituted. The government also started to collect data that measure human wellbeing on top of economic metrics.
2024	Canada announced the Algorithmic Non-Bias Act that requires organizations to disclose what data sets are used to develop algorithms, and the team building the algorithms must also be predominantly composed of women and people of colour.
2025	Many Boomers are retiring, leaving a gap in government positions. The Government of Canada (GoC) launched a hiring spree to attract tech talent to accelerate their digital transformation strategies in order to better serve Canadians.
2026	LinkedIn created the largest global gig marketplace that tracks verifiable employability metrics that include quality of work, empathy, collaboration skills, and complaints.
2030	Many households have adopted AR/VR and hologram tools developed by Microsoft and Facebook to teleport into workplaces.
2033	A rise in transgender men giving birth has changed the notion that womanhood is defined by having a baby. The notion of gender is also greatly challenged, as many from Gen Z and Gen Alpha expect their gender identity to fluctuate over time.
2035	Automation has fully transformed industries, which prompted Canada to roll out a Robot Tax to fund training and basic income programs for displaced workers.
2037	Mass adoption of personalized AIs helps individuals optimize their health and happiness, with wellbeing scores being worn as a badge of honour.

## A Look into 2040

### Human-AI Augmented Workplaces

Technology has transformed the workplace, eliminating mundane tasks to build capacity for humans to work on purpose-driven projects that stimulate creativity. Most organizations have a Chief AI that handles all administrative tasks, such as scheduling, expense reports, performance reviews, and monitoring of employee wellbeing. Work is primarily remote, as advanced AR/VR and holograms can teleport people anywhere. The use of assistive exoskeleton chairs is also popular, which prevents muscle-related injuries in workers. These technologies are synced with the workers' personal AI, which can monitor health systems in real-time using smart stickers and neurotechnology. The personal AI monitors attention, manages fatigue, and helps enhance brain health. In this new age of working, organizations prioritize wellbeing, building a culture of belonging, and providing human therapy whenever individuals feel isolated and lonely. The Chief

AI conducts a real-time analysis of people's cognitive state to assess workload, stress, and attention levels. These overall metrics are analyzed with the Chief Health Officer at the leadership and board level with balanced AI and human representation. Executives participate in leadership training to build empathy, collaboration, and inclusion between all human and AI workers.

Reputation systems are essential to find meaningful jobs in this new era. The advancement in digital identity and the interoperability of different networks allows the Chief AI to create verified reviews of a worker's quality of work, empathy and teamwork skills, along with any complaints (such as racist or sexist behaviours or remarks that were identified through review of employees' communications). These reviews are connected to the individuals' social media and LinkedIn accounts for everyone to access.

### **Fully Automated Social Democracy**

Trust in institutions is at an all-time high as citizens feel cared for by the government. The government has been effective in using technologies to create targeted policies aimed to help individuals out of poverty. There are strong private and public coalitions across sectors and industries that represent citizens' needs. These coalitions put people first to create shared solutions for data monitoring and ethical technologies that cultivate equity and belonging. Furthermore, robots and AI do a significant portion of the work, and, as a result, humans can better enjoy the fruits of their labour by increasing leisure time and vacations.

After the devastating climate disasters in 2024, the Canadian government parties merged to unify and advance the agenda of building a prosperous and sustainable future for all Canadians. Their mandate allows humans and AI to work together to combat inequality and provide opportunities for everyone to actualize, pursue their passions, and flourish. The government created a robust social safety net with a generous universal basic income program made possible by AI-produced surpluses and the aggressive Robot tax paid for by large multinational corporations.

### **Human Wellbeing and the Happiness Index**

Millennials have overtaken Baby Boomers as the largest generational cohort, and have fundamentally changed how we look at the economy, and to whom it should benefit. In 2040, the economy is healthy and abundant, and people only work when they derive pleasure and purpose from it. A circular economy has become the norm as waste is fully repurposed. Also, cultured meat has been commercialized since 2026 and is widely preferred by Gen Z and Gen Alphas due to its smaller environmental footprint. The world has moved radically to eliminate structures of economic exploitation and instead focuses on metrics of deep wellbeing. People want to live a good, purposeful life, and the biggest societal priority is happiness and health. The happiness and wellbeing metric is a balanced indicator for socioeconomic and environmental health and is tied to human outcomes. It measures economic sufficiency, quality of physical

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and mental health, community solidarity and integration, and the health of intellectual and creative flourishing.

While automation has enabled humans to enjoy life more fully, human cognitive tasks, such as care work, are still highly valued as people crave human connection. Personal AI has stepped in to automate social reproduction work and emotional labour. Even nursing homes have robots that help with feeding, lifting and washing, but human touchpoints are still necessary to maintain wellbeing. Traditional care workers are highly sought after from the ageing Boomer generation, and in-person care is generously compensated and greatly valued. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many front-line healthcare workers were infected by the virus. As a result, the government has since brought substantial changes to stabilize, support, and recognize the care sector after numerous protests and union negotiations.

**Let a Hundred Sexes Bloom**

Humans acknowledge biological sex, but the traditional notion of gender has been abolished by many, specially amongst Gen Zs and Gen Alphas. The heteronormative laws of the past have been dismantled along with the hierarchal value of “gender”. Gender identity, much like sexual identity, may fluctuate throughout an individual’s lifetime. Every human’s needs are now considered in all decisions, especially policymaking. Technology and AI have made this possible as data has become fully disaggregated based on intersecting identities and is collected and analyzed ethically and equitably.

**Key Takeaways**

What is the value of women's work?	Women's work and care work are highly valued as these roles cannot be fully automated.
What is the gender pay gap?	Inconsequential, as the notion of gender has been removed. However, if it needs to be quantified, those who identify as women make 15% more than men.
What is women's prosperity?	Flourishing, along with the rest of humanity.
What is the CLA metaphor?	Let everyone flourish.

## 06 INSIGHTS & CONSIDERATIONS

### what did we learn

# AREAS OF INFLUENCE

## Revisiting the research question:

What is the value of women's labour in the future of work and its implication for women's economic participation and prosperity?

In the previous section, scenarios were used to explore how various prototypes of future socioeconomic and political systems may evolve to impact the value of women's labour in the future of work. The purpose was not to select one of the scenarios as the "best-case" future. Rather, these visions of the future are intended to be equally inspiring and cautionary. Different opportunities and risks exist in each future scenario for us to consider for the present, and we may even see aspects from all scenarios as our future unfolds.

Each scenario includes associated vulnerabilities, risks and opportunities for the future of work for women. Research findings were synthesized to generate the following ten insights for us to consider today in order to future-proof gender parity efforts for the future of work. See [Appendix D](#) for details of the full analysis. These insights aim to move us closer to our preferred future, where women can fully participate in work and be valued for their contributions:

*"The best way to predict the future is to create it." - Peter Drucker*

## Workplace Insights

### 01/ Move from performative to transformational change

As employees, consumers, and community stakeholders, we must hold organizations accountable and call out companies that engage in performative diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives. Organizations should measure their gender and racial equality efforts using diagnostic frameworks and periodically report these metrics to all stakeholders. Leaders should be held accountable to move the needle, either through participation in mandatory anti-oppression training or quotas tied to executive compensation. Accountability from the top will create rippling effects throughout the entire organization, leading to better cultures, improved employee morale and wellbeing, and better societal and business outcomes.

### 02/ Prevent the additional barriers that emerging technologies create for women

The flexibility that comes with remote work also comes with additional barriers. Organizations need to have transparent discussions around surveillance technologies and how they may be used to increase productivity for remote work. Also, increased isolation may be experienced in remote settings which might require more mental health support from employers and human touchpoints. Furthermore, barriers to work participation may be magnified in the digital realm, as women may be continuously left out of digital channels and have restricted access to information. Organizations need

to understand and assess the impact these changes have on women and marginalized groups by reviewing all policies through a gendered-based analysis (GBA+) lens.

### **03/ Accommodate for the changing notion of work by designing for flexibility**

The coming decade will bring significant changes to the type of work we do and how we want to work. Technological advances, demographic shifts, social movements, and other political and environmental factors will change how we value work in relation to our lives. The workplace will need to adapt to be flexible-at-the-core to accommodate all needs without disfavours others. This may include accommodating for regular sabbaticals, shorter work weeks, and/or hybrid work arrangements. To be truly flexible, organizations need to have knowledge and transparency around roles and expectations and update their performance metrics to account for value, not hours worked. Workplace policies and structures must be redesigned to accommodate the needs of women and diverse groups and it must no longer be catered to the default male.

## **Governance Insights**

### **04/ Reframe the care economy as an essential economy**

The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed how the care economy is neglected yet fundamental to the paid economy. Our current systems are built to leave women and marginalized groups behind due to the government's lack of childcare and elder care support. The care economy is a significant leverage point. It is the most female-dominated sector of the economy and is also one of the largest growing areas of work due to an ageing population. Care work cannot be fully automated, and the care that is provided by humans are based on core values that prioritizes wellbeing over profit. The government needs to make significant, long-term investments in the care economy in order to offer sustainable infrastructure that supports those in care roles. Investment in the care economy provides opportunity for people of all genders to participate in the paid workforce and creates broader socioeconomic benefits that will improve societal health in the long term.

### **05/ Protect the evolving worker in the face of disruption**

Our social contract must be continuously updated to protect the evolving worker, as the nature of what work is and how we work will change in the next decade due to automation and the proliferation of gig work. The government needs to protect the new worker in the digital economy by updating employment regulations for emerging forms of precarious work through effective public-private coalitions. Automation will also displace jobs, sparking mandatory upskilling for new roles. Women and marginalized groups have limited time and resources to upskill, and so an effective, highly subsidized skill-to-job training program should be prioritized to combat increasing inequality. Also, as automation displaces jobs, policies such as a Robot Tax as explored in the Transform Scenario could be implemented to redistribute AI earnings back to displaced workers.



## Economy Insights

### **06/ Challenge economic priorities to focus on wellbeing, not wealth**

The COVID-19 pandemic presents a pivotal moment to rebuild better and prioritize a feminist economic recovery where organizations can build intentional strategies to hire back women and people of colour. As a society, we should strive towards living under the matriarchal values of sustainability, justice, care, and cooperation, and challenge who the economy is designed to benefit. As consumers, we have significant leverage in shaping how businesses operate through what we buy. By supporting businesses with good practices and using ESG reporting metrics, we can create a baseline for accountability to move society towards positive change. Furthermore, to value human wellbeing over wealth, we need to move away from GDP and productivity towards metrics that prioritize our communities and our planetary health.

### **07/ Design technologies and AI to fill in the gaps**

AI models will exacerbate existing biases due to the under-representation of women and people of colour in data sets and decision-making. What if AI and algorithms can be intentionally designed to increase diversity and put marginalized groups' wellbeing at the forefront? To do so, organizations need to hire more women and people of colour to design these predictive algorithms. They need to conduct regular audits for algorithmic biases and provide transparency over how data is collected and validated. Also, AI can be used to better maintain employee wellbeing in virtual environments by using emotional AI software to understand nuanced human emotions and complex cognitive states. These technologies will be prevalent in the future, and guidelines must be created to ensure that AI is designed and applied equitably.


## Societal Insights

### **08/ Create an egalitarian approach to the division of labour**

Adapting a true egalitarian approach to the division of labour starts at home. There is a social shift in domestic sharing due to changing gender roles; however, women are still doing most of the unpaid care work. Sharing the care within family units means having more men take parental leave to participate in care work and addressing unequal sharing of intra-household dynamics (Gender Wage Gap Strategy Steering Committee, 2016). Increasing men's participation in childcare models different behaviours starting at birth and works to remove gender biases in households. Different frameworks can be explored to help families share the care equitably and not make decisions based solely on earning power. Technologies may also help measure the invisible work that women perform and help with the recognition, reduction, and redistribution of care work.

### **09/ Understand implicit biases for both men and women**

We are socialized to conform to gender roles, and these social expectations can lead to implicit biases. We need to be mindful of how we deal with these implicit biases. From an organizational perspective, there is a risk that mandatory implicit bias training can lead to defensive backlash, triggering tension, and negative emotions



such as shame (Sukhera, 2020). From a social perspective, many individuals fear being penalized or “cancelled” by voicing unpopular beliefs, which may include racist or sexist remarks. These individuals need a safe space to have productive polarized conversations to unlearn and relearn new ways of thinking. Furthermore, we must acknowledge that women also feed into the patriarchy and default into traditional gender roles. Removing gender biases from our society requires more open conversations and better role models for everyone.

### **10/ Disrupt the status quo by dismantling gender constructs**

Jason Tester’s theory “queering the future” challenges us to scrutinize, adapt, and transform the status quo into a future that is radically open, human, and empowers marginalized groups to innovate and lead towards the futures we want to see (Policy Horizons Canada, 2021). As a society, we are undergoing fundamental transformations in how we think about gender and family. There is an urgent need to abolish gender constructs and dismantle the hierarchical value of gender, as society has progressed beyond traditional gender norms. We must consider every human’s needs in all forms of decision-making by fully disaggregating data based on intersecting identities.

## 07 CONCLUSION

### final words

# TOWARDS A HOPEFUL FUTURE

It is evident that we are still far from achieving gender equality in the workforce. Women's economic participation and prosperity face systemic barriers and is further threatened by the digitization and automation that is driving the future of work. Some individuals, however, believe that we have achieved gender parity in our modern egalitarian society. The COVID-19 pandemic proved otherwise, as it forced women to leave the paid workforce to fulfil unpaid care duties, rolling back three decades of advances in women's labour force participation. The pandemic has exposed how systemic discrimination is structurally embedded within our societies, and it has created an opportunity for us to think and act differently. At this moment, we are at a precipice where we may actually be regressing and losing the hard-earned gains of women, or we may come together to create a more equitable future where women's work is valued.

## Research Summary

This research project explored the past, present, and future of women's work. Part 1 of the report explored women's work from a systemic perspective. It explained how gender inequality in the workplace is a systemic problem that workplace policies and structures cannot solve alone. We must look at the systems that shape our lives and uproot the intersecting social, economic, and governance structures that currently make women's economic participation and prosperity impossible. Part 2 of the report used strategic foresight to envision alternative, plausible futures that challenge our mental models and assumptions about the future. Our current system is broken and structurally oppressive and is designed to serve those who are already privileged. We need to design a system where the most

marginalized are prioritized in all decisions. The scenarios help us reimagine what our future could look like if we changed our current systems to value women's labour in the future. My hope for this research is to spur discussion, provoke new thinking, and inspire action towards building a collective feminist vision for the future of work for women that ultimately benefits everyone.

## Key Takeaways

Given the complexity and urgency of the challenges ahead, we need collective action to break down existing barriers and inequalities for women, so we can start valuing women's invisible labour. It is important to use an intersectional lens as the trends and scenarios explored will have varying impacts on different groups of workers with intersecting identities, such as class, race, sexuality, ability, age, etc. These identities will compound inequalities as some groups may be affected differently and in opposed ways based on class.

To close the inequality gap, we need to hold businesses and leaders accountable for creating anti-oppressive and anti-racist workplace policies and cultures. We need to challenge our economic priorities by examining where our money goes and who is elected to power. We need to question who is left out of important decisions and if all voices are heard. We also need to start looking within to understand how gendered constructs drive our personal decisions and what sort of behaviours we are modelling for the next generation. Together, we can use this opportunity to rebuild our systems for women, future-proof gender parity efforts, and collectively shape a future of work that finally works for all women.

# MOVING FORWARD

This report scratches the surface of this complex, wicked problem. However, it provides a useful starting point for discussion. The scope of this research project is diagnostic and exploratory. It is not meant to provide specific actionable strategies to achieve gender equality in the workplace. Given the scope of the project, there are several research actions that might be explored further:

## Identifying the Preferred Future

While the foresight section outlined trends that may impact the future of work for women and how these may manifest into various images of the future, more work needs to be done to articulate our preferred future and to create an actionable pathway to change. We need to move from diagnostic and exploratory research towards strategic action. This could be done using foresight tools such as the Three Horizons framework and backcasting. Furthermore, a participatory foresight approach should be used to co-create the preferred future with diverse groups of people.

## Continuing the Dialogue

This research contribution is additive and complementary to existing research about gender equality. Research findings may be socialized with other women's rights and advocacy groups to continue conversations on the importance and urgency of this topic. Here are some readings for further context, all of which were instrumental in creating this report:

- [Resetting Normal: Women, Decent Work and Canada's Fractured Care Economy](#) by the Canadian Women's Foundation, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, Ontario Nonprofit Network, and Fay Faraday
- [A Feminist Economic Recovery Plan for Canada](#): Making the Economy Work for Everyone by The Institute for Gender and the Economy (GATE) and YWCA Canada
- [Memory Work](#) is a research-based immersive audio future scenario presented by At The Moment and From Later at Myseum Intersections 2020
- [Radical Care: Embracing Feminist Finance](#) is feminist finance zine presented by Amateur Cities and the Institute of Network Cultures
- [Invisible Women: Exposing Data Bias in a World Designed for Men](#), the book by Caroline Criado-Perez
- [Doughnut Economics: Seven Ways to Think Like a 21st Century Economist](#), the book by Kate Raworth
- [Fem-LED: A look into female leadership for women in digital media and tech today and tomorrow](#) by the Super Ordinary Laboratory at OCAD University
- [Final report and recommendations of the Gender Wage Gap Strategy Steering Committee](#), prepared for Minister of Labour Minister Responsible for Women's Issues

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## Horizon Scan

### Trend 1/ Employee Activism for Corporate Social Justice

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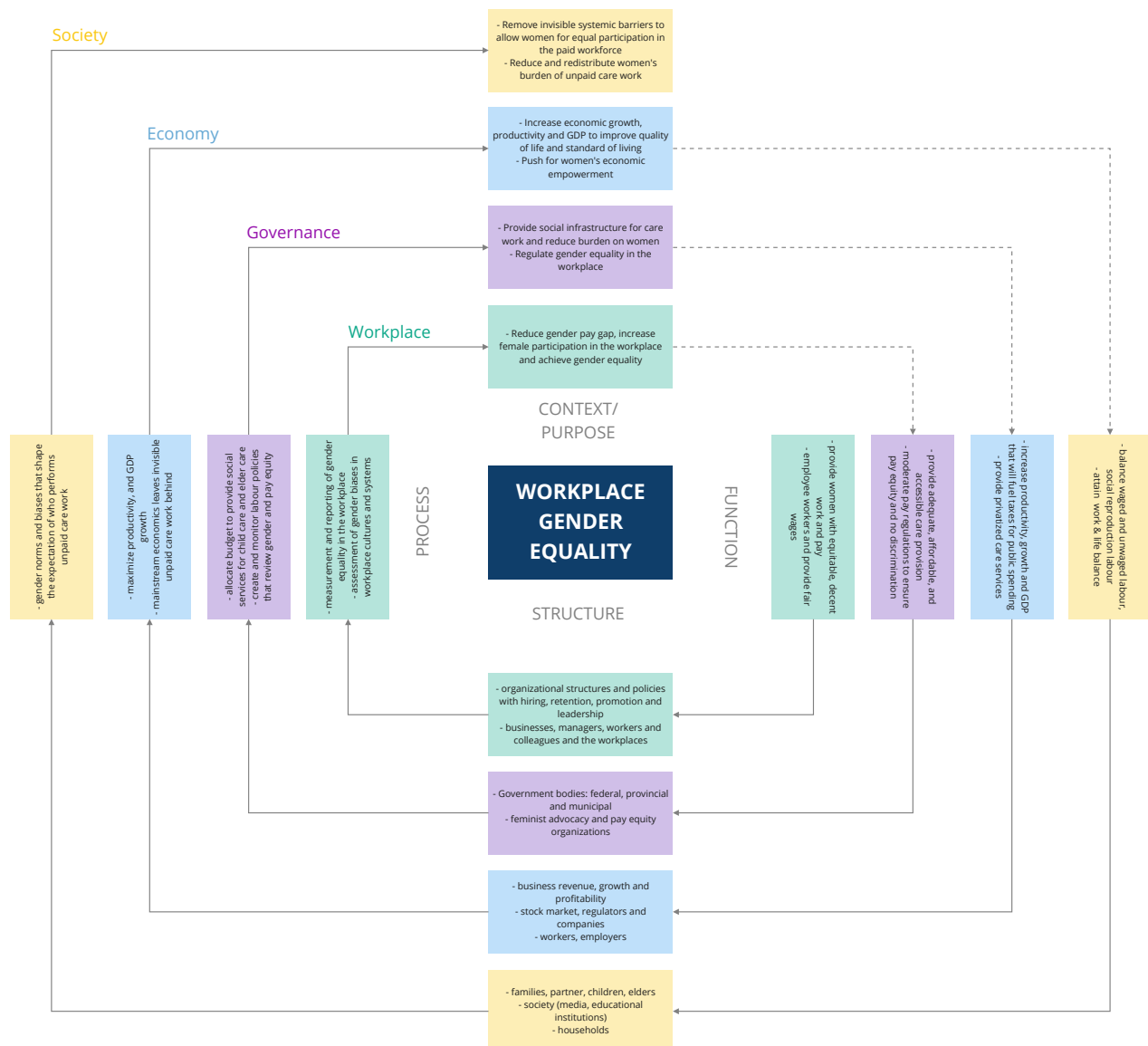
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## 09 APPENDICES

# Appendix A: Iterative inquiry

Each iteration, defined as its own system yields insight into the next, containing and contained levels. Each inquiry involves identifying the following:

- It starts with **function** - what activity is needed to achieve the desired result?
- What **structures** enable this function? Who and what is involved in this activity? People as roles, places as systems, tools
- What **processes** are required to fulfil the function? Who is doing what and in what order? What knowledge is needed for this? Known procedures, policies, steps, routine
- What **context (purpose)** does this lead to? What context is created to coordinate the process and subsystems?





# Appendix B: CLAs for each Scenario



RECONSTRUCT THE FUTURE OF 2040				
	GROW	COLLAPSE	DISCIPLINE	TRANSFORM
<b>Litany</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gender wage gap (15% gap to men)</li> <li>More women in leadership and board positions due to DEI quotas, more voices in the workplace</li> <li>Women still recovering from the pandemic, and take on more unpaid care work due to lower earnings</li> <li>The majority of gig workers are women due to flexibility and increased employment standards, but they still make less than men.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Massive gender wage gap (50% gap to men)</li> <li>Women's voice is submissive and non existing in the workplace</li> <li>Women never recovered from the pandemic, an all-time low in women participation</li> <li>Women default to care roles and take on precarious gig work in between care duties</li> <li>Men are increasing hostile with rising MRA movements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The gender wage gap is non-existent (at parity)</li> <li>Everyone's voice is valued, driven by represented leadership</li> <li>Pandemic sparked policies to help women and POC</li> <li>Motherhood is no longer a penalty, and more people are taking regular sabbatical leaves regardless of gender</li> <li>Care work is valued and compensated accordingly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is no gender wage gap, but people who have high empathy, community building, and personal skills are paid the most (aka women in Today's world)</li> <li>Human-AI leadership prioritizes employee wellbeing and happiness</li> <li>Care is one of the few tasks that cannot be automated, as such is highly valuable</li> <li>People only work when they derive pleasure from it</li> </ul>
<b>Causes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government prioritizing care and funding social programs for child care and eldercare</li> <li>Updating social contract for equal parental leave and gig work employment standards</li> <li>More pressure on workplaces to appear to uphold equity standards (market-driven)</li> <li>Care work is recognized, but still undervalued and given to women by default</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>crisis perpetuates patriarchal systems. Increased economic pressures due to globalization and automation</li> <li>Government support is diminished due to other economic and environmental priorities</li> <li>Gender bias, sexism and discrimination are dominant in the workplace due to the lack of women representation</li> <li>Women are expected to do unpaid care work due to unemployment and underemployment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the government prioritized citizens wellbeing to create UBI and universal carer income</li> <li>household labour and care work is measured as part of economic indicators</li> <li>work is no longer split between gender lines</li> <li>every person's time and work is valued</li> <li>fundamental shift in prioritizing quality of life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>use of robots and AI to fully automate work and perform mundane tasks</li> <li>AI produced surpluses create a generous social safety net (UBI), happiness is most valued</li> <li>strong and unquestioned trust in AI government</li> <li>quantified self-movement leads to greater transparency and accountability</li> <li>human cognitive tasks such as care cannot be automated, making women's work the most valued</li> </ul>
<b>World Views</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>patriarchal capitalism and neoliberalism still persists</li> <li>more progressive and egalitarian beliefs, but power structures remain with men (higher earner)</li> <li>Values gender and racial equality, but unwilling to comprise own social standing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>disaster capitalism (neoliberalism)</li> <li>libertarianism (anti-government, values free-market solutions)</li> <li>more traditional gender roles as women are increasingly endangered and lose agency and power</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>everyone has a right to the future they want</li> <li>post-growth, anti-capitalist society</li> <li>values human and environmental sustainability</li> <li>egalitarian beliefs based on an equal division of labour and earning power</li> <li>intersectional feminism, giving voice to traditionally marginalized groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>fully automated luxury communism</li> <li>let robots do all the work, and humans can enjoy the fruit of their labour</li> <li>work should be pleasure and purpose-driven</li> <li>gender abolishment - we are all born non-binary with an abundance of identities</li> </ul>
<b>Metaphors</b>	<p>"You are what you make"</p> <p>"Woke washing"</p>	<p>"Survival of the fittest"</p> <p>"Men are born to lead"</p>	<p>"The world is your oyster"</p> <p>"Freedom of choice"</p>	<p>"Let all sexes flourish"</p> <p>"Live is meant to be enjoyed, not endured"</p>

## Appendix C: Scenario Table

## DATOR TABLE

TABLE	GROW				COLLAPSE				DISCIPLINE				TRANSFORM			
	The "WoKe" Workplace				The Default Caretaker				The Matriarchal Model				Transfeminist Utopia			
Population	Increasing	aging and in need of care			Declining	aging without retirement support			Diminshed					Posthuman		
Environment	Devalued				Chemist	Climate Disaster (core resources, climate refugees)			Sustainable					Enhanced and Artificial		
Economy	Dominate & Profitized	Extractive	Growing Income Inequality	Neo-liberalism	Survival	Extreme Income Inequality	Highly Competitive	Prolonged recreation	Regulated	Iron Capitalist Degrowth	Greater Income equality			Diversified	Trivial or Reformed	Abundance
Governance	Corporate	Democratic	Collaborative		Local & Tribal	Populism			Regional	Social Democracy	Public-Private Partnerships	Cooperative and decentralized decision making		Direct and Riger Democracies	DAO	
Technology	Accelerating & Dominating	Personal investment in tech for mass market adoption			Limited to only a few	Stagnant for the masses			Reshaping yet regulated	Open source	Intentional investment in tech, Mission driven innovations			Transformative	Exponential	Automatic investment in tech
Culture	Dynamic & Free				Oppressed & Rescued	Stable			Focused	Systemized	Values plurality, participation, justice & cooperation			Complex	Abundant	Human-centered

## AREAS OF FOCUS

AREAS OF FOCUS		GROW The Diversity Theatre				COLLAPSE The Displaced Caretaker				DISCIPLINE The Matriarch Model				TRANSFORM Transfeminist Liberation			
Work	How & Where We Work?	Hybrid Models of Working	Flexibility: workers share time & gig work (20%)	Virtual work: remote workers, more autonomy, more work-life balance	motherhood penalty persists	Gig work & automation (20%)	Tech companies: remote work, more autonomy, more work-life balance	dark side of virtual work: isolation, loss of social connection, more work-life balance	People prefer to be physically present: virtual work is not a replacement for in-person work	Hybrid, decentralized models	Value: building & human interactions	Project-based work (20%)	Skilled & flexible: workers share time & gig work	Advanced: workers share time & gig work	Flexibility: workers share time & gig work	Work is sacred, not a commodity	
Workplace Policies		DEI initiatives as check to address shareholders	Growing policies to address workplace inequality	Family and child care: more autonomy, more work-life balance		Bottom line as priority, less time for DEI	Survivalist tech and policies for productivity: "no excuses" (time-saving)	Breakfast work: creating more flexibility for women	Identity: women's work is not a commodity	Women design their own work: inclusive diversity and equity	Putting people first, not just the bottom line	Team autonomy: workers share time & gig work	Outwarding and training: the art of being a team to each other	Tech used to control workers: more autonomy, more work-life balance	Flexibility at its core for workers' needs	Identified needs: workers share time & gig work	
Leadership Practices		More women in leadership and boards (20%)	Change in LMI, but SME lagging			Less women in leadership and boards (20%)				balanced: women and people on either side of the table (20%)	Meaning: workers share time & gig work	Reporting: workers share time & gig work	Strong trust in government	Unconditional: workers share time & gig work	Healthy and abundant economy		
Governance	Renew Social Contract	More options to strengthen private PP services	Better access to social programs	Reskilling & subsidizing training programs	renewed trust in government	No IT systems in place: private sector IT is gone	restrained: private sector IT is gone	Service for the vulnerable: private sector IT is gone	Accountability: workers share time & gig work	Core became central: workers share time & gig work	Free thinking: workers share time & gig work	Advanced: workers share time & gig work	Strong trust in government	Unconditional: workers share time & gig work	Healthy and abundant economy		
Care Support		No universal care programs, but targeted care for vulnerable	Business: have stepped in to provide care support			Done mostly by women: private sector IT is gone		declining trust in government		Universal: workers share time & gig work	Strong trust in government	Advanced: workers share time & gig work	Strong trust in government	Unconditional: workers share time & gig work	Healthy and abundant economy		
Economy	Care within Economic Priorities	Added flexibility to workers within the workplace	DEI reporting and accountability measures	Triple bottom line focus		GDP: workers share time & gig work	Low wages and increased precarity (20%)	Workers' resistance and solidarity (20%)	Discharge of quality care work: workers share time & gig work	Global economy & equity: workers share time & gig work	Consumer economy & equity: workers share time & gig work	Advanced: workers share time & gig work	Strong trust in government	Unconditional: workers share time & gig work	Healthy and abundant economy		
Automation of Work		Partially automated: workers share time & gig work	Human-AI augmentation: workers share time & gig work			Human-AI augmentation: workers share time & gig work	Unemployment at a high	Gender and racial bias: workers share time & gig work	Automation of manual labor: workers share time & gig work	Automation of manual labor: workers share time & gig work	Automation of manual labor: workers share time & gig work	Advanced: workers share time & gig work	Strong trust in government	Unconditional: workers share time & gig work	Healthy and abundant economy		
Automation of Care		Partially automated: workers share time & gig work	Human-AI augmentation: workers share time & gig work			Human-AI augmentation: workers share time & gig work	Unemployment at a high	Gender and racial bias: workers share time & gig work	Automation of manual labor: workers share time & gig work	Automation of manual labor: workers share time & gig work	Automation of manual labor: workers share time & gig work	Advanced: workers share time & gig work	Strong trust in government	Unconditional: workers share time & gig work	Healthy and abundant economy		
Social & Culture	Balancing Work & Care	More balance for workers' well-being	Care as a career choice: workers share time & gig work	Increased priority for low wage workers		Gender of workers: workers share time & gig work	Business: workers share time & gig work	Women choose care over career	Hyper local networks for care	Choice, not exceptions: workers share time & gig work	Choice, not exceptions: workers share time & gig work	Advanced: workers share time & gig work	Strong trust in government	Unconditional: workers share time & gig work	Healthy and abundant economy		
Gender Roles and Bias		Changing gender norms	Gender roles: workers share time & gig work	Increased priority for low wage workers		Gender of workers: workers share time & gig work	Business: workers share time & gig work	Women choose care over career	Hyper local networks for care	Choice, not exceptions: workers share time & gig work	Choice, not exceptions: workers share time & gig work	Advanced: workers share time & gig work	Strong trust in government	Unconditional: workers share time & gig work	Healthy and abundant economy		
Women's Work	What is the Value?	Acknowledged, but women's work is still secondary to men's	Women's work is still secondary to men's	Balanced parental leave (BQL Quebec)		Gender of workers: workers share time & gig work	Business: workers share time & gig work	Women choose care over career	Hyper local networks for care	Choice, not exceptions: workers share time & gig work	Choice, not exceptions: workers share time & gig work	Advanced: workers share time & gig work	Strong trust in government	Unconditional: workers share time & gig work	Healthy and abundant economy		
Gender Pay Gap		Women still make 15% less than men	diminished			Gender of workers: workers share time & gig work	Business: workers share time & gig work	Women choose care over career	Hyper local networks for care	Choice, not exceptions: workers share time & gig work	Choice, not exceptions: workers share time & gig work	Advanced: workers share time & gig work	Strong trust in government	Unconditional: workers share time & gig work	Healthy and abundant economy		
Prosperity		Restricted				Gender of workers: workers share time & gig work	Business: workers share time & gig work	Women choose care over career	Hyper local networks for care	Choice, not exceptions: workers share time & gig work	Choice, not exceptions: workers share time & gig work	Advanced: workers share time & gig work	Strong trust in government	Unconditional: workers share time & gig work	Healthy and abundant economy		

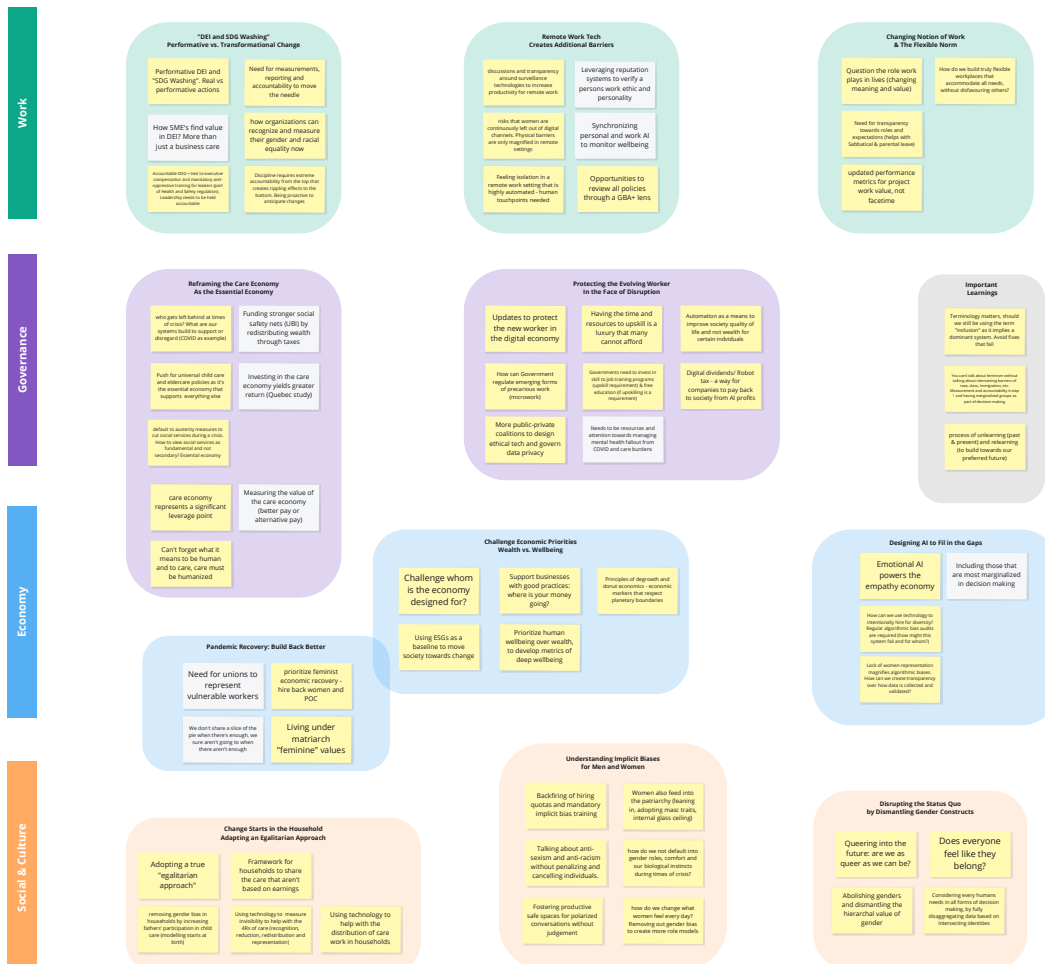
## MAPPING TRENDS

GROW			COLLAPSE			DISCIPLINE				TRANSFORM			
The DEI Checklist			The Displaced Caretaker			The Matriarch Institution				Transfeminist Liberation			
1/ Employee alliance for corporate social justice	2/ Flexible & liquid workforce	3/ Hiring learning to close the skills gap	3/ Humane attention for corporate social justice	3/ Employee surveillance	3/ Shifting learning to close the skills gap	1/ Employee alliance for corporate social justice	2/ Flexible & liquid workforce	3/ Humane attention for corporate social justice	3/ Workaholic paradigm shift	2/ Flexible & liquid workforce	3/ Humane attention for corporate social justice	3/ Employee surveillance	3/ Workaholic paradigm shift
5/ Human-AI Augmentation	10/ Digitization of Work	12/ Responsible Capitalism	5/ Human-AI Augmentation	10/ Digitization of Work	12/ Responsible Capitalism	5/ Human-AI Augmentation	11/ Shifting the Power in the Digital Economy	12/ Responsible Capitalism		5/ Human-AI Augmentation	10/ Digitization of Work	12/ Responsible Capitalism	
13/ Population in Crisis	14/ Decolonized Care Networks		13/ Population in Crisis	14/ Anti- Systemic Movements	16/ Decolonized Care Networks	15/ Queering Social Norms				15/ Queering Social Norms	17/ Automation of Care		

# Appendix D: Scenario Analysis



## CLUSTERED INSIGHTS & LEARNINGS



Thank you for your time and energy in reading this report.

If you have any comments or feedback,  
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