

UNDERSTANDING THE GENDER CARE GAP

PRACTICAL ACTIVITY



THEMATIC AREA

Understanding the Gender Care Gap

ACTIVITY TITLE AND INTRODUCTION

Case Study: Unequal Care, Unequal Opportunities — Exploring the Gender Care Gap

This case study helps participants understand how unequal unpaid care work between women and men creates inequalities in time availability, career opportunities, earnings, health, and overall well-being.

The activity encourages participants to analyse real-life caregiving patterns, identify root causes, and design strategies for reducing the gender care gap in households, workplaces, and communities.

PHOTO



Link: <https://pixabay.com/photos/women-equality-2196594/>

DURATION OF ACTIVITY (IN MINUTES)

65 minutes

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Define the gender care gap and list its common workplace manifestations.
2. Analyse simple, local evidence on how caregiving affects time, career progression and wellbeing.
3. Propose 2–3 concrete, low-cost measures their organisation can trial to reduce the care gap.

AIM OF THE ACTIVITY

Help participants identify how unpaid caregiving affects employees in their organisation, uncover patterns and barriers, and design small practical responses they can implement locally.

MATERIALS REQUIRED FOR ACTIVITY

- Flipchart paper or large sheets
- Sticky notes (two colours)
- Markers and pens
- Timer or clock
- Laptop + projector (optional for showing slides)

STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS

1) Welcome & framing (5 minutes)

Facilitator explains the sessions goal plainly: map observable signs of the gender care gap in our workplace, identify root causes, and design practical next steps we can pilot. Emphasise this is about learning, not blaming.

2) Quick individual reflection (5 minutes)

Each participant writes two short notes (one per sticky note colour):

- Colour A (personal): one care task they personally do regularly (e.g., school run, appointments).
- Colour B (observation): one example they have observed where caregiving affected someone's work (e.g., missed promotion, frequent absences). No names on notes.

3) Group clustering: what patterns emerge? (10 minutes)

Participants place notes on a flipchart under three columns: Time & availability, Career & opportunities, Wellbeing & stress. The facilitator groups similar notes and highlights recurrent themes aloud.

4) Rapid local audit (15 minutes)

Split into small teams (3–4 people). Each team uses a checklist to scan available local data and perceptions. Suggested checklist items:

- Are part-time roles disproportionately filled by women? (yes/no/unknown)
- Have you seen parents (mostly mothers) moving to lower-responsibility roles? (yes/no/unknown)

- Do managers regularly approve flexible requests for men and women equally? (yes/no/unknown)
- Is parental leave uptake by gender tracked? (yes/no/unknown)

Teams use a 1-page sheet to record quick answers and one concrete example they know of (anonymised).

5) Group synthesis: identify 2 priority problem areas (10 minutes)

Each team reports back 1-2 top issues they found (2 minutes per team). Facilitator writes them on a board and the whole group votes to select the two highest-priority problems to address in the session.

6) Design small, concrete interventions (15 minutes)

Working on the selected two problems, teams develop practical actions using this short template:

- Problem statement (1 line)
- Proposed action (1–2 lines) — choose one quick win and one medium-term step
- Owner (who will try it)
- Simple success indicator (how will we know if it worked)

Examples of quick wins: publish a one-page flexible-work request form; introduce a 6-week phased return checklist for parents; schedule “protected hour” for school pick-ups. Medium-term: formalise part-time hours in manager roles; run manager briefing on unconscious bias in promotion decisions.

7) Present actions & commit to next steps (10 minutes)

Teams present their proposed actions (2 minutes each). The facilitator captures owners and deadlines. Agree on a follow-up: who will run a short pilot or present the plan to leadership and when (e.g., 4–6 weeks).

8) Wrap-up & reflection (5 minutes)

Facilitator summarises key insights and invites volunteers to test one action and report back.

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