

ROYAUME DU MAROC



المندوبية السامية للتخطيط

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HAUT-COMMISSARIAT AU PLAN

TOWARD INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT IN MOROCCO

POLICY PATHWAYS FOR ENHANCING WOMEN'S ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION

A POLICY REPORT

March 2025

In partnership with



FOREWORD

Women's participation in Morocco's economy remains central to the country's development strategy. Yet, despite progress in multiple areas, persistent disparities in employment opportunities, working conditions, wages, and unpaid domestic work at home continue to limit women's full engagement in the labor market and their contribution to national development. Addressing these disparities is not only essential for achieving gender equality but also an economic and social imperative, necessitating responses grounded in a thorough understanding of the underlying dynamics.

In this context, this Policy Report, elaborated by the High-Commission for Planning in partnership with UN Women Morocco, represents a continuum of efforts to provide policymakers with analytical tools and evidence-based decision-making. It aims to support the design of coherent and effective public policies towards achieving our country's development goals in terms of eliminating gender inequalities. Through a scientific approach, the report assesses objectively the potential impact of various policy interventions designed to empower women and identify the most effective levers for fostering inclusive growth for all.

As the report uses different surveys conducted over different periods, and taking into account the challenges associated with data coherence, the research team has made a concerted effort to ensure that the information used remains consistent with the country's economic and social realities. This effort is part of an ongoing process to develop an integrated, adaptive analytical framework enabling the dynamic updating of information as new data become available. In this regard, the database that underpins this report will be updated using the 2022/2023 Household Living Standards Survey and the Time Use Survey planned for 2025, in the perspective of a comprehensive and broader analysis of care dynamics.

Finally, detailed documentation of the model, the database, and the underlying methodological aspects will be published in a special issue of *Les Cahiers du Plan*.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The persistent gender gap in Morocco's labor market remains a major obstacle to economic growth, social equity, and inclusive development. Female labor force participation in the country stands at an alarmingly low rate of 19%, far below the global average and significantly behind comparable middle-income countries.

Despite considerable efforts, especially in education, where literacy rates and higher education enrollment for women have improved over the years, the rate of female labor force participation (FLFP) remains low due to persistent structural barriers. These include wage discrimination, labor market segmentation, distribution of work at home, and deeply entrenched social norms that collectively restrict women's access to employment opportunities. This policy report, developed by the High-Commission for Planning in partnership with UN Women Morocco, provides a comprehensive analysis of the challenges constraining female economic participation and assesses the effects of several policies on FLFP and other socio-economic indicators.

The study employs a dynamic Gendered Computable General Equilibrium CGE model specifically developed for Morocco's social and economic context, simulated up to the year 2035. This tool allows for assessments of the potential impact of various policy interventions and social norms shifts on gender equality, economic growth, and household well-being. Through a series of simulations, the report evaluates how different policy-driven changes—including reduced wage discrimination, increased female productivity in GDP activities, increased household service productivity, a reallocation of time-use within household domestic tasks,² expanded childcare services, and reduced gender-based hiring biases—affect women's economic participation and broader socio-economic indicators. The analysis is based on a detailed Care-Extended Social Accounting Matrix (SAM) that captures Morocco's socio-economic structure, disaggregated by sector, labor type, and household characteristics. It integrates data from various sources, namely National Accounts, Labor Force, Time-Use and Living Standards Surveys and also Employment and Household Satellite Accounts.

The simulations explore both individual and combined policy interventions to determine their effectiveness in boosting FLFP. The first scenario focuses on reducing gender wage discrimination, based on the hypothesis that fairer wages will incentivize more women to enter the labor market. The second scenario examines the impact of increasing women's productivity to enhance their employability and earning potential. A third key scenario evaluates a reallocation of household responsibilities, modeling a reduction in the gender gap in unpaid domestic labor. The simulations also consider the impact of higher productivity within household activities and increased government spending on childcare to assess how improved household infrastructure and access to childcare services can facilitate higher female workforce participation. In addition to these individual policy measures, the analysis evaluates the impact of combined interventions on gender disparities. A main insight is that while individual measures may contribute to FLFP improvement, the most significant gains arise from coordinated policy efforts.

Key findings demonstrate that reducing wage discrimination is a strong driver of a higher FLFP, with simulations showing that halving the gender wage gap could increase women's market work time and earnings. However, partial reallocation of unpaid domestic work to men, while increasing the FLFP, may have unintended consequences, such as male labor market withdrawal and reduced household income.

Increasing women's productivity in market activities raises earnings but has a limited effect on employment due to structural constraints. Similarly, enhancing household productivity—through access to time-saving domestic infrastructure which, for example, may reduce commuting time—reduces domestic unpaid domestic work burdens but does not significantly increase the FLFP unless it is accompanied by shifts in time allocation and job accessibility.

1 Unpaid domestic work refers to household tasks like cleaning, cooking, childcare, and caring for dependents, performed without financial compensation. These activities are essential for daily life but are not accounted for in traditional economic measures like GDP. In this report, the terms domestic work, unpaid domestic work, work in the home and Non-GDP Activities are used interchangeably.

Although expanded childcare services may raise the FLFP, its full impact depends on complementary labor market reforms. Investments in childcare are more effective if accompanied by measures such as flexible work arrangements, equitable hiring practices, and efforts to dismantle structural barriers to women's participation.

The most promising results emerge from comprehensive policy packages that combine wage equality, reduced gender-based hiring biases, productivity improvements, and childcare services expansion. Compared to a scenario where current trends continue, such packages could increase the FLFP by approximately 9 percentage points and raise GDP by 3% by 2035. These gains are driven by higher employment rates and female labor incomes, which amplify women's economic empowerment and contribute to a virtuous cycle of improved educational attainment, economic autonomy, and shifts in social norms.

However, the report also highlights the limitations of the aforementioned labor market supply-side policies. While these policies are important for increasing the FLFP, labor demand constraints and market rigidities risk limiting overall employment growth and wage gains. Achieving Morocco's New Development Model target of 6% annual GDP growth will indeed drive job creation. However, complementary labor demand-side policies that stimulate labor-intensive sectors and create sufficient employment opportunities to absorb the growing female workforce would significantly add to employment growth. Without such measures, an increase in the FLFP may lead to underemployment and lower wages rather than effective economic integration.

VERS UN DÉVELOPPEMENT INCLUSIF AU MAROC: VOIES POLITIQUES POUR RENFORCER LA PARTICIPATION ÉCONOMIQUE DES FEMMES

RÉSUMÉ EXÉCUTIF

La persistance des disparités de genre sur le marché du travail au Maroc continue d'être perçue comme l'un des défis majeurs à la croissance économique, à l'équité sociale et au développement inclusif. La participation des femmes se situe à un taux préoccupant de 19%, bien en dessous de la moyenne mondiale et nettement inférieur à celle des pays à revenu intermédiaire similaires.

Malgré des avancées notables, notamment en matière d'éducation – avec l'amélioration des taux d'alphabétisation et de scolarisation dans l'enseignement supérieur des femmes –, la participation économique des femmes continue de reculer en raison de barrières structurelles persistantes. Celles-ci incluent la discrimination salariale, la segmentation du marché du travail et des normes sociales profondément ancrées qui limitent l'accès des femmes aux opportunités d'emploi. Ce rapport, élaboré par le Haut-Commissariat au Plan en partenariat avec ONU Femmes Maroc, présente une analyse compréhensive des obstacles entravant la participation économique des femmes, et examine les effets de diverses politiques et mutations sociales sur leur participation au marché du travail ainsi que sur d'autres indicateurs socio-économiques.

Cette étude s'appuie sur un modèle d'Équilibre Général Calculable Dynamique et Généré, spécifiquement élaboré pour le contexte socio-économique du Maroc et simulé jusqu'en 2035. Cet outil permet d'évaluer l'impact potentiel de diverses interventions politiques et des évolutions des normes sociales sur l'égalité de genre, la croissance économique et le bien-être des ménages. À travers une série de simulations, ce rapport examine comment différentes mesures – notamment la réduction de la discrimination salariale, l'augmentation de la productivité des femmes dans les activités économiques, l'amélioration de la productivité des services domestiques, la réallocation du temps entre les sexes, l'expansion des services de garde d'enfants et la correction des biais à l'embauche fondés sur le genre – influencent la participation économique des femmes ainsi que d'autres indicateurs socio-économiques. L'analyse mobilise également une Matrice de Comptabilité Sociale étendue intégrant le travail domestique et de soins non rémunérés, permettant une représentation détaillée de la structure socio-économique du Maroc selon une désagrégation par secteur, type de travail et caractéristiques des ménages. Les données utilisées proviennent de plusieurs sources, notamment des Comptes Nationaux, des Enquêtes Nationales sur l'Emploi, de l'Enquête Nationale sur le Budget-Temps, de l'Enquête de Consommation et des Dépenses des Ménages ainsi que des Comptes Satellites de l'Emploi et des Ménages.

Les simulations dans ce rapport explorent les effets des diverses mesures politiques tant individuelles que combinées, afin d'évaluer leur efficacité dans la stimulation du taux de participation des femmes au marché du travail. Le premier scénario porte sur la réduction de la discrimination salariale, en stipulant que plus les salaires sont égalitaires, plus les femmes seraient incitées à intégrer le marché du travail. Le deuxième scénario illustre l'impact de l'augmentation de la productivité des femmes dans les activités économiques afin de favoriser la participation des femmes dans le marché du travail et d'optimiser leur revenu salarial. Le troisième scénario mesure l'impact de la réallocation des responsabilités au sein du ménage, en simulant une réduction de l'écart entre les deux sexes dans le travail domestique non rémunéré. Le rapport prend également en compte l'amélioration de la productivité des tâches domestiques ainsi que l'augmentation des dépenses publiques en termes de services de garde d'enfants, afin d'analyser dans quelle mesure l'amélioration des infrastructures domestiques et l'accès élargi aux services de garde peuvent favoriser l'intégration des femmes dans le marché du travail.

Enfin, en plus des mesures et mutations prises individuellement, ce rapport évalue l'effet de leur combinaison sur la réduction des disparités de genre. Les résultats montrent que si chaque mesure contribue à renforcer la participation économique des femmes, les impacts les plus significatifs émergent d'une approche coordonnée et intégrée des politiques publiques.

Les principaux constats montrent que la réduction de la discrimination salariale entre les deux sexes représente l'un des leviers essentiels pour accroître la participation des femmes au marché du travail. La simulation révèle qu'une réduction de la discrimination salariale de moitié augmenterait le temps de travail des femmes sur le marché et de leurs revenus. D'un autre côté, la réallocation partielle des activités domestiques aux hommes, bien qu'elle soutienne la participation des femmes dans le marché du travail, pourrait avoir des effets inattendus, tels qu'un retrait des hommes du marché du travail et une diminution du bien-être des ménages.

L'augmentation de la productivité des femmes dans les activités économiques accroît le revenu des femmes, cependant, son impact sur l'emploi demeure limité en raison de contraintes structurelles. De même, l'amélioration de la productivité des ménages grâce à l'amélioration de l'infrastructure domestique – notamment grâce à un meilleur accès aux infrastructures permettant de réduire le temps consacré aux tâches ménagères – allège la charge du travail non rémunéré sans pour autant entraîner une hausse significative de la participation des femmes au marché du travail, à moins qu'elle ne s'accompagne d'une réallocation du temps et d'une amélioration de l'accessibilité à l'emploi.

Bien que l'expansion des services de gardes d'enfants facilite l'intégration des femmes, cette mesure dépend d'autres réformes complémentaires du marché du travail. L'investissement dans ces services est plus efficace s'il est accompagné de mesures telles que la flexibilisation du temps de travail, des pratiques de recrutement équitables et des actions visant à lever les barrières structurelles entravant la participation économique des femmes.

Les résultats les plus prometteurs émergent de politiques et mutations intégrées combinant l'égalité salariale, la réduction des biais de recrutement fondé sur le genre, l'amélioration de la productivité et l'expansion des services de garde d'enfants. Par rapport au scénario actuel dans lequel les mêmes structures économiques et sociales restent en place jusqu'en 2035, de telles mesures pourraient augmenter le taux de participation des femmes d'environ 9 points de pourcentage et de faire progresser le PIB de 3%. Ces résultats découlent de l'augmentation des taux d'emploi et des revenus des femmes, renforçant leur autonomisation économique et contribuant à un cercle vertueux d'amélioration du niveau d'éducation, d'autonomie économique et des normes sociales.

Toutefois, le rapport met également en évidence les limites des politiques axées uniquement sur l'offre de travail. Si ces mesures sont essentielles pour accroître la participation des femmes, les contraintes liées à la demande de travail et les rigidités du marché risquent de freiner la croissance de l'emploi et l'augmentation des salaires. La réalisation de l'objectif du Nouveau Modèle de Développement du Maroc, visant une croissance annuelle du PIB de 6 %, favorisera la création d'emplois. Cependant, des politiques complémentaires axées sur la demande de travail, stimulant les secteurs à forte intensité de main-d'œuvre et générant suffisamment d'opportunités d'emploi pour absorber l'augmentation de la main-d'œuvre féminine contribueraient de manière significative à la croissance de l'emploi. À défaut, une hausse de la participation des femmes pourrait entraîner une augmentation du sous-emploi et une stagnation des salaires plutôt qu'une intégration économique effective.

ويتناول السيناريو الثالث إعادة توزيع المهام داخل الأسر، من خلال محاكاة انخفاض الفجوة بين الجنسين في الأشغال المنزلية. كما تأخذ الدراسة بعين الاعتبار أثر ارتفاع الإنتاجية في الأنشطة الأسرية وزيادة الإنفاق العمومي على خدمات رعاية الأطفال، بهدف تقييم مدى مساهمة تعزيز البنية التحتية الأسرية وتوسيع نطاق هذه الخدمات في رفع نسبة إدماج النساء في سوق الشغل.

إضافة إلى ذلك، يحلل التقرير أثر الجمع بين مختلف التدخلات السياسية لقياس انعكاساتها على الحد من الفجوات بين الجنسين. وقد أبرزت نتائج هذه المحاكاة أن السياسات أو التغييرات «المعزولة» قد يكون لها تأثير إيجابي على مشاركة المرأة في سوق الشغل، غير أن تبني مقاربة متكاملة تعتمد على سياسات متداخلة ومتراصة يساهم في تحقيق أثر أكثر عمقاً واستدامة على ديناميات الإدماج الاقتصادي.

تُظهر نتائج هذه الدراسة أن تقليص التمييز في الأجور بين الجنسين يعدّ عاملاً رئيسياً في تعزيز مشاركة المرأة في سوق الشغل، حيث توضح المحاكاة أن تخفيض فجوة الأجور إلى النصف قد يساهم في زيادة الوقت الذي تقضيه النساء في العمل المأجور ورفع مستوى مداخيلهن. في المقابل، يمكن أن ينتج عن إعادة توزيع العمل غير المأجور داخل الأسر زيادة مشاركة النساء في سوق الشغل، غير أنها قد تؤدي أيضاً إلى انخفاض أكثر حدة في مشاركة الرجال، مما قد يؤثر على مستوى الرفاه الأسري.

أما فيما يخص تحسين إنتاجية النساء في الأنشطة الاقتصادية المأجورة، فتشير النتائج إلى أن ذلك يساهم في زيادة مداخيلهن، لكنه يظل محدود التأثير على معدلات التشغيل بسبب العوائق البنوية التي توطر سوق الشغل. وبالمثل، فإن تحسين إنتاجية العمل الأسري، عبر توفير بنية تحتية منزلية موفرة للوقت، يساعد في تقليل الأعباء غير المأجورة، لكنه لا يؤدي بالضرورة إلى رفع معدلات مشاركة المرأة في سوق الشغل ما لم يكن مصحوباً بإعادة توزيع للوقت وتحسين شروط الولوج إلى فرص العمل. ورغم أن توسيع نطاق خدمات رعاية الأطفال يشكل عاملاً داعماً لمشاركة النساء في سوق الشغل، إلا أن تأثيره يظل رهيباً بإصلاحات موازية. وبقضي تحقيق أثر مستدام في هذا المجال تبني سياسات تعزز مرونة أكبر في عقود العمل، واعتماد ممارسات توظيف أكثر إنصافاً، واتخاذ تدابير لمعالجة العوائق البنوية التي تحد من مشاركة المرأة في الاقتصاد.

تُظهر نتائج المحاكاة أن تبني مقاربة متكاملة من السياسات تشمل تقليص التمييز في الأجور، والحد من التحيز في التوظيف، وتحسين إنتاجية النساء، وتوسيع نطاق خدمات رعاية الأطفال، من شأنه أن يؤدي إلى آثار إيجابية ملموسة. وتشير التقديرات إلى أن هذه التدخلات، مقارنةً بالسيناريو الحالي والذي تستمر فيه نفس الهياكل الاقتصادية والاجتماعية السارية، يمكن أن ترفع معدل مشاركة النساء في سوق الشغل بنحو 9 نقاط مئوية، مما قد يساهم في زيادة الناتج الداخلي الإجمالي بنسبة 3% بحلول سنة 2035. وتتحقق هذه المكاسب من خلال تحسن معدلات تشغيل النساء وارتفاع مداخيلهن، الأمر الذي يعزز تمكينهن الاقتصادي، ويساهم في إحداث تفاعلات إيجابية تشمل تحسين مستويات التعليم، وتعزيز الاستقلالية الاقتصادية، وإحداث تغييرات تدريجية في الأنماط الاجتماعية.

غير أنه يجدر الإشارة إلى أن السياسات التي تركز على تعزيز عرض اليد العاملة النسوية وحدها تظل غير كافية لتحقيق إدماج اقتصادي فعلي. فعلى الرغم من أهميتها في رفع معدلات مشاركة المرأة في سوق الشغل، إلا أن قيود الطلب على اليد العاملة والجمود الذي يميز سوق الشغل قد تحد من إمكانيات خلق فرص العمل وهو الأجور، مما يقلل من الأثر الفعلي لهذه التدخلات.

وضمن هذا الإطار، فإن تحقيق الأهداف التي حددها النموذج التنموي الجديد، ولا سيما تحقيق معدل نمو سنوي للناتج الداخلي الإجمالي بنسبة 6% كفيل بخلق فرص شغل مهمة. ومع ذلك، فإن تنشيط الطلب على اليد العاملة النسوية يقتضي تبني سياسات موازية تستهدف تحفيز القطاعات ذات الكثافة التشغيلية العالية، وضمان دينامية كافية لسوق الشغل لاستيعاب عدد النساء المتزايد في النشاط الاقتصادي. من دون هذه التدابير، فإن ارتفاع مشاركة النساء في سوق الشغل قد يؤدي إلى ارتفاع معدلات الشغل الناقص وانخفاض الأجور بدلاً من تحقيق إدماج اقتصادي فعلي ومستدام يعزز النمو والتنمية الشاملة.

نحو تنمية شاملة بالمغرب : سياسات لتعزيز المشاركة الاقتصادية للنساء

ملخص تنفيذي

يعد التفاوت القائم بين الجنسين في سوق الشغل إحدى الخصائص البنيوية التي تؤثر على ديناميات التشغيل والإدماج الاقتصادي بالمغرب. فلا تزال نسبة مشاركة النساء في النشاط الاقتصادي عند مستوى منخفض لا يتجاوز 19%، وهو معدل يقل بشكل واضح عن المتوسط العالمي البالغ 69%، كما أنه أدنى من المستويات المسجلة في دول ذات دخل متوسط، حيث يصل إلى 50%. ورغم الجهود المبذولة، خاصة في مجال التعليم، حيث سجلت تحسنات مهمة في معدلات الإلمام بالقراءة والكتابة والولوج إلى التعليم العالي، إلا أن مشاركة النساء في النشاط الاقتصادي ظلت تتراجع على مدى السنوات الأخيرة. ويرجع ذلك إلى استمرار مجموعة من العوامل البنيوية، من بينها الفجوات في الأجور، والتوزيع القطاعي للعمل في سوق الشغل، بالإضافة إلى العوامل الاجتماعية والثقافية التي تؤثر على إمكانيات ولوج المرأة إلى فرص العمل. وفي هذا السياق، يقدم هذا التقرير السياسي، الذي أعدته المندوبية السامية للتخطيط بشراكة مع هيئة الأمم المتحدة للمرأة بالمغرب، تحليلاً لمحددات المشاركة الاقتصادية للنساء، كما يستعرض تأثير عدد من السياسات والتغيرات في الأنماط الاجتماعية على معدلات تشغيل المرأة وعلى المؤشرات الاقتصادية والاجتماعية ذات الصلة.

تعتمد هذه الدراسة على نموذج ديناميكي للتوازن العام القابل للحوسبة مصمم وفق مقارنة تأخذ بعين الاعتبار الفروقات بين الجنسين، وكذا السياق الاجتماعي والاقتصادي للمغرب، مع محاكاة تمتد لسنة 2035. يتيح هذا النموذج تقييم التأثير المحتمل لمجموعة من التدخلات السياسية والتغيرات في الأنماط الاجتماعية على كل من المساواة بين الجنسين، والنمو الاقتصادي، ومستويات رفاه الأسر من خلال مجموعة من السيناريوهات. وتشمل هذه السياسات تقليص فجوة الأجور، وتحسين إنتاجية النساء في الأنشطة الاقتصادية المساهمة في الناتج الداخلي الإجمالي، وزيادة إنتاجية الخدمات المنزلية، وإعادة توزيع استعمال الزمن، وتوسيع خدمات رعاية الأطفال، ومعالجة التحيزات في التوظيف.

يعتمد هذا التحليل على مصفوفة حسابات اجتماعية موسعة تشمل العمل المنزلي والرعاية غير المأجورين، مما يسمح بوصف دقيق للبنية الاقتصادية والاجتماعية للمغرب من خلال تصنيفها حسب القطاعات الاقتصادية، وأنواع اليد العاملة، وخصائص الأسر. وقد تم بناء هذه المصفوفة استناداً إلى مصادر بيانات متعددة، تشمل الحسابات الوطنية، والبحوث الوطنية حول التشغيل، وبحوث استعمال الزمن، وبحوث حول استهلاك ونفقات الأسر، إلى جانب الحسابات التابعة الخاصة بالأسر والتشغيل. تتيح هذه المحاكاة تحليل التدخلات السياسية وتغيرات الأنماط الاجتماعية، سواء كتدخلات مستقلة أو كحزمة متكاملة، بهدف قياس مدى فعاليتها في تعزيز إدماج المرأة في سوق الشغل. يركز السيناريو الأول على تقليص التمييز في الأجور بين الجنسين، انطلاقاً من فرضية أن تحقيق مستوى أعلى من العدالة في تحديد الأجور من شأنه أن يعزز من ولوج النساء إلى سوق العمل. أما السيناريو الثاني، فيبحث في أثر تحسين إنتاجية النساء على فرص تشغيلهن ومستويات مداخيلهن.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

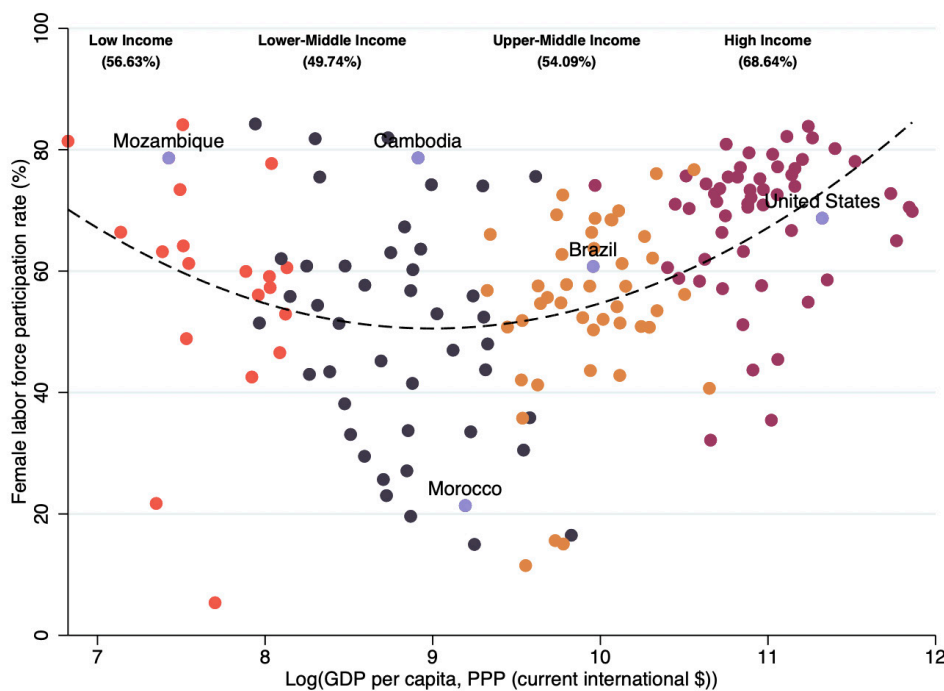
CGE	Computable General Equilibrium
FLFP	Female Labor Force Participation
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEM-Gender	General Equilibrium Model - Gender
HSA	Household Satellite Account
HServ	Household Services
LFS	Labor Force Survey
LMIC	Lower Middle-Income Country
NDM	New Development Model
SAM	Social Accounting Matrix
SUTs	Supply and Use Tables
TFP	Total Factor Productivity
TIEA	Table of Integrated Economic Accounts
TUS	Time-Use Survey
UMIC	Upper Middle-Income Country

WOMEN'S ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION IN MOROCCO: CONTEXT AND CHALLENGES

The continuing downward trend in Morocco's labor force participation rates reflects deep and complex challenges, particularly for women. Despite various policy efforts to empower women, persistent barriers continue to limit their participation in the labor market. As a result, the female labor force participation rate remains critically low at around 19%,² far below the male participation rate of 69%.

In many countries, declining female labor force participation is linked to economic development patterns. At an early stage of development, women often take up low-paid jobs or engage as family workers,³ raising participation rates. As income levels rise, labor participation temporarily declines as women invest in education, skill development and households' responsibilities, before re-entering the workforce in higher-skilled jobs, as illustrated in Figure 1. Similar patterns have been observed in countries like Spain, Chile, and Bangladesh, where the FLFP has increased by 20 to 30%-age points since 1990, while others, including Burkina Faso and Guinea, have seen declines of a similar magnitude.⁴

Figure 1. Female Labor Force Participation and Development



Note: This figure represents countries with different income levels and FLFP rate, where each bullet corresponds to a country. The y-axis represents the FLFP (% of female population ages 15-64), while the x-axis shows GDP per capita (PPP, current international \$) in log scale. The dotted line represents a non-linear fitted trend, representing the U-shaped relationship between economic development and FLFP. In parentheses, the average FLFP in each country group.

Source: Based on data from the 2025 World Development Indicators

2 HCP, 2024 Labor Force Survey.

3 Family workers are individuals who perform unpaid domestic work for a family-owned business or household, contributing to its operations without receiving formal wages or salary.

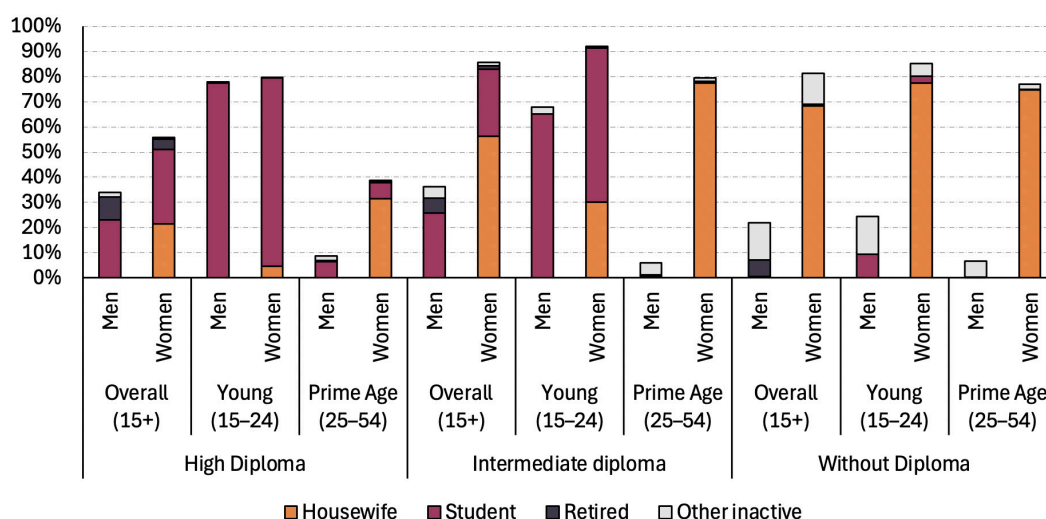
4 Table 2 in the appendix presents Female Labor Force Participation in 2023, its variation since 1990, and the evolution of income classifications for selected countries.

However, this link does not fully explain Morocco’s low FLFP level, as it remains significantly below the average of 50% observed in countries at a comparable level of GDP per capita. Such a gap suggests the presence of additional economic and social barriers that contribute to weakening women’s access to and retention in the labor market.

A recent study by the HCP has shed light on these barriers by analyzing the determinants of women’s participation in the labor market.⁵ The study found that, in general, compared to other groups of women, those with higher diploma are less likely to be outside the labor force. However, the study also found that participating in the labor market, even among this category of women, is not straightforward and depends on multiple factors.

For instance, while Morocco has made significant progress in educational attainment—evidenced by an increase in female literacy from 57.9% in 2014 to 67.6% in 2024,⁶ as well as parity in higher education graduation rates—the labor force participation rate for educated women stands at only 44.3%, compared to 66.1% for men with similar educational level in 2021. Notably, among women outside the labor force with higher diploma, 21% identify as “housewives”. This share increases to 32% in the prime working-age group (25–54). Moreover, a considerable share of young women is neither employed nor enrolled in school. In 2021, 37% of inactive women aged 15 to 24 were identified as “housewives,” while only 61% continued their education in stark contrast with inactive young men in the same age group where 94% were students.⁷ This disparity is even more pronounced among women with intermediate diplomas (30% housewives vs. 61% students) and those without diplomas (77% housewives) (see Figure 2 below).

Figure 2. Distribution of Inactivity by Types, Gender, Age Group, and Education Level



Note: The height of each bar represents the inactivity rate, which is composed of four categories: Housewife, Student, Retired, and Other Inactive. Prime age (25 - 54) refers to individuals who are typically in their most active labor force participation years.

Source: HCP, 2021, Labor Force Survey

Beyond individual endowments, economic barriers contribute to constraining women’s access to the labor market. A significant proportion of women remain concentrated in sectors characterized by precarious employment, particularly in agriculture, which employs 45% of total working women compared to 27% of men.⁸ Additionally, persistent wage disparities further limit women’s economic opportunities, with urban wage worker women earn,

5 HCP (2024a). Analyse intersectionnelle de la participation des femmes au marché du travail marocain : Une étude comparative entre la région de Casablanca-Settat et celle de l’Oriental.

6 According to the 2024 Census. Illiteracy rate is calculated for the population aged 10 and over,

7 HCP, 2021 Labor Force Survey.

8 HCP, 2021 Labor Force Survey.

on average, 22% less than men.⁹ These inequalities are even more pronounced in rural areas, where 72% of female workers engage in unpaid employment, compared to only 16% of their male counterparts.¹⁰

On the other hand, social norms exacerbate these constraints through socio-cultural expectations regarding the role of women as primarily responsible for domestic work. Women dedicate nearly seven times as much time to domestic work as men—an estimated five hours and five minutes per day versus only 43 minutes. Social biases in the labor market further limit women's professional opportunities, as 61% of respondents in the 2016 National Survey on the Perception of Sustainable Development Measures stated that *"priority should be given to men in employment opportunities."* Additionally, 63% of respondents believe that *"women's employment compromises their children's education."* These perceptions shape hiring decisions and workplace environments, making it more difficult for women to access stable and high-paying jobs.

In this respect, addressing gender inequalities and promoting an equitable and inclusive labor market was positioned as a cornerstone of Morocco's New Development Model. The third Priority Area of the NDM, "Opportunities for Inclusion for All and a Stronger Social Bond," emphasizes the pivotal role of women's empowerment as a key driver for economic growth and social development. In addition, the NDM underscores that promoting gender equality—especially increasing FLFP—is foundational for harnessing the full potential of Morocco's workforce and foster inclusive progress.

With the objective of reaching 45% FLFP rate by 2035, the New Development Model advocates addressing deeply rooted economic and social barriers that limit women's empowerment. On the economic side, the NDM emphasizes expanding secure and decent employment opportunities for women and promoting female entrepreneurship. It advocates enhancing social protection, developing infrastructure such as affordable childcare and safe public transportation, and implementing equal pay practices alongside expanded educational and vocational training opportunities.

On the social front, the NDM underscores the importance of changing cultural norms that place disproportionate household responsibilities on women and promotes policies to reduce the work at home and enable their economic engagement. The NDM also promotes fair hiring practices in employment and encourages a deeper social commitment to gender equality and parity. Integral to this vision is a firm zero-tolerance stance on violence and discrimination against women, reinforcing the NDM's promotion of a safe and inclusive environment for all.

It is in this context that this policy report aims to provide a qualitative and quantitative analysis of how economic reforms and shifts in social norms could impact gender disparities in labor force participation, as well as broader economic outcomes. Using a gendered Computable General Equilibrium Model (GEM-Gender Morocco)—an analytical framework that provides a structural data-driven view of the economy—the report assesses the effectiveness of key actions aimed at promoting gender equality in time use and labor income. These actions include reducing wage discrimination, enhancing women's productivity, improving access to affordable childcare, promoting shared domestic responsibilities, and enhancing household service productivity. The report quantifies the potential impact of these measures on female labor force participation, economic growth, and overall well-being by 2035, a time frame that is aligned with that of Morocco's New Development Model goals. By identifying the most effective strategies for addressing structural barriers, the report aims to inform policies that foster a sustainable, inclusive and equitable labor market.

9 HCP (2024b). Inégalités des salaires hommes-femmes en milieu urbain : Rôle de la discrimination sexiste.

10 This refers to women who are engaged in the labor market as family workers.

Box 1. Simulated Policy Scenarios for Boosting Female Labor Participation and Advancing Gender Equality in Morocco

The simulations of this report analyze the potential effects by 2035 of policy changes and socio-economic shifts on female labor force participation and gender equality, both within households and in the labor market. The scenarios, which are presented in Table 1, are designed to assess how targeted interventions could address structural barriers to female employment. The simulations are divided into a base scenario, representing a business-as-usual projection, and a series of alternative scenarios, each introducing specific shocks aimed at reducing gender disparities.

The first set of scenarios includes individual shocks focused on single policy dimensions. These include a 50% reduction in wage discrimination against women,¹¹ a 5% increase in female productivity within GDP activities, and a 10% increase in productivity within household production, for both men and women. Additionally, the scenarios model a 12.5% reduction in the gender gap in time allocated to household tasks¹² and a boost in government spending on childcare, equivalent to 0.25% of base GDP. These are designed to assess how specific policies could affect time-use and broader socio-economic outcomes, with the aim of identifying the policy measures that may be most effective when setting policy priorities.

11 For instance, if women earn 50% less than men due to wage discrimination, eliminating 50% of this gap means reducing the wage disparity from 50% to 25%.

12 For example, if women contribute 80% of the time spent on household tasks and men 20% (a gap of 60%; for example 40 and 10 hours per week, respectively), after a 12.5% reduction in the gap, women would contribute 73.75% and men 26.25% (a gap of 47.5%; in this example 36.875 and 13.125 hours, respectively).

Table 1. Definition of non-base simulations

Name	Description
Individual shocks	
Wage Disc. -50%	50% reduction in wage discrimination against women
Labor Prod. (GDP) +5%	5% increase in female labor productivity in GDP activities
Labor Prod. (Hhd. Serv) +10%	10% increase in male and female labor productivity in household production
Time-Use Gap (HServ) -12.5%	12.5% reduction in male-female gap in household production time
Gov. Childcare	increase in government childcare spending equivalent to 0.25% of base GDP
Combined shocks	
Combined 1	Wage Disc. -50% + Labor Prod. (GDP) +5% + Labor Prod. (HServ) +10% + Time-Use Gap (HServ) -12.5% + Gov. Childcare +0.25%
Combined 2	Combined 1 + doubling of male-female substitution elasticities in GDP production
Combined 3	Combined 2 + Time-Use Gap (HServ) -12.5%
Combined 4	Combined 3 + 100% (not 50%) reduction in wage discrimination + quadrupled (not doubled) substitution elasticities in GDP production

Note: All shocks are introduced gradually during the period 2025-2029 and kept in place during the remaining simulation period.

The analysis also incorporates combined shocks to examine the effects of coordinated policy actions. For instance, *Combined 1* integrates reduction in wage discrimination, increase in female productivity within GDP activities, enhanced household productivity, and elevated government spending on childcare. As the combined scenarios progress, they introduce additional measures to gauge the full impact and depth of the policies and social norms changes. For instance, *Combined 1* integrates reduction in wage discrimination, increase in female productivity within GDP activities, enhanced household productivity, and elevated government spending on childcare. *Combined 2*, *Combined 3*, and *Combined 4* build on *Combined 1* by adding additional adjustments related to substitution elasticities (reflecting gender-based hiring biases), further reductions in wage discrimination, and more equitable sharing of the work at home.¹³

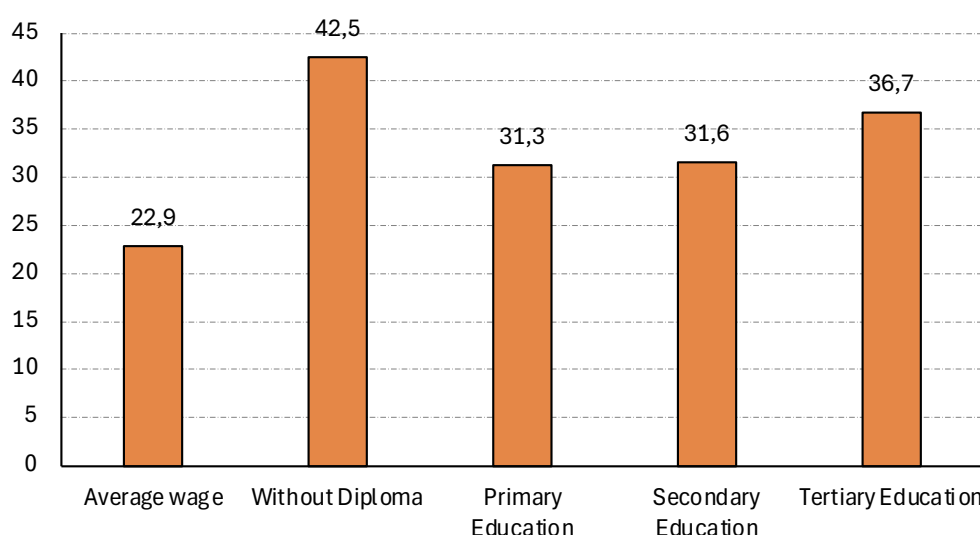
13 In production, the elasticity of substitution measures the extent to which one input (e.g., male labor) is replaced by another (e.g., female labor) in response to relative wage changes—a higher elasticity indicates a stronger response.

TACKLING WAGE DISCRIMINATION FOR AN INCLUSIVE LABOR MARKET

The gender wage gap in Morocco remains high in many sectors, driven by a combination of structural and cultural factors. Historically, limited educational and vocational opportunities for women have led to productivity-related differences that contributed to wage disparities. However, non-productivity related factors still play a major role in determining female wages. A recent study by the HCP estimates the average¹⁴ gender wage gap in urban areas at 22% as of 2019.¹⁵ Compared to previous historical data, this gap is smaller than the 1999 estimate of 30.4%; however, it still illustrates the wide disparities in earnings between men and women.

The study reveals also that the wage gap is not uniform across educational levels. As illustrated in Figure 3, individuals without diplomas and those with tertiary education degrees have the highest wage gap compared to disparity observed among those with primary and secondary education. Women without diplomas earn on average 42.5% less than men with comparable educational levels, while women with higher educational attainment face a wage gap of 36.7% compared to their male counterparts.

Figure 3. Gender Pay Gap in Urban Area by Education Level (as a Percentage of Women’s Average Wage)



Note: This figure illustrates wage gaps across educational levels, considering both productivity-related and non-productivity-related factors.

Source: HCP (2024b)

Beyond productivity-related differences, cultural biases continue to influence wage-setting practices, contributing to gender-based wage discrimination and, ultimately, large wage disparities. In fact, despite Morocco’s commitment to gender equality, as outlined in the Moroccan Labor Code provisions that mandate equal pay and prohibit gender-based discrimination, progress in reducing wage discrimination has been slow.¹⁶ The HCP

14 A gap that may be due to productivity-related differences or wage discrimination.

15 HCP (2024b). Inégalités des salaires hommes-femmes en milieu urbain : Rôle de la discrimination sexiste.

16 Article 9 of Title III of the Moroccan Labor Code stipulate that “Any discrimination against employees based on race, color, sex, disability, marital status, religion, political opinion, trade union affiliation, national ancestry, or social origin is also prohibited if it results in violating or undermining the principle of equal opportunity or equal treatment in employment or the exercise of a profession. This applies in particular to hiring, work management and distribution, vocational training, wages, promotion, the granting of social benefits, disciplinary measures, and dismissal.”

study reveals that discrimination accounts for 91% of the observed wage gap, while only 9% is due to differences in education, experience, or skills.¹⁷ This discrimination manifests itself through the undervaluation of female attributes in the labor market and the overvaluation of male characteristics. The “female disadvantage” alone accounts for 45% of the unexplained wage gap, highlighting how women’s qualifications and contributions are systematically devalued, limiting their earnings potential. In contrast, the “male advantage” reflects preferential treatment or higher perceived value assigned to male work, further widening the pay gap. Together, these dynamics emphasize the persistent structural barriers women face in achieving wage equality.

These discrepancies not only impact household income but also discourage women from pursuing employment, often leading them to focus mainly on household responsibilities as a second-best choice. Consequently, many skilled women remain outside the labor market, increasing talent misallocations that limit overall economic productivity, while also deepening income inequalities between men and women.

To evaluate the economic implications of reducing wage discrimination by 50%, a simulation was conducted to analyze shifts in employment, time-use patterns, and income distribution between genders. This policy intervention assumes that wage discrimination can be reduced through stronger enforcement of equal pay laws, increased wage transparency, and employer incentives to pay fair wages. By correcting or overcoming biases that systematically overestimate (underestimate) male (female) abilities and productivity, firms are assumed to adjust their hiring behavior, leading to a reallocation of employment opportunities and a rise in demand for female workers. By making wage-setting practices more equitable, firms are expected to adjust their hiring behavior, reallocating employment opportunities and increasing demand for female workers.

Box 2. Interpreting the GEM-Gender Morocco Results

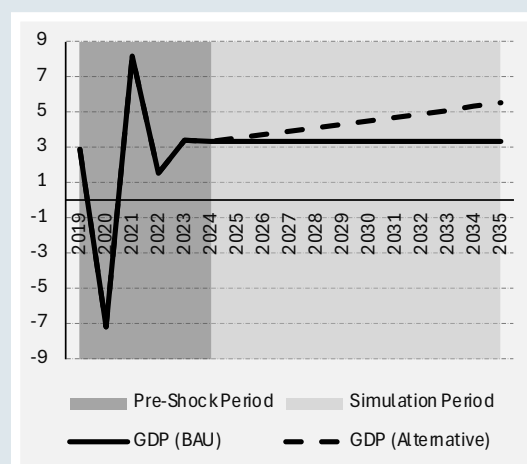
The results presented in this report compare policy outcomes to a *business-as-usual (BAU) scenario* that projects all model variables to 2035 under the assumption of a constant real GDP growth rate of 3.3% per year.

All scenarios are run for the period from 2019 (the base year for the SAM and rest of the database) to 2035. The model data are calibrated so that the solution for 2019 exactly replicates the detailed 2019 dataset. Given the report’s forward-looking perspective, it focuses on the results for 2024 and onwards. For all scenarios, the results are identical for 2019-2024; thus, 2024 provides a common starting point when results for different scenarios are compared.

All reported changes—whether in GDP, labor force participation, or other indicators—are measured relative to the BAU scenario and are expressed as *percentage changes or percentage point changes*.

- **Percentage change (%)** measures the relative change in a variable compared to its BAU value.
- **Percentage point change (%-age points)** applies to rates or ratios, indicating an absolute difference between scenario value (point B on the graph) and BAU value (point A).

Figure 4. Baseline vs. Simulation: An Example



17 HCP (2024b). Inégalités des salaires hommes-femmes en milieu urbain : Rôle de la discrimination sexiste.

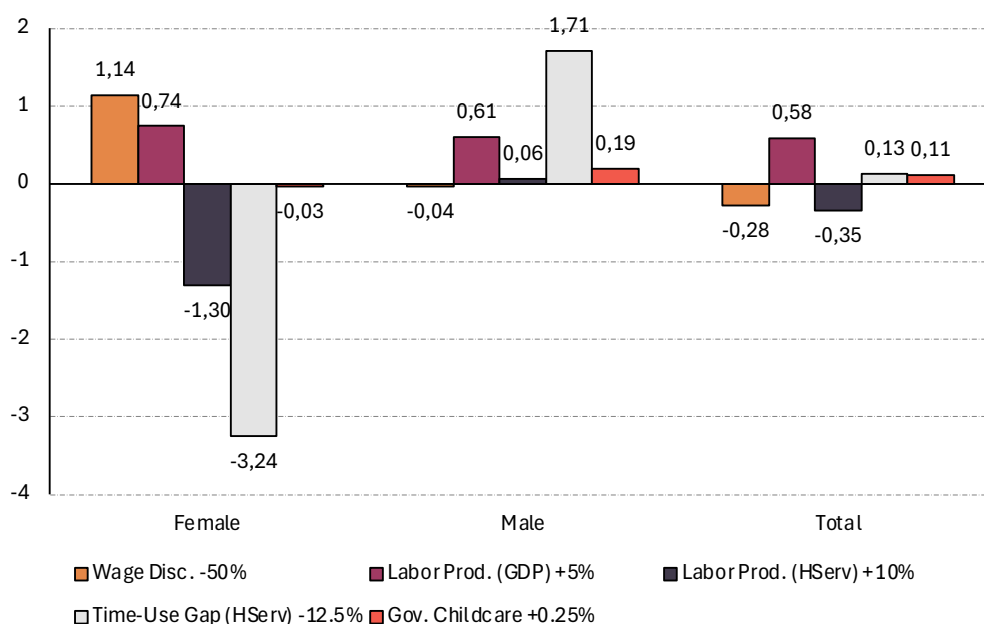
The wage discrimination reduction simulation leads to substantial wage increases for women across all education levels, significantly altering labor market participation outcomes. The highest wage increases are observed among women with high diploma (2.83%), followed by female workers without diploma (2.31%) and those with intermediate diploma (1.62%). These wage improvements strengthen the incentive for women to enter and remain in the labor market, particularly in higher-skilled segments.

The influence of wages on employment outcomes is not uniform and varies depending on educational attainment. Women without a diploma experience the highest increase in employment, with a rise of 2.1%-age points, closely followed by women holding a higher diploma, who see a growth of 1.3%-age points. In contrast, the employment rate for women with an intermediate diploma remains virtually unchanged, showing minimal change.

The strongest gains in market employment are recorded for women with higher diplomas. Employment gains are observed across multiple sectors, with notable increases in manufacturing and services, where initial gender wage disparities were higher. Firms in these sectors adjust hiring practices to account for reduced wage discrimination, leading to greater female employment in higher-paying jobs. Conversely, male employment in these sectors declines slightly as firms rebalance labor demand.

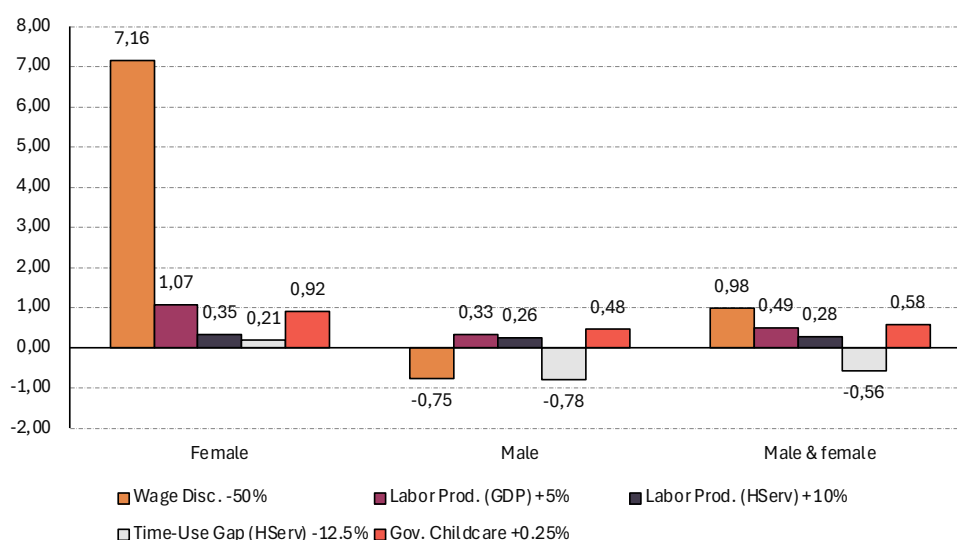
Men’s labor adjustments are more modest, with a slight decline of 0.27%-age points in time spent on market work and a marginal increase of 0.08%-age points in household services. Together, these shifts suggest that despite relative redistribution of labor, the gendered division of unpaid domestic work remains largely unchanged.

Figure 5. Single shocks: Wage by gender in 2035 (% Change from base)¹⁸



Those changes are also reflected when analyzing time-use reallocation. The redistribution of labor in response to reduced wage discrimination results in measurable shifts in time allocation across market work, household production, and leisure. Women’s market work increases by 1.08%-age points, while their time spent on unpaid household services declines by 0.52%-age points. This reduction is more pronounced in non-care household services (0.47%-age points) than in care-related activities (0.05%-age points), indicating that while women reallocate time toward market work, caregiving responsibilities remain less flexible.

¹⁸ The figures in this report serve as illustrations of key findings rather than direct visual complements to specific paragraphs. Figures 5, 6, 11, 12, 14 and 15 present results from single-shock simulations across various economic and social variables, while Figures 22, 23, 24, 25, 26 and 27 correspond to combined policy shocks.

Figure 6. Single shocks: Labor income by gender in 2035 (% Change from base)

Source: GEM-Gender Morocco Simulation Results

As a consequence of higher employment rates for women, income distribution shifts accordingly, with the most substantial gains observed among female workers without a diploma, who experience a 16.72% increase in labor income. This is followed by women with higher diploma (7.8%) and those with intermediate diploma (4.6%). In contrast, the effects on male employment and wages are relatively small, as eliminating wage discrimination does not lead to job or income losses for men. Male workers without diploma experience a 0.16% decline in total labor income, while reductions for male workers with intermediate diploma and high diploma are 1.32% and 0.35%, respectively.

Finally, despite slight reductions in labor income, male labor force participation remains largely unchanged against an increase of female participation by 1.13%-age points. As a result, firms appear to be hiring more women without significantly displacing male workers.

Box 3. Morocco's GEM-Gender Model Overview

The GEM-Gender model for Morocco is a dynamic computable general equilibrium (CGE) model designed to analyze the impact of economic policies through a gendered lens. The model integrates key dimensions of gender disparities, including labor market dynamics, wage differentials, and unpaid household work, to assess how economic and policy changes influence women's and men's participation in the labor force and overall economic outcomes.

This model operates within a recursive dynamic framework, allowing for long-term policy evaluations by incorporating demographic trends, capital accumulation, and evolving labor market dynamics. The recursive structure assumes that economic agents make short-term myopic decisions, meaning that choices in each period are based on current conditions, influenced by past decisions, and not on expectations about the future.

At its core, the model is built around a gendered and care-extended Social Accounting Matrix (SAM) for Morocco (see Box 4 for more details), which structures economic transactions between households, firms, the government, and the rest of the world. This framework ensures a comprehensive representation of both market-based production (GDP activities) and non-market household production (non-GDP activities).

Production Structure and Market Linkages. The model has a nested production technology, where firms use capital and labor inputs to produce goods and services. These outputs are then allocated between the domestic market and exports based on relative prices. The government plays a central role in driving economic outcomes through taxation, subsidies, and public expenditures, particularly in social infrastructure such as childcare and education, which directly influence female labor supply and household decisions.

Time Allocation and Utility Maximization. The GEM-Gender model captures the trade-offs individuals face in allocating their time between market work, unpaid household work, and leisure within a general equilibrium framework. This allocation follows a utility-maximizing decision process constrained by a fixed total time availability. Households derive utility from consumption, leisure, and household-produced services, with preferences guiding their choices. Household decision-making also follows a nested structure. At the first level, individuals decide between total work (market + household) and leisure, prioritizing work if its perceived benefits outweigh those of leisure. At the second level, time allocated to work is split between market and household work based on relative returns— switching toward more market work if market wages increase relative to the implicit value of household labor and vice versa.

Labor Market and Gendered Time Allocation. The GEM-Gender model explicitly disaggregates labor by gender and education level, distinguishing between different types of work. The model captures:

- Wage differentials, arising from both productivity differences and gender-based discrimination.
- Occupational segmentation, where men and women tend to be concentrated in different sectors.
- Household time allocation, where labor supply decisions are influenced by wages, social norms, and policy interventions.

The model accounts for how changes in policies or economic conditions alter time-use patterns, affecting labor market participation and overall productivity. The persistence of wage differences within labor categories (by education and sector) is also modeled, reflecting sector-specific job conditions.

Public Finance, Macroeconomic Balances, and Policy Analysis. The model integrates public finance mechanisms and macroeconomic balances, allowing for simulations of fiscal policies aimed at reducing gender disparities. Among other policies, it evaluates how:

- Government spending on childcare, education, and social services impacts labor supply and household welfare.
- Taxation policies influence household income, consumption, and incentives for female employment.
- Public investment in infrastructure and education supports long-term productivity growth and private sector competitiveness.

Dynamic Features and Growth Mechanisms. The model's dynamic structure captures:

- Labor force evolution, where demographic shifts influence workforce composition.
- Capital accumulation, where investment and depreciation determine the growth of private capital stock.
- Total Factor Productivity (TFP) growth, which depends on both public capital stock and sectoral efficiency gains.

Poverty and Distributional Impacts. The model includes a poverty and distributional module, allowing for a detailed analysis of inequality and welfare effects. This component ensures that policy assessments go beyond aggregate economic indicators to examine:

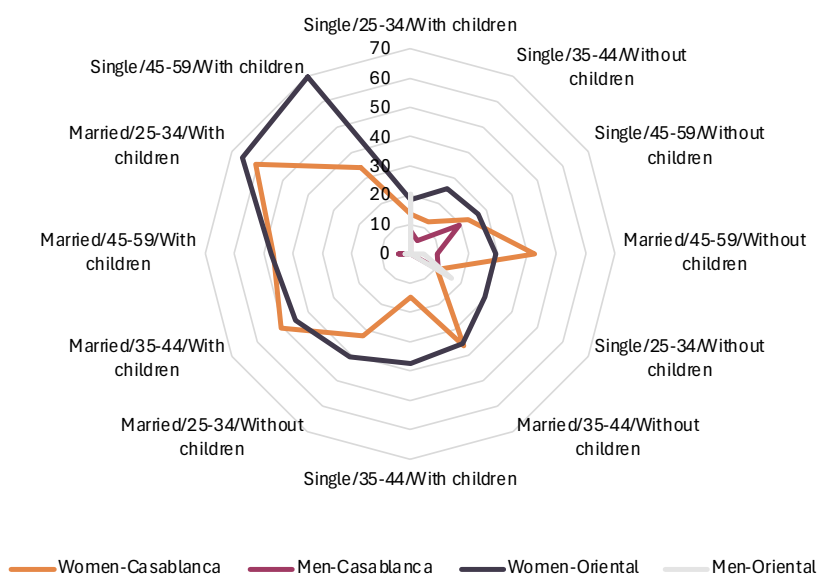
- How gender-sensitive policies affect income distribution across household types. The model allows for a disaggregated analysis of household types based on their care needs.¹⁹
- The evolution of poverty and vulnerability levels due to labor market shifts.
- The impact of redistribution policies, including social transfers and subsidies.

WOMEN'S SKILLS: LINKING PRODUCTIVITY TO ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

The productivity gap between men and women in Morocco is closely tied to disparities in access to education, vocational training, and professional development opportunities. Over the past two decades, the country has made significant strides in improving educational attainment for both genders, with literacy and school enrollment rates steadily rising. However, despite these gains, substantial gender disparities persist, particularly among older populations. For instance, while literacy rates for young individuals aged 15 to 24 reached 95.4% for women and 97.9% for men in 2022, the gap widens significantly among those over 15, with only 57.7% of women literate compared to 77.1% of men.

In addition, and while improved literacy and education are essential for enhancing female labor market participation, they alone are insufficient to dismantle existing female economic empowerment social norms barriers. Even women with advanced degrees encounter significant challenges in engaging in the labor market, securing employment in specific sectors, advancing in their careers, or transitioning into high-productivity sectors. According to the HCP study on the intersectional determinants of inactivity, social expectations regarding caregiving and family responsibilities often limit women's availability, especially among young married women.²⁰ This effect is observed across all educational levels when compared to men.²¹ For instance, Figure 7 illustrates that even among women with higher diplomas, being young and married is associated with a high probability of being out of the labor force, which can be compared to the probabilities of women without a diploma. A fact that reinforces traditional gender roles but also reduces the returns on investments in women's education.

Figure 7. Probabilities of Being Out of the Labor Force by Gender, Region, and Profile (Individuals with Higher Education Diploma) (%)



Note: «With/Without children» refers to the presence of children in the household, not exclusively to a parental relationship.

Source: HCP (2024a)

These disparities in foundational skills and social barriers restrict women’s opportunities to engage in productive, high-skilled, and well-paid jobs, perpetuating their concentration in low-productivity sectors and vulnerable employment. As illustrated in Figure 8, between 2000 and 2021, female employment in the industrial sector, which offers productive jobs under contracts, fell from 38% to 26%, but remained virtually stable in agriculture, where women hold non-wage jobs, declining from 35% to 32%, and rose modestly in the rise in the service sector – in sum, in 2021, a large proportion of women were confined to low-productivity sectors with fewer opportunities for career progression and income growth.

Figure 8. Sectoral Employment by Gender in 2000 and 2021 (%)



Source: HCP, 2000 and 2021 Labor Force Survey

Increasing women’s productivity through measures such as expanding vocational training, may help in integrating women into high-productivity sectors, equipping them with specialized skills that align with market demand. By improving their employability and income prospects, such interventions can promote female labor participation through the perception of better wages. To assess the impact of such policies, a 5% increase in female labor productivity is simulated. While the scale of the shock and observed changes remains moderate, the results highlight, in the Moroccan context, the potential impacts of productivity gains on female wages, employment patterns, and time allocation.

The increase in female productivity in GDP activities results in a modest shift in time allocation. Time spent by women in GDP activities increases by 0.11%-age points, which represents a slight reallocation towards productive labor. At the same time, time dedicated to household service work declines by 0.1%-age points, as some women adjust their work-life balance in response to the improved incentives in market employment.

Unlike women, men exhibit no significant changes in time allocation, with only minor variations in their allocation to household and market activities. In sum, these results indicate that, on its own, enhancing women’s productivity does not induce major redistributions of labor.

The increase in female productivity leads to moderate wage gains, particularly among skilled women. Wages for women with higher diploma increase by 1%, while for women without diploma and those with intermediate diploma, the gains are 0.7%. The distribution of these gains aligns with existing labor market structures, where access to high-productivity sectors is contingent on educational attainment. As a result, women already integrated into skilled employment see the greatest returns, reinforcing patterns of labor market segmentation.

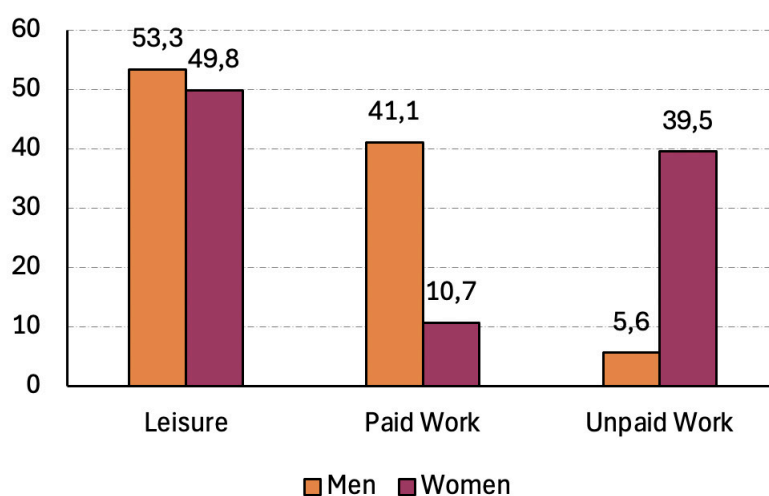
Total female labor income rises by 1.07%, driven more by wage improvements than by significant employment expansion. In contrast, male earnings rise only slightly, reflecting broader labor market improvements linked to higher female productivity. The relative stability of male earnings confirms that increasing women's productivity does not lead to income losses for men but rather contribute to incremental improvements across the broader economy through productivity spillovers.

The overall impact on female labor force participation is a slight increase, with the strongest gains for women with higher diploma being most affected. While this increase is modest, it signals a shift towards broader female workforce integration, though structural constraints continue to limit participation for less-skilled women.²² However, the limited magnitude of this effect suggests, on their own, that productivity improvements would have to be much larger to drive major employment shifts. Compared to men, fewer women in the labor market have higher qualifications. Furthermore, even within different production sectors, workers from both groups are imperfect substitutes, even when they possess the same diploma. Additionally, as the most significant impacts are observed in wage growth and labor income gains, changes in labor force participation and unemployment remain modest. Time reallocation patterns suggest that enhanced female productivity optimizes the work of already employed women rather than reshaping labor market structures or the sharing of household duties.

REDUCING THE TIME-USE GAP: THE COMPLEX IMPACT OF TIME-USE REALLOCATION

The gender distribution of time-use reveals significant inequalities. Women are primarily responsible for unpaid domestic work and caregiving responsibilities, which limits their availability for paid employment. Compared with the average across 76 countries, the time-use gap in Morocco remains larger.²³ Data show that women account for 76.4% of domestic work on average, while in Morocco, this share reaches 87.5%.

Figure 9. Time-Use by Gender (%)



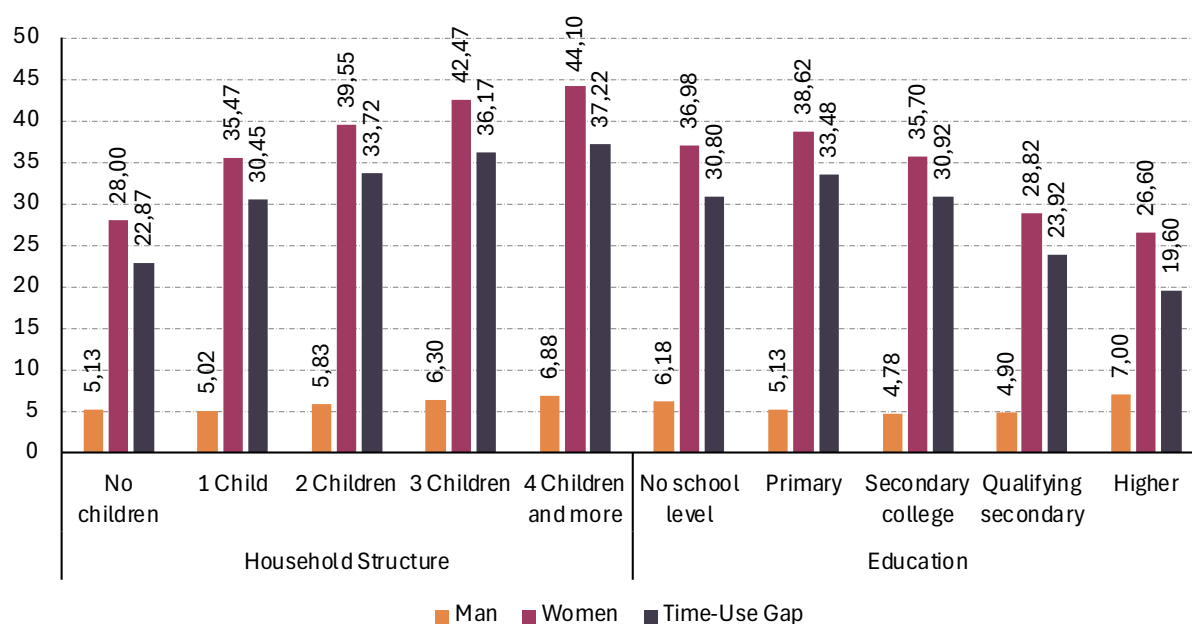
Source: HCP, 2012 Time-Use Survey

According to the 2012 Time-Use Survey, women in Morocco spend seven times more on domestic tasks and four times less on paid work than men. In fact, Moroccan women devote an average of five hours and five minutes per day to unpaid domestic work, compared to only 43 minutes for men.²⁴ Despite their smaller engagement in paid labor, the total workload (combining paid and unpaid domestic work) for women surpasses that of men, as illustrated in Figure 9, further exacerbating the time constraints that limit their professional advancement.

Time-use inequalities remain high across all groups of women, with minimal variation based on employment status, marital status, or education level – see Figure 10. Women who are employed still perform substantial unpaid domestic work, averaging four hours and 20 minutes daily, while inactive women dedicate nearly five hours and 23 minutes to these responsibilities. Similarly, married women perform an average of six hours of household labor per day, compared to 3 hours and 31 minutes for single women. Education reduces unpaid labor time, although not dramatically, as women with no diploma spend an average of five hours and 17 minutes on household tasks, while those with higher diploma allocate three hours and 47 minutes. As shown in Figure 10, these figures consistently exceed those of men, highlighting how domestic responsibilities persistently burden women, regardless of their endowment or status. Moreover, as the number of children in a household increases, so does the time spent on unpaid household work. This burden falls disproportionately on women: in households with four or more children, women dedicate an average of 44 hours per week to unpaid chores, compared to less than six hours for men.

²³ Compiled by: Charmes, J. (2019). The unpaid care work and the labour market. An analysis of time use data based on the latest world compilation of time-use surveys. International Labour Office.

²⁴ Compared to 76 country, Charmes (2019) reports that « women dedicate 3.2 times more time than men to unpaid care work: 4 hours and 32 minutes (272 minutes) per day against 1 hour and 24 minutes for men (84 minutes), or more than three-fourths (76.4 per cent) of the total amount of unpaid care work.”

Figure 10. Time-Use Across Household Structure and Educational Attainment (Number of Hours)

Source: HCP, 2012 Time-Use Survey

It is worth noting to recall that shifts in time-use patterns have been slow; between 1997 and 2012, women's domestic work declined by only 11 minutes per day, while men's, it increased by a mere three minutes.²⁵ The 2014 Household Satellite Account underscores the significant contribution of non-market household production in terms of value-added, encompassing activities like childcare, eldercare, and housework performed within families. According to the HSA, unpaid domestic work, relative to GDP (of which it is not part), amounts to 19.4%. Of this, women generate 84%, primarily through tasks such as meal preparation and home maintenance. In contrast, men contribute 16%, mainly through services related to transportation and errands.

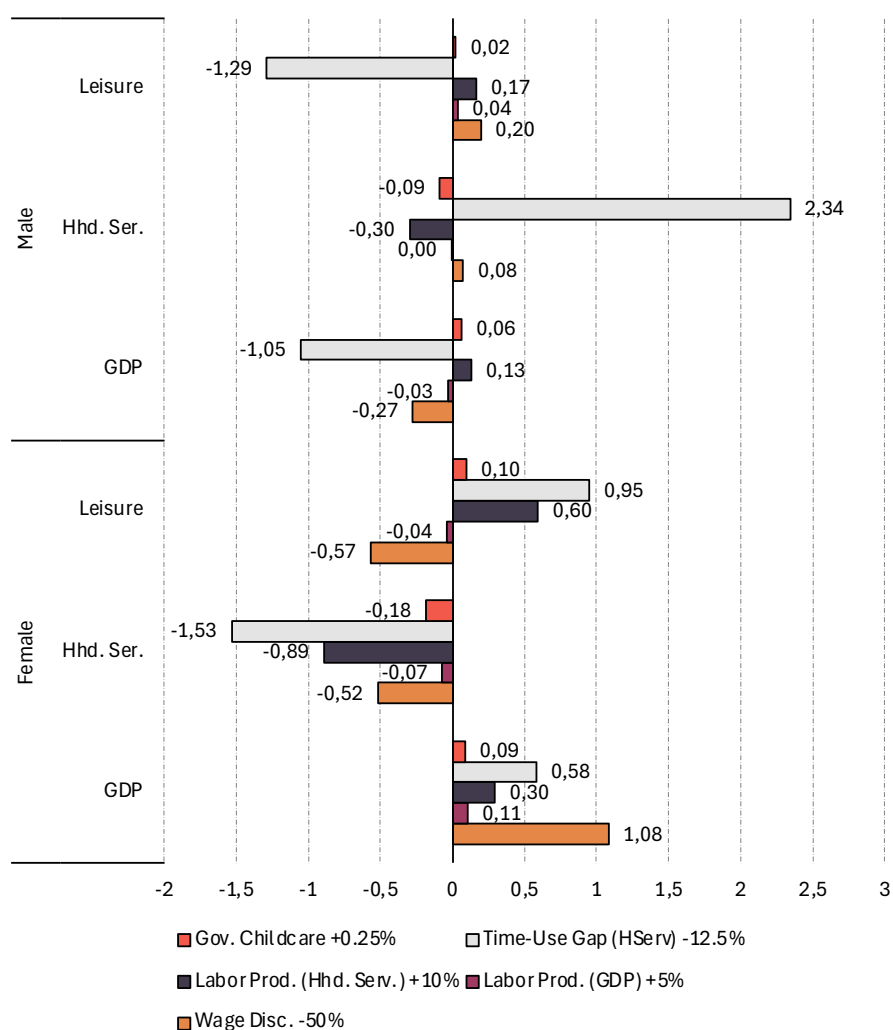
Recent policy discussions have advocated for the need for a shift in social norms toward a higher contribution of men to household services. The underlying idea is that a narrowing of the gender gap in unpaid domestic work time's allocation can free-up women's time and enhance their labor force participation. To explore the potential impact of a gradual shift in social norms regarding the reallocation of household responsibilities, this simulation models a 12.5% reduction in the gender gap in household duties allocation for each household group.²⁶

Overall, simulation results indicate that such a moderate narrowing of the gender gap in household tasks would have a significant impact on the labor markets and the broader economy. More of women's time becomes available for market activities and leisure, while men shift toward household responsibilities. Total market work declines, reflecting the challenges in replacing men's labor with women's.

25 HCP (2023). Rappports sociaux Femmes-Hommes : Éclairage à partir des enquêtes sur l'emploi du temps.

26 A 12.5% (or 1/8) reduction in the gender gap for time allocated to household tasks reflects a moderate and gradual adjustment of social norms and aims to capture the early stages of a rebalancing process without assuming radical changes in entrenched behaviors. To illustrate, if for a household group, men put in 10 and women 90% of the total time on household production, under this simulation this would change to 15 and 85%, respectively, ceteris paribus.

Figure 11. Single shocks: Time Use by Gender & Activity in 2035 (%-point Change from Base)

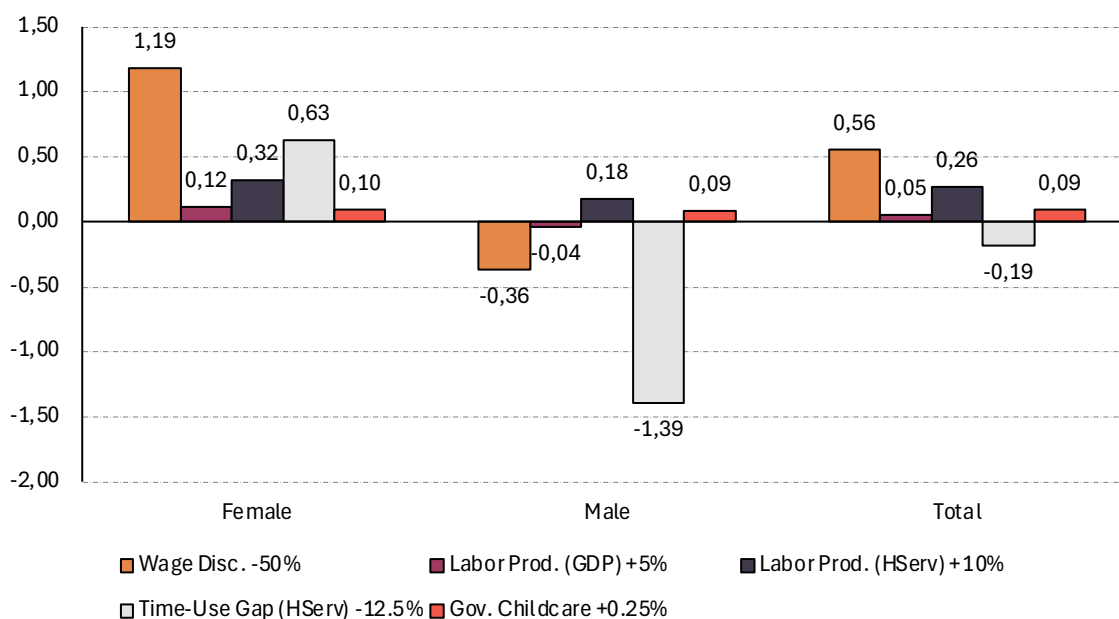


Note: For each gender and simulation, the changes sum to zero.

Source: GEM-Gender Morocco Simulation Results

Specifically, in this simulation women reduce time allocated to household responsibilities by 1.53%-age points. Yet, due to limited demand, not all this newly available time translates into paid work. Women’s entry into the labor market leads to a marginal increase in the female employment rate and labor-force participation, while male workers leave the market to take on more household responsibilities, leading to a 2.34%-point rise in household work and a 1.39%-point decline in their employment rate, resulting in an overall market employment rate decline of 0.19%-age points.

The time-use analysis in this simulation underscores that gender norms alone do not drive employment outcomes, as educational structural composition, marginal value products, exposure to wage discrimination, and labor demand dynamics also plays a crucial role. In sectors where women traditionally work, such as services, labor demand from firms may be more elastic. However, female participation remains constrained by lower wages, limited mobility, and fewer full-time opportunities. Men’s withdrawal from the labor market exacerbates substitution challenges, as female workers entering the market would not possess the same skill sets and may face sector-specific barriers to their employment. Consequently, wage pressures rise for men, with a 1.7% increase, while women experience a wage decline of 3.2%, driven by the increase in female labor supply, which the market finds it difficult to absorb.

Figure 12. Single Shocks: Employment Rate by Gender in 2035 (%-point Change)

Source: GEM-Gender Morocco Simulation Results

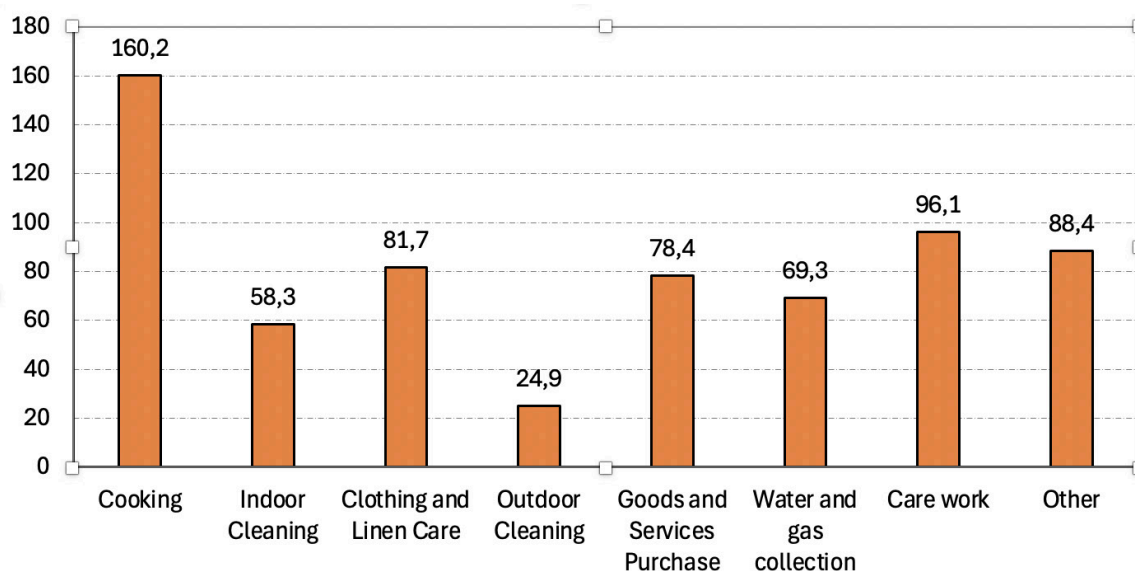
Although both male and female employment rates adjust in response to the reallocation, the changes in labor incomes remain small, as wage and employment shifts counterbalance each other, keeping the male and female income shares virtually unchanged.

The shrinking of market employment and the reallocation of labor reduce GDP by around 0.7%. Furthermore, total per-capita household consumption declines by a smaller percentage, with urban households experiencing a more significant drop. For all households, the smaller overall decline in consumption is partly mitigated by an increase in household services consumption, offsetting the reduction in market consumption.

HOUSEHOLD EFFICIENCY AND WOMEN'S LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION

As shown in previous sections, the division of household tasks significantly influences labor force participation, particularly for women, who carry a disproportionate share of unpaid domestic work. The 2012 Time-Use Survey indicates that activities such as cooking, cleaning, and caregiving require substantial daily hours. The extent of this time commitment is closely linked to household infrastructure, which affects the efficiency of domestic tasks. Access to modern appliances, reliable water supply, and energy sources enhance productivity by reducing the time spent on routine tasks. The availability of washing machines, refrigerators, and gas stoves enables households to shift time away from manual labor toward more automated tasks. However, disparities in access to these essential services, particularly among rural and low-income households, reinforce gendered labor divisions and limit economic participation. Data from the 2012 TUS indicate that less than half of Moroccan households own a washing machine, while only 9% have a vacuum cleaner and 2% a dishwasher.

Figure 13. Average Time Allocated to Household Chores and Care (Minutes per day)

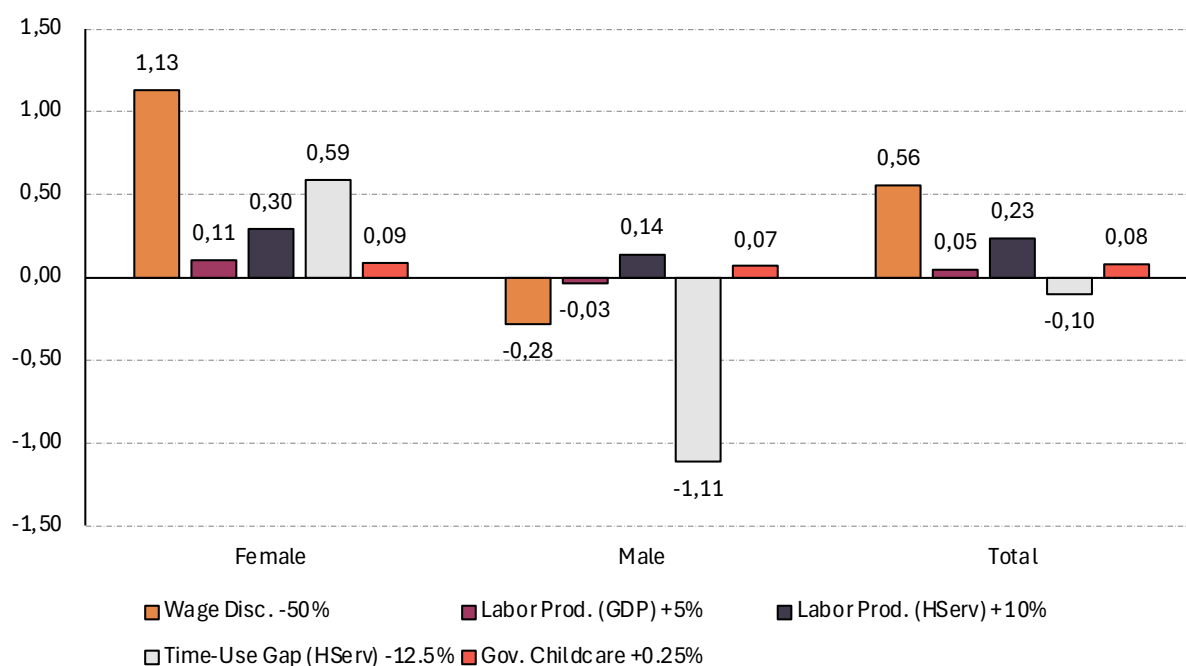


Note: Other include Household administrative tasks and other households' maintenance activities.

Source: HCP, 2012 Time-Use Survey

The availability of domestic helpers can mitigate some of these challenges. However, only 2.5% of Moroccan households employ a housekeeper, with significant variations based on income level. Higher-income households are more likely to afford external support, while lower-income households primarily rely on balancing both paid and unpaid domestic work themselves.

Beyond labor-saving appliances, access to infrastructure outside the home reduces household labor burdens. While access to paved roads is nearly universal in urban areas, 38.4% of rural households remain without proper road infrastructure, affecting transportation efficiency and access to essential services. Similarly, digital services could improve household work, benefiting from, for example, online shopping, remote work, and facilitating communication and task coordination. However, according to the 2024 census, only 59.6% of the population aged 15 and over declared having used Internet during the three months preceding the census, which suggests limited integration of digital tools into daily activities.

Figure 14. Single Shocks: Labor Force Participation Rate by Gender in 2035 (%-point Change)

Source: GEM-Gender Morocco Simulation Results

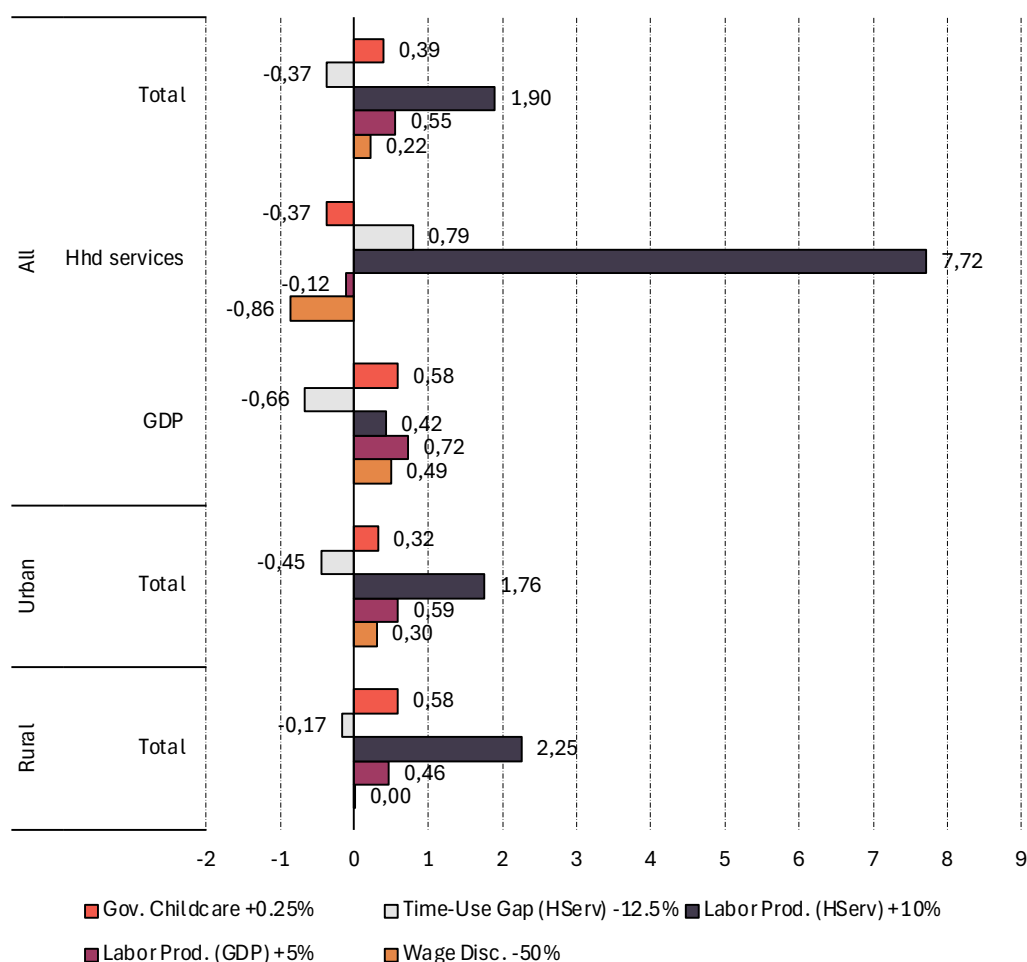
As domestic tasks can be carried out with higher labor productivity, opportunities emerge for labor reallocation. To analyze this issue, we conduct a simulation that imposes 10% increase in household service productivity, examining how efficiency gains reshape time allocation, employment, and income distribution.

Simulation results show that a 10% increase in household service productivity introduces moderate but important adjustments in time allocation and labor participation. The reduction in time spent on household tasks, estimated at 0.89%-age points for women and 0.3%-age points for men, suggests that both genders benefit from efficiency improvements, although the redistribution of time remains unequal.²⁷ Women continue to perform the majority of household work, even as their unpaid labor burden is reduced.

This decline in time allocated to household tasks results in a relative increase in paid employment, as female market work participation rises by 0.30%-age points, while male market work remains largely stable. However, the reallocation of time does not fully translate into employment gains, as part of the saved time is directed toward leisure activities. Women experience a 0.6%-age points increase in leisure time, while men's leisure time rises by 0.2%-age points. These findings highlight that while efficiency gains in household services alleviate time constraints, they do not automatically translate into greater labor market participation due to preferences, labor demand limitations, and social expectations.

²⁷ Given the initial level of household endowments in terms of utilities and appliances, a 10% increase can be considered a small increase in productivity. However, as mentioned above, the aim of these simulations is to provide a normative analysis of the impact of changing policy parameters or social norms.

Figure 15. Single Shocks: Per-capita Consumption by Household & Commodity in 2035 (% Change from Base in 2035)



Source: GEM-Gender Morocco Simulation Results

While domestic efficiency gains provide additional time resources, labor market entry is still largely contingent on education levels and existing employment structures. In fact, the effects of household productivity improvements are not uniform across education levels. Women with higher diploma attainment experience a stronger employment response, with participation increasing by 0.5%-age points, compared to only 0.25%-age points for women without diploma.

The simulation also reveals gendered contrasts in wage dynamics. Due to increased female labor supply, women’s wages decline by 1.3%, while male wages decrease by a smaller percentage of 0.5%. This suggests that the additional labor force participation does not translate into wage gains even though wage incomes may increase.

In terms of overall labor income, women’s share in total earnings is almost unchanged. As for income growth, female labor income rises by 0.35%, which is closely matched by a 0.26% increase in male’s labor income, and confirm that household productivity gains do not significantly close gender income gaps, as other factors, such as wages, mitigate these changes.

The shift in time allocation extends beyond employment to broader household consumption patterns. Per capita consumption of household services rises by 7.7%, reflecting the increased efficiency of domestic production rather than a mass reallocation of time into external labor markets. In other words, in addition to spillovers into the labor market, households benefit from household productivity gains through enhanced service provision within the home.

In sum, the interplay between household productivity, gendered time use, and labor market access remains complex. Indeed, a 10% increase in household service productivity reduces women's unpaid domestic workload and modestly increases their participation in paid work. However, this mechanism depends largely on the sectoral and structural conditions that govern labor market integration.

Box 4. Gendered and Care-Extended Social Accounting Matrix for Morocco

The Social Accounting Matrix for GEM-Gender Morocco provides a comprehensive representation of economic flows, linking production, factor incomes, and institutional transactions within a consistent framework. Unlike conventional SAMs, this matrix extends beyond the GDP-producing economy to include household services (unpaid care work) and leisure, making it particularly relevant for analyzing gender disparities and the role of care in economic dynamics.

The matrix distinguishes between two main economic domains: the GDP economy, which includes market-based production and government activities, and the non-GDP economy, which covers household production of care services and leisure. In this framework, household services are treated as economic activities, where household members provide unpaid care and domestic labor. Leisure is also assigned an economic value, reflecting its opportunity cost in terms of forgone labor income. The matrix follows the standard single-entry accounting principle, where each transaction is recorded as both a payment and a receipt, ensuring consistency.

Data Sources Used

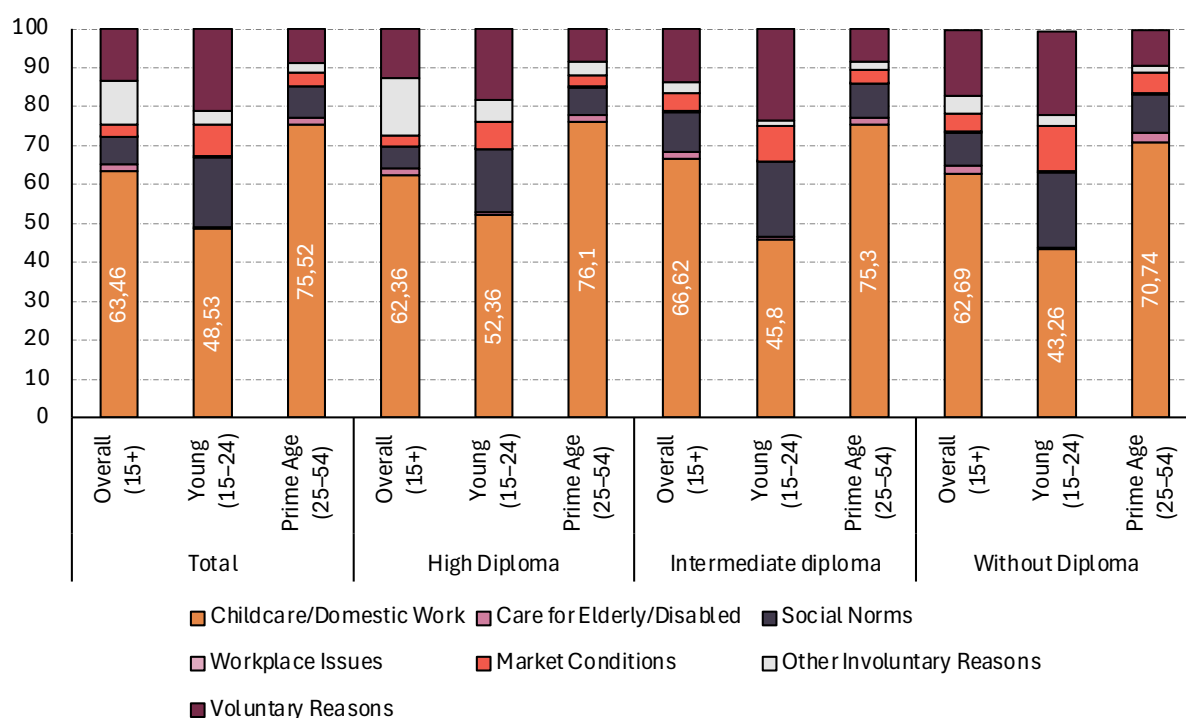
The construction of the SAM relies on multiple data sources. The core of the GDP economy is based on Morocco's Supply and Use Tables (SUTs) and Table of Integrated Economic Account (TIEA) for 2019. For the non-GDP sector, data on household time-use and unpaid care work come from the 2012 Moroccan Time-Use Survey (ENET) and the 2014 Household Satellite Account (HSA). Income and expenditure patterns for household disaggregation are based on the 2014 National Household Consumption and Expenditure Survey (ENCDM). Labor data comes from the 2011-2021 Labor Force Survey and the 2014 Employment Satellite Account. Population projections are obtained from HCP Projection and World Population Prospects 2022.

The final SAM accounts are presented in Table 3 in the appendix.

THE ROLE OF CHILDCARE IN SUPPORTING WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION

Childcare responsibilities in Morocco significantly impede women's participation in the labor force.²⁸ According to the 2021 Labor Force Survey, over 63% of inactive women, excluding students, cite childcare and household duties as the primary reason for their withdrawal from the workforce.

Figure 16. Reasons for Inactivity Among Women (Excluding Students)



Note: The graph shows reasons for inactivity as declared by women, excluding students, grouped into categories. Childcare and Domestic Work; Care for Elderly/Disabled family members; Social Norms includes opposition from family or societal disapproval of women working. Workplace Issues covers feelings of insecurity outside the home, harassment, lack of consideration for women's needs at work, discrimination, or poor work experiences. Market Conditions refers to women's perceptions of a lack of qualifications, job opportunities, or despair about finding work. Other Involuntary Reasons includes illness or disability. Voluntary Reasons involves choosing not to work or pursuing studies. Undefined Reasons is excluded from the figure as its share does not exceed 0.1% of total responses.

Source: HCP, 2021 Labor Force Survey

Women undertake 84.4% of unpaid childcare work, dedicating approximately 1.8 billion hours annually, in stark contrast to the 0.3 billion hours contributed by men. This unpaid labor is valued at an estimated 10 billion dirhams, six times the contribution of men. Moreover, this gap could be even more striking if overlapping activities or multitasking were accounted for in the 2012 Time-Use Survey. In fact, the estimated childcare in the 2012 TUS represents only 3.9% of total women's time-use and less than 1% for men as individuals, particularly women,

²⁸ In this report, "Childcare" refers to unpaid and paid care for children, including preschool education, supervision, and other activities directly related to child-rearing. It excludes health care services, as these fall outside the scope of substitutable household care responsibilities adopted in this report. See Box 5 for a detailed discussion of the definition of *Care*.

report household tasks as their primary responsibilities, while caregiving for children or elderly family members is frequently considered a "side task."²⁹

Figure 17. Time Use Distribution by Gender

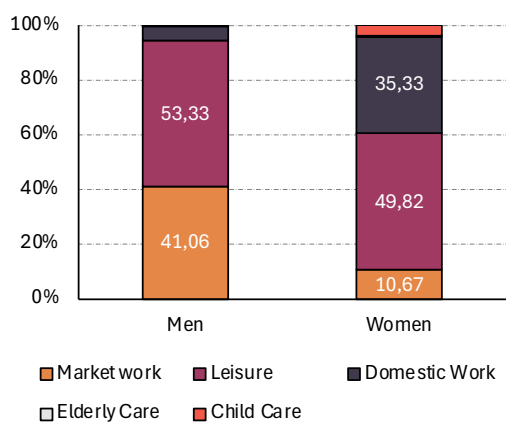
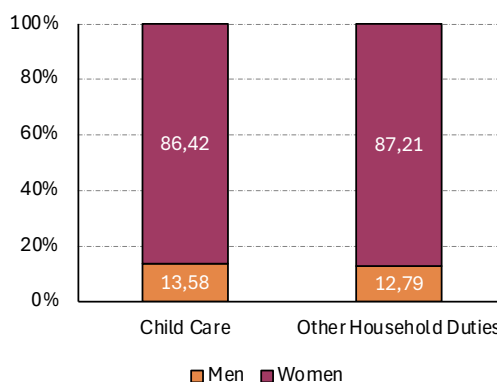


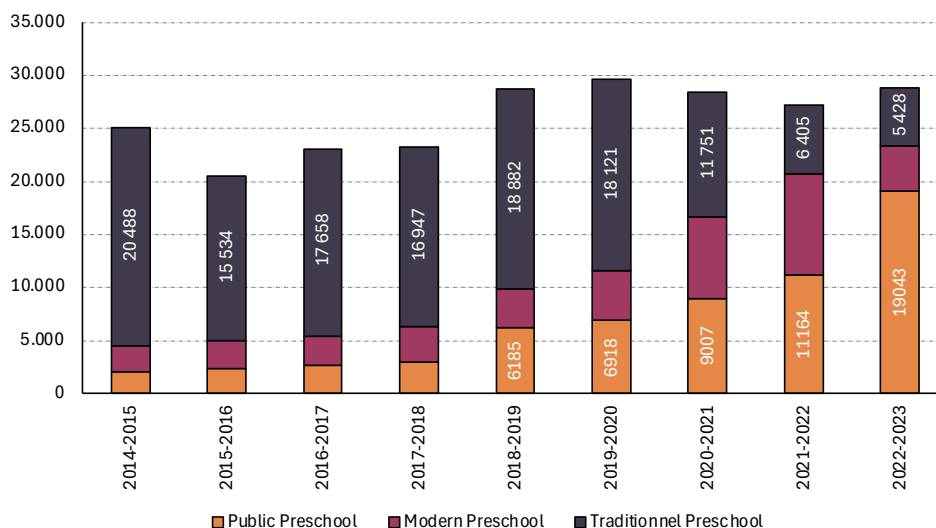
Figure 18. Gender Gap in Unpaid Domestic Work



Source: HCP, 2012 Time-Use Survey

Over the past decade, early childhood education has expanded significantly, providing families with alternatives to traditional caregiving methods. As illustrated in Figure 19, the number of preschool institutions increased by 15% between 2014 and 2023, with particular progress in the public sector. During this period, the number of public preschools grew ninefold, rising from just 8% of all preschool institutions in 2015 to 66% in 2023. At the same time, the share of traditional, Quranic Schools and Kuttabs, preschools declined sharply, falling from 82% in 2015 to 19% in 2023.

Figure 19. Number of Preschool Institutions by Type



Note: Preschool Education: Includes two types of institutions (i) Quranic Schools (Kuttabs) where children receive traditional preschool education. (ii) Nurseries and Kindergartens that provide preschool education based on modern methods. Modern Preschool includes private preschools and preschools supported by partnerships.

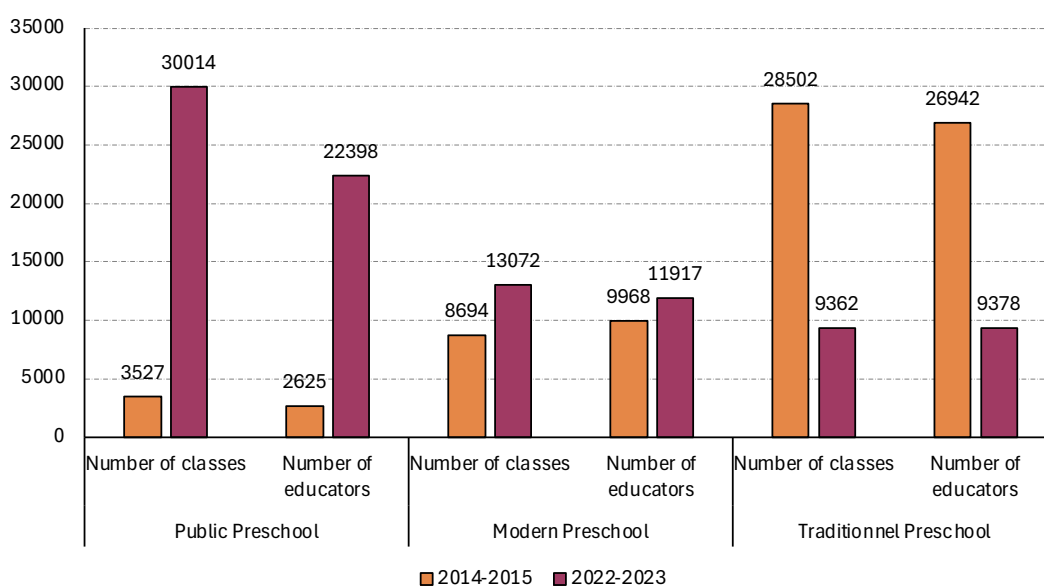
Source: HCP, *Annuaire statistique, Chapter XI. Based on Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, du Préscolaire et des Sports Data.*

29 It is worth noting that not accounting for multitasking in data collection can lead to an underestimation of women's unpaid care work. For example, Floro & Miles (2003) in their paper "Time use, work and overlapping activities: Evidence from Australia" showed that in the Australian 1992 Time-Use Survey, including overlapping childcare activities increased reported childcare time from 64.7 to 264.8 minutes per day for women (a 310% rise) and from 20.3 to 110.4 minutes for men (a 440% rise).

Public preschools have seen significant increases in enrollment, infrastructure, and staffing. Enrollment in public preschools surged from 73,103 students in 2014-2015 to 571,301 in 2022-2023, while the number of educators increased from 2,625 to 22,398, and the number of classes grew to 30,014.

In contrast, modern preschools experienced more modest growth over the same period. Enrollment in modern preschools increased by 42,669 students, rising from 180,126 in 2014-2015 to 222,795 in 2022-2023. The number of modern preschool institutions barely doubled, increasing from 2,445 to 4,347. Similarly, the number of classes and educators in modern preschools grew by only 4,378 and 1,949, respectively. These increases represent just 16% and 9% of the growth seen in public preschool classes and educators.

Figure 20. Evolution of the Number of Classes and Educators by Preschool Type



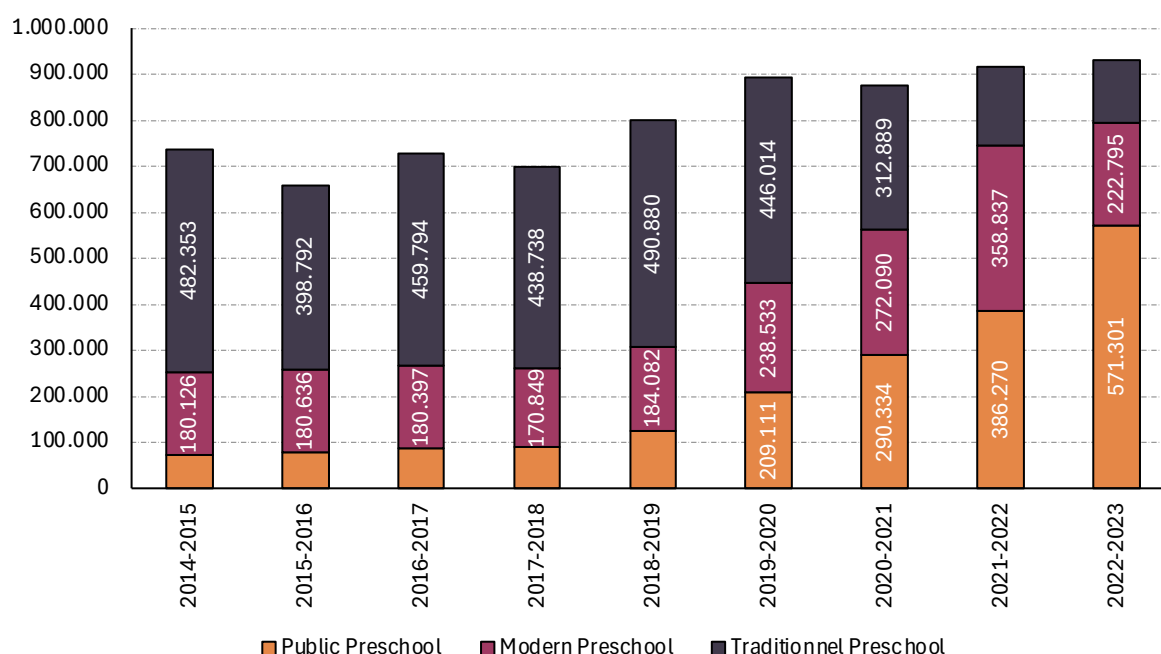
Source: HCP, *Annuaire statistique*, Chapter XI. Based on Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, du Préscolaire et des Sports Data.

These efforts have significantly improved access to preschool education, with the total enrollment rate for children aged 4 to 5 years increasing from 58% in 2014-2015 to 80% in 2022-2023. However, in absolute terms, the number of children in this age group not enrolled in preschool remains high, at around 335,000.³⁰ This gap is particularly pronounced in rural areas, where nearly half of the children still lack access to early childhood education.

Beyond preschool, childcare services for younger children—such as kindergartens and nurseries, which cater to children aged 3 months to 4 years—play a critical role in supporting women's participation in the labor market. By providing quality childcare options, these services enable women to balance work and family life, ease their return to work after childbirth, reduce mental stress, and encourage greater labor force participation. However, the availability of such services remains insufficient to meet demand. In 2024, there were only 598 authorized private kindergartens and nurseries and 387 public institutions, of which 241 were located in urban areas and 146 in rural regions.³¹ This limited infrastructure falls far short of the needs of the approximately 2.3 million children aged 0 to 3 years.

30 The enrollment rate is computed as the ratio of enrolled children (from Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, du Préscolaire et des Sports data) to the total number of children aged 4 to 5, which is derived from the HCP's Population Projections based on the 2014 Census. This calculation assumes that all enrolled children in the Ministère's data are aged 4 and above, as the number of kindergartens and nurseries for younger children remains limited.

31 According to Ministère de la Jeunesse, de la Culture et de la Communication.

Figure 21. Total Enrollment in Preschool Education by Type

Source: HCP, *Annuaire statistique*, Chapter XI. Based on Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, du Préscolaire et des Sports Data.

These figures highlight two critical issues: first, that with nearly 20% of children aged 4 to 5 still excluded, preschool coverage is still not universal; and second, the authorized kindergartens and nurseries do not have the capacity to provide care to all children in the relevant age groups. Expanding public childcare services has been proposed as one of the policies to offer children a quality preschool education and alleviate constraints on female labor market participation, allowing them greater flexibility to engage in paid employment. In this respect, international evidence suggests that access to affordable childcare can significantly enhance women's labor market outcomes. Studies like Havnes & Mogstad, (2011) and Blau & Currie (2006) have shown that providing free childcare services increases women's employment rates and enables them to pursue better job opportunities.³²

To assess the potential impact of such an intervention, a policy scenario is simulated in which government spending on childcare services is increased by 0.25% of base GDP assuming that the expansion of government-funded childcare services has effects through two primary channels. First, it reduces the need for household-provided childcare, particularly by women. Second, by creating additional employment opportunities within the formal childcare sector, the policy directly raises labor demand, particularly for female workers with higher and intermediate diplomas.

Simulation results indicate a modest reallocation of female time away from household services toward market-based work.³³ For non-GDP household services, time allocated by women declines by 0.2%-age points. This shift is mirrored by an increase in time spent in market work. Male time allocation remains virtually unchanged, with negligible shifts in household production or market labor supply. This underscores the fact that the policy primary impacts women's employment decisions.

The rising demand for childcare service providers has varying effects across different education groups. The overall FLFP increases moderately with expanded childcare access, with stronger effects observed among female

32 Havnes, T., & Mogstad, M. (2011). No child left behind: Subsidized child care and children's long-run outcomes. *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*, 3(2), 97-129.

Blau, D., & Currie, J. (2006). Pre-school, day care, and after-school care: who's minding the kids?. *Handbook of the Economics of Education*, 2, 1163-1278.

33 It is worth noting that initial amount of time allocated to childcare is small. The results must be interpreted in a normative perspective rather than a quantitative assessment.

workers with no diploma and those with higher diploma. Women with higher diploma levels see the highest proportional increase in labor market participation and employment. However, for women without diplomas and those with intermediate diploma, the policy's impact is minimal, as their employment decisions are more strongly influenced by occupational segmentation.

At a sectoral level, the expansion of childcare services primarily benefits the social services and public sector jobs, where labor demand for childcare workers rises. However, the broader wage effects remain limited, as the expansion does not significantly alter overall labor supply-demand dynamics in other industries.

Household income effects are driven by two opposing forces: increased female earnings and a potential reduction in household childcare expenditures. With more women entering the labor market, female labor income rises by 1%, leading to higher household disposable income. However, the substitution of household-provided childcare with market services introduces additional costs, which partially offset these gains.

The simulation confirms that increasing government spending on childcare services facilitates modest but meaningful gains in female labor force participation. However, the policy's full potential is limited by broader labor market constraints, including wage disparities and rigid employment structures. While the simulated childcare expansion alleviates a key barrier to female employment, on its own it does not drastically increase gender equality within Morocco's economy.

Box 5. Toward a Comprehensive Definition of Care Economy

In this report, "Care" is defined as unpaid and paid child care (i.e., nurseries, kindergartens and preschool), unpaid and paid elderly care, and unpaid and paid domestic work. This definition focuses on direct and indirect care responsibilities performed within or outside households. The definition of Care in this report excludes health care services. The rationale for this is to focus on care sectors for which households can provide substitutes rather than specialized health services that typically require professional expertise and cannot be easily replaced by household production.

The concept of care can be defined more broadly in the literature. According to UN Women (2018),³⁴ the care economy entails the production and consumption of goods and services necessary for the physical, social, mental, and emotional well-being of care-dependent groups, such as children, the elderly, the ill, and people with disabilities, as well as healthy, prime working-age adults. Care-related economic activities include both direct and indirect services. Direct care involves relational tasks like child-rearing, assisting elderly individuals, or providing emotional support, while indirect care includes domestic tasks such as cooking, cleaning, and household maintenance, as well as additional responsibilities in rural areas like collecting water and firewood.

In the perspective of a comprehensive analysis of care in Morocco, the next Time-Use Survey in 2025 will provide essential information to refine the report's definition of care and improve the modeling of care work in Morocco. With this new data, future updates of the report and its analytical model will capture more accurately gender disparities, time allocation patterns and the wider socio-economic implications of care work, facilitating their integration into economic and social policy frameworks.

34 Women, U. N. (2018). Promoting women's economic empowerment: Recognizing and investing in the care economy. Issue Paper, UN Women, New York.

BEYOND INDIVIDUAL MEASURES: A COORDINATED FRAMEWORK FOR BOOSTING FEMALE WORKFORCE ENGAGEMENT

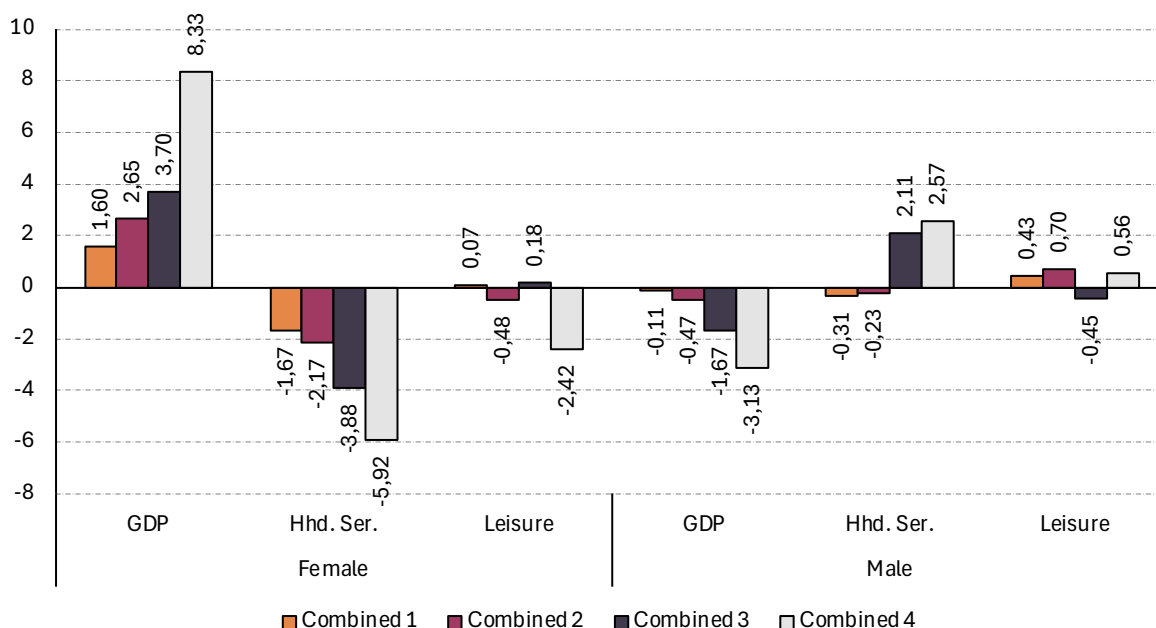
While the quantitative impact of individual shocks on gender equality is relatively small, the insights gained into the behavioral responses of women and men are important. These findings highlight how policies designed to empower women, if implemented in isolation, could yield unintended consequences or even have adverse impacts if complementary conditions are not in place. For instance, certain interventions aimed at increasing female labor force participation may inadvertently lead to trade-offs in household dynamics, wage structures, or overall economic efficiency if not supported by broader systemic changes.

Building on these findings, the report explores the potential of a holistic approach to empower women through the simulation of combined scenarios involving various interventions. These scenarios are designed to assess how the interplay of complementary labor supply policies can collectively influence women's participation in the workforce and contribute to overall economic and social well-being.

The first simulation, as mentioned in Box 1, *Combined 1*, combines four of the five shocks that were introduced individually; the reduction in the male-female gap in household work time is not included. The second, *Combined 2*, is identical to *Combined 1* considering doubling of the elasticities of substitution between men and women in GDP production—this addition is meant to mimic a shift in social norms toward viewing men and women, at each level of education, as more easily substitutable, thereby reducing hiring bias. It could also reflect that, over time, increased female market work leads to women gaining skills and experience, making them closer substitutes for men. Ultimately, it has the effect of making it easier for the labor market to absorb both men and women when the growth rates of their market labor supply and demand differ. The third simulation, *Combined 3*, is identical to *Combined 2* in addition to the reduction in the male-female gap in household work time. Finally, *Combined 4* is identical to *Combined 3* apart from that it wage discrimination is fully eliminated (not cut by half) and substitution elasticities are quadrupled (not doubled).

As expected, *Combined 1* produces stronger effects than any of the individual simulations. Compared to the base results for 2035, female market work increases by around 1.6 hours per week, wages rise by 0.6%, and labor incomes increase by close to 10%, while household service time drops by 1.67%-age points. The female employment and labor force participation rates both increase by around 1.7%-age points, while female unemployment rate declines. In contrast, male employment declines slightly, as reflected in a 0.11%-age points drop in male GDP-related work and a decrease in male household service participation of 0.31%-age points. As a consequence, total male wage incomes register a relative increase by 0.3%, reflecting the combined impact of a wage gain and a slight decline in market work. Given that female incomes grow more rapidly, the female share in total wage incomes increases by 1.6%-age points. Total GDP in this scenario increases by 2.1% compared to the base thanks to gains in market employment and labor productivity. Per-capita household consumption ends up around 3% higher both for rural and urban households, reflecting growth in market and household service consumption by roughly 2 and 6%, respectively.

Figure 22. Combined Shocks: Time-use by Gender & Activity in 2035 (%-point Change from Base Shares)

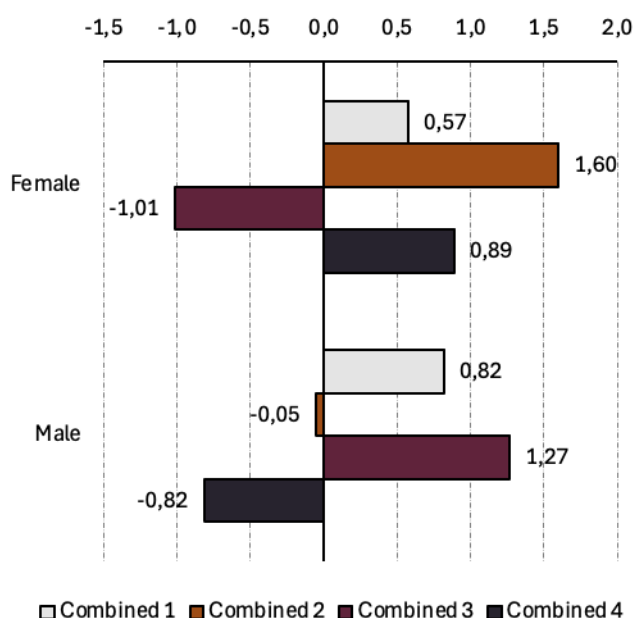


Source: GEM-Gender Morocco Simulation Results

For the scenario *Combined 2*, the gains for women and in gender equality are considerably stronger than for *Combined 1*, pointing to the importance of labor market flexibility (captured by higher elasticities of substitution) in the context of more rapid employment growth for women than men. Compared to the base results for 2035, women allocate an additional 2.7 weekly hours to market work and enjoy a wage gain of 1.6%. Female labor income jumps by 16.35%, with women with no diploma experiencing a 33% increase and women with higher diploma experiencing a 17.33% increase. The rates for female employment and labor-force participation both gain close to 3%-age points, accompanied by a decline in the female unemployment rate of 3%-age points.

For men, the changes for *Combined 2* compared to the base 2035 outcome are negative but small. Their labor incomes decline by 1.3%, the outcome of the combination of unchanged wages and a decline in the employment rate (by 0.6%-age points). The widening gap between male and female wage income growth—where female wages grow faster than male wages—increases women’s share of total labor income by 3%-age points. The total GDP gain is boosted slightly, reaching 2.5%, thanks to the smoother integration of women in the labor force. However, the aggregate gain in per-capita household consumption is unchanged compared to *Combined 1*: market consumption growth is stronger compared to a weaker household service growth, an outcome that is related to increased female market work and rigid gender roles in the household economy.

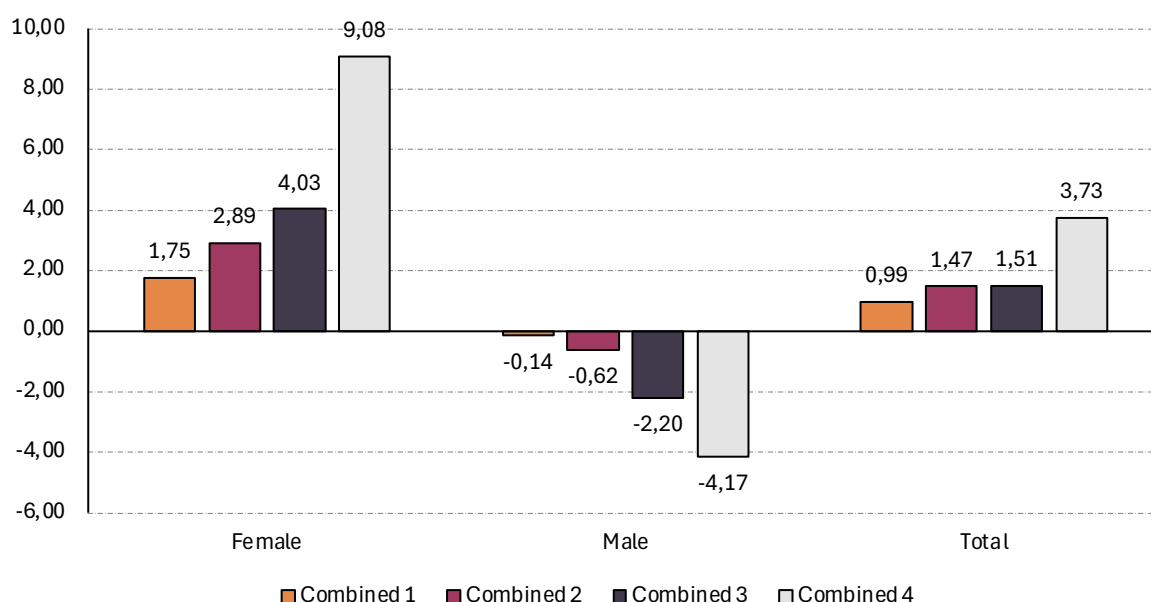
Figure 23. Combined Shocks: Wage by Gender in 2035 (% Change)



Source: GEM-Gender Morocco Simulation Results

The results from the individual simulation about closing the gender time-use gap in household services indicated that, while a reallocation of household production has the obvious advantage of leading to less gender inequality in terms of time use, it may give rise to adjustment challenges in labor markets and the broader economy, leading to female wage declines, a lower GDP, and less household consumption.

Figure 24. Combined Shocks: Employment Rate by Gender in 2035 (%-point Change)



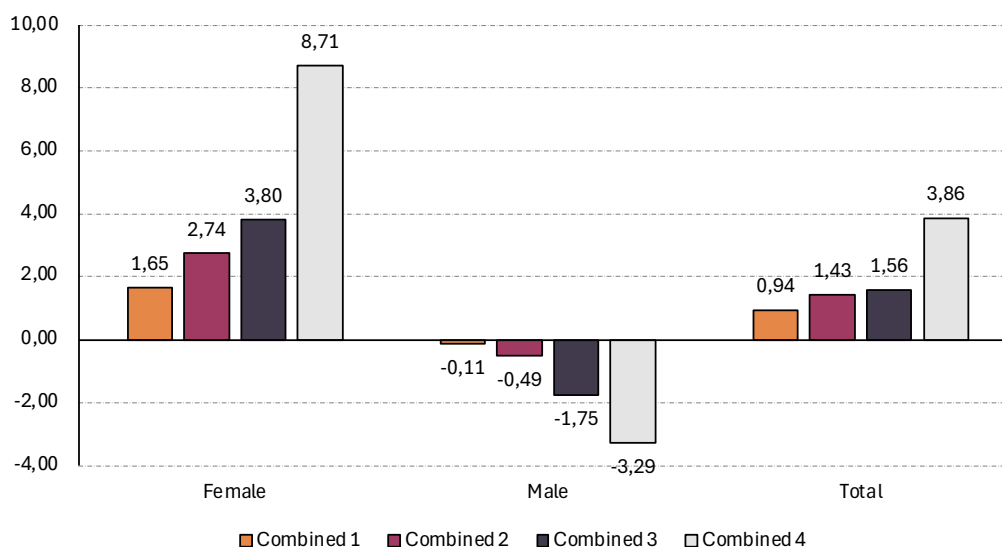
Source: GEM-Gender Morocco Simulation Results

The simulation *Combined 3* reintroduces the same shock however in the context of a more flexible economy designed in *Combined 2* to promote gender equality in the labor market. In this setting, the marginal impacts on women (compared to *Combined 2*) are more positive: on average, females reduce household service work by 3.88%-age points, with leisure time slightly increasing (0.18%-age points) and add 3.7 hours per week to market work; yet the marginal wage effect remains negative, but smaller, dropping by 1% due to labor market absorption constraints. Meanwhile, male household service time increases by 2.11%-age points, reinforcing a redistribution rather than an expansion of employment.

Female wage incomes in this scenario are not stagnant but increase by 3%. Compared to the scenario *Combined 2*, male wage income growth declines by 1.5%-age points, reflecting the combined impact of reduced participation in market work (in favor of household services and leisure) and wage gains that are insufficient to fully compensate for a lower market work time. The female gain in the total wage pool expands by 3.7%-age points. The impact on GDP growth remains positive but is slightly smaller, while household consumption declines by 0.3%-age points in the context of a loss in market consumption and a gain in the consumption of household services.

The final simulation, *Combined 4*, explores the consequences of a more transformative shift in two key areas: complete elimination of wage discrimination and a labor market with hiring decisions that are getting closer to being gender neutral (reflected in quadrupled elasticities of substitution). With the elimination of wage discrimination and in the context of a labor market ready to absorb female workers, the results reflect significant gains in female market work. This represents an increase in market work of more than double, compared to *Combined 3*, reaching more than 8 hours per week compared to the base, equivalent to an additional workday. This transformation is accompanied by reductions of 2 hours in leisure and 6 hours in household work. The female employment rate gains 9%-age points compared to the base in 2035, and female wage growth is boosted by 1%.

Figure 25. Combined Shocks: Labor Force Participation Rate by Gender in 2035 (%-point Change)



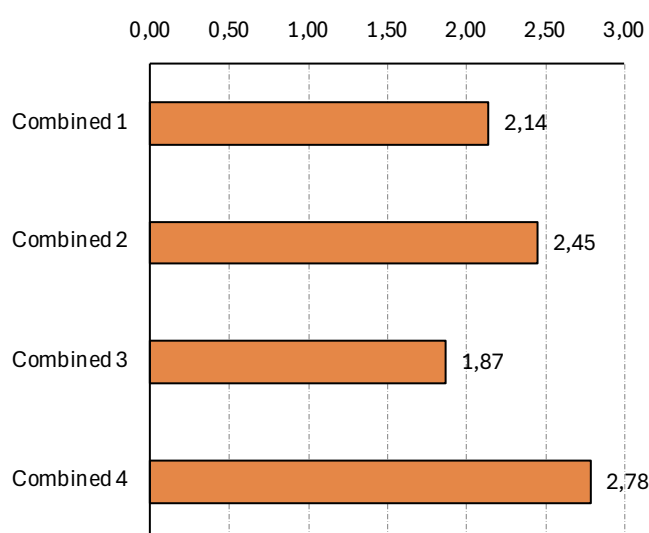
Source: GEM-Gender Morocco Simulation Results

For men, the changes are modest and shift in the opposite direction: time spent on household work and leisure increases at the expense of market work. Male market work time declines by 3.13%-age points, while household production responsibilities expand by 2.57%-age points, reflecting a shift towards greater male involvement in unpaid labor. This reallocation coincides with a slight increase in male leisure, though the effect remains limited compared to the redistribution observed among women. On average, wages decline by 0.8%, driven by a reduction in labor demand in sectors where male employment has traditionally been dominant. The contraction is more pronounced for male workers with no diploma and those with intermediate diploma, where employment declines in response to rising female participation in key sectors.

As a result of these shifts, total male labor income registers a decline of 7.99%, marking a significant contrast to the strong gains recorded by women. The labor income gap narrows substantially, leading to an increase in the female share of total labor incomes by nearly 9%-age points, reaching 31% in 2035. The redistribution of earnings highlights a structural transformation in gendered economic participation, with women capturing a larger share of the overall wage pool as their employment in higher-productivity sectors expands.

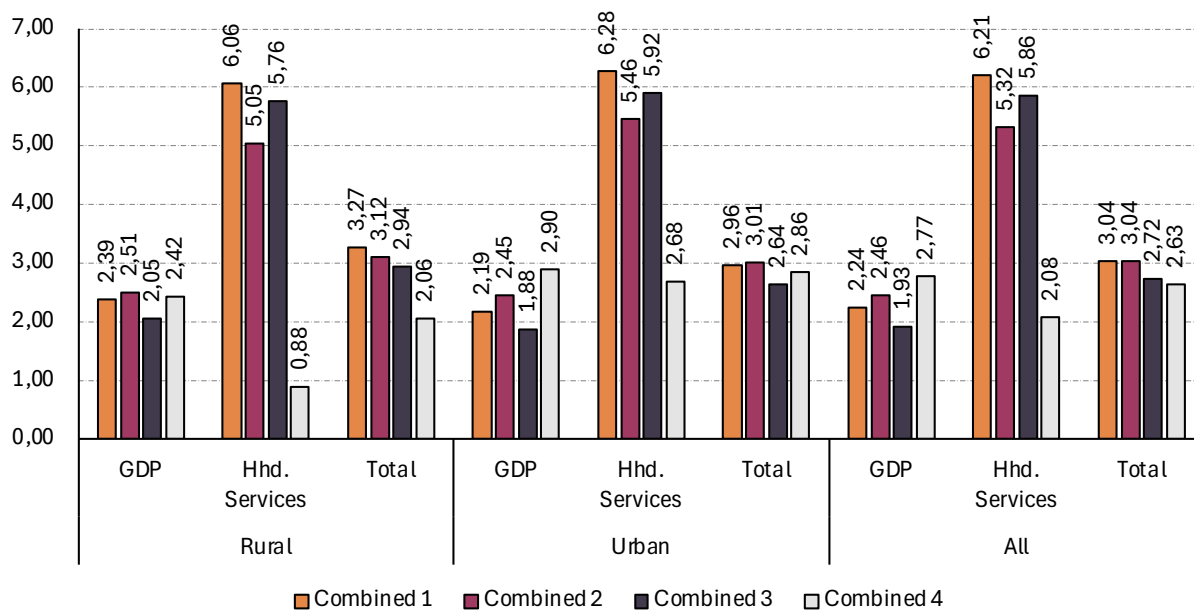
The gain in female employment is stronger than the loss in male employment, leading to an overall increase in the employment rate by around 9%-point. Increased employment leads to stronger GDP growth compared to other scenarios; in 2035 the GDP's level is 2.8% above the base. Total household consumption is virtually unchanged compared to other combined scenarios, once again in the context of gain in market consumption and reduced household services, suggesting that, as the opportunities for market employment improve for women, household economize on their consumption of the services that they have to produce themselves.

Figure 26. Combined Shocks: GDP in 2035 (% Change)



Source: GEM-Gender Morocco Simulation Results

Figure 27. Combined Shocks: Per-capita Consumption by Households & Commodity in 2035 (% Change)



Source: GEM-Gender Morocco Simulation Results

CONCLUSION: A PATH FORWARD FOR INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE LABOR MARKET

In recent decades, Morocco has adopted many inclusive policies that pave the way toward increased gender equality. However, women's economic participation remains remarkably low, with only 19% engaged in the labor market. This issue extends beyond questions of equity; it represents a significant untapped economic potential reducing overall well-being.

The findings presented in this policy report underscore the fact that addressing gender inequality requires an integrated and comprehensive approach — as isolated policy changes yield only modest improvements and often entail trade-offs. While individual interventions—such as reducing wage discrimination, increasing women's productivity, improving childcare access, and redistributing unpaid domestic labor—can contribute to narrowing the gender gap, their impact is significantly amplified when implemented as part of an integrated policy framework. A fragmented approach, by contrast, risks overlooking the interconnected nature of economic, social, and institutional mechanisms that limit women's labor force participation.

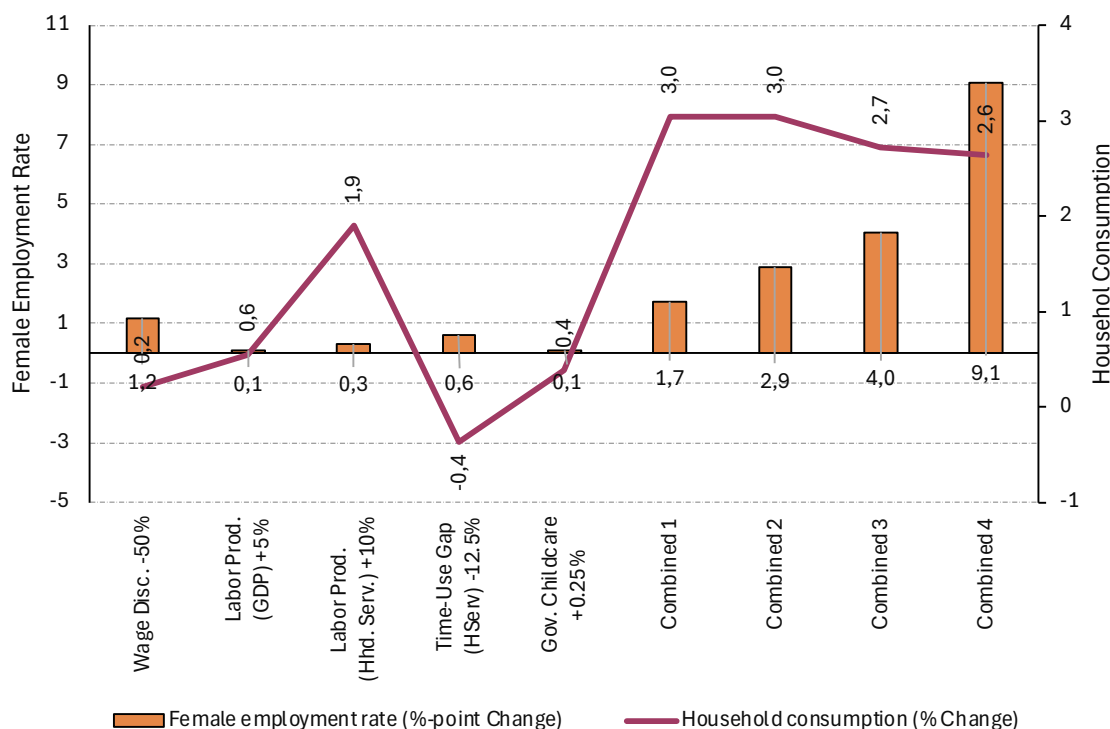
Among the measures analyzed, reducing wage discrimination emerges as one of the most effective strategies for boosting female labor market engagement. This finding highlights the importance of enforcing equal pay regulations and improving transparency in wage-setting practices. Another notable result is that reallocating women's time spent on unpaid housework leads to increases in female employment but also undesirable outcomes, such as a significant withdrawal of men from the labor market, a decline in total household income, and the deterioration of general well-being. This trade-off suggests that it is important to consider the full consequences of a reallocation of time use between men and women.

The findings also reinforce that while childcare policies are beneficial, they may not automatically translate into substantial increases in female employment unless they are paired with broader labor market reforms. Simply increasing the availability of childcare services is insufficient if labor market structures continue to reinforce gendered hiring biases or wage disparities. Ensuring that investments in childcare are accompanied by policies that incentivize flexible work arrangements, encourage equitable hiring practices, and address the structural barriers women face in securing employment opportunities is key to maximizing their effectiveness.

Improving women's productivity in market-based activities increases their wages and employment potential. However, persistent labor market rigidities and a lack of demand for female labor limit the extent to which these gains translate into higher female labor force participation. At the household level, productivity improvements—such as access to time-saving domestic infrastructure—reduce the time burden of unpaid domestic work. Yet, without a reallocation of household responsibilities, these efficiency gains primarily boost household services consumption, not women's market work. The results indicate that while productivity gains in both spheres bring economic benefits, their impacts are constrained by structural barriers.

The effects of comprehensive policy packages that simultaneously promote female employment and enhance household welfare are more encouraging. A holistic approach enables both women and men to allocate less time to unpaid household tasks without compromising economic growth or household well-being. Our simulations indicate that coordinated interventions have a greater impact than isolated measures. Notably, reducing gender-based hiring biases in our models shows promising potential for significant improvements in female employment without adversely affecting household welfare.

Figure 28. Female Employment & Household Consumption in 2035



Source: GEM-Gender Morocco Simulation Results

More broadly, the projected increase in female labor force participation is closely linked to a rise in women's labor income shares, which could, in turn, amplify their influence both within the household and the broader economy. Strengthening women's economic empowerment has the potential to trigger a cycle of positive change, reinforcing gender equality through improvements in educational attainment, enhanced economic autonomy, and shifts in social norms regarding gender roles in both work and household settings.

The most comprehensive package of reforms analyzed in this report illustrates the magnitude of the potential gains. By implementing asset of coordinated policies that include the elimination of wage discrimination, reduce gender-based hiring biases, improve productivity, and expand childcare provision, Morocco could increase female labor force participation by approximately 9%-age points and raise GDP by 3% by 2035. These results highlight the transformative effect of gender-inclusive policies in driving economic expansion, improving household welfare, and fostering a more balanced labor market.

However, as this policy report primarily examines the supply side of the labor market without directly addressing labor demand constraints, the simulation results indicate a redistribution of labor and division of work rather than a pure expansion of employment. In this perspective, achieving the New Development Model's target of 6% annual GDP growth, through structural transformation and economic diversification, could create significant labor demand across sectors, reinforcing the impact of gender-focused supply-side policies. The interaction between increasing labor demand and the removal of gender-related constraints could yield higher-than-estimated gains in employment, income distribution, and overall economic expansion. Without parallel policies to stimulate labor-intensive growth, female economic empowerment risks being offset by insufficient job opportunities, leading to increased underemployment and lower wages rather than effective labor market integration.

APPENDIX

Table 2. Female Labor Force Participation and Economic Development in Selected Countries (1990-2023)

Rank	Country	FLFP (%) in 2023	FLFP Change	1990 Income Class		2023 Income Class
1	Burkina Faso	42.553	▼ -39.57	Low-income	⇔	Low-income
2	Guinea	43.421	▼ -22.69	Low-income	↗	LMIC
3	Cameroon	57.679	▼ -21.24	Low-income	↗	LMIC
4	Papua N. Guinea	51.376	▼ -20.98	LMIC	↘	Low-income
5	Myanmar	45.199	▼ -20.09	Low-income	↗	LMIC
6	Vanuatu	55.83	▼ -19.31	LMIC	⇔	LMIC
7	Ethiopia	59.12	▼ -17.62	Low-income	⇔	Low-income
8	Lesotho	51.45	▼ -16.80	Low-income	↗	LMIC
9	Chad	48.877	▼ -16.17	Low-income	⇔	Low-income
10	Sierra Leone	52.921	▼ -15.21	Low-income	⇔	Low-income
11	Malawi	64.159	▼ -14.25	Low-income	⇔	Low-income
12	Ghana	63.629	▼ -13.97	Low-income	↗	LMIC
13	Sri Lanka	35.847	▼ -12.95	LMIC	⇔	LMIC
14	Samoa	33.724	▼ -12.05	LMIC	⇔	LMIC
15	Yemen, Rep.	5.132	▼ -11.74	Low-income	⇔	Low-income
16	Afghanistan	5.369	▼ -10.89	Low-income	⇔	Low-income
35	Morocco	21.377	▼ -2.740	LMIC	⇔	LMIC
158	Saudi Arabia	35.444	▲ +19.65	High-income	⇔	High-income
159	Uruguay	71.021	▲ +20.40	UMIC	↗	High-income
160	Belgium	66.689	▲ +20.48	High-income	⇔	High-income
161	Dominican Rep.	57.507	▲ +20.77	LMIC	↗	UMIC
162	Singapore	69.843	▲ +21.45	High-income	⇔	High-income
163	Bangladesh	46.979	▲ +22.44	Low-income	↗	LMIC
164	Maldives	42.818	▲ +22.65	LMIC	↗	UMIC
165	Ireland	72.776	▲ +23.17	High-income	⇔	High-income
166	Panama	58.336	▲ +24.09	UMIC	↗	High-income
167	Peru	69.282	▲ +24.64	LMIC	↗	UMIC
168	U.A. Emirates	54.893	▲ +24.83	High-income	⇔	High-income
169	Cyprus	75.213	▲ +25.95	High-income	⇔	High-income
170	Chile	60.577	▲ +27.08	UMIC	↗	High-income
171	Luxembourg	70.514	▲ +28.09	High-income	⇔	High-income
172	Spain	70.531	▲ +29.56	High-income	⇔	High-income
173	Malta	72.598	▲ +41.16	UMIC	↗	High-income

Note: This table shows Female Labor Force Participation (FLFP) in 2023, its change since 1990, and the evolution of countries' income classifications based on World Bank criteria. Countries are ranked by FLFP Change. ↗ indicates an upgrade, ↘ a downgrade, and ⇔ stability in income classification.

Source: Based on data from the 2025 World Development Indicators

Table 3. Disaggregation of GEM-Gender Morocco database

Sectors (activities and commodities) (86)	<p>Agriculture and industry, GDP (7) agriculture, mining; food processing, textiles and clothing, other manufacturing, utilities, construction</p> <p>Services, GDP (13) trade, transport, education-private, health-private, childcare-private, elderly care-private, domestic services*, other services, education-government, health-government, childcare-government, elderly care-government, other government</p> <p>Services, non-GDP (household) (66)** child care, elderly care, other household services, leisure</p>
Factors (12)	<p>Labor (8) Male by education (primary or less, lower secondary, upper secondary, tertiary) (4) Female by education (primary or less, lower secondary, upper secondary, tertiary) (4)</p> <p>Other (4) Capital - private Capital - government Land (for agriculture) Mining natural resource</p>
Institutions (10)***	<p>Households (6) Rural (working age head with children; working age head without children; elderly head) (3) Urban (working age head with children; working age head without children; elderly head) (3)</p> <p>Other (4) NPISH (Non-profit institution in the service of households) Enterprise Government Rest of the World</p>
Taxes and subsidies (6)	<p>Tax on activities, commodities, imports and income Commodities and activities subsidies</p>
Distribution margins (3)	<p>Trade and transport margins - domestic Trade and transport margins - imports Trade and transport margins - exports</p>
Investment (3)	<p>Investment - private Investment - government Investment - change in inventories</p>

Note: *Substitutes for other household services in household consumption; **Non-GDP (household service) sectors are disaggregated by household and, for leisure, also by labor type; ***The institutional capital accounts are for split into domestic non-government (aggregate of households and enterprises), government, rest of the world, and financial institution.

Source: GEM-Gender Morocco database.

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