

The Future of Domestic Work in the GCC



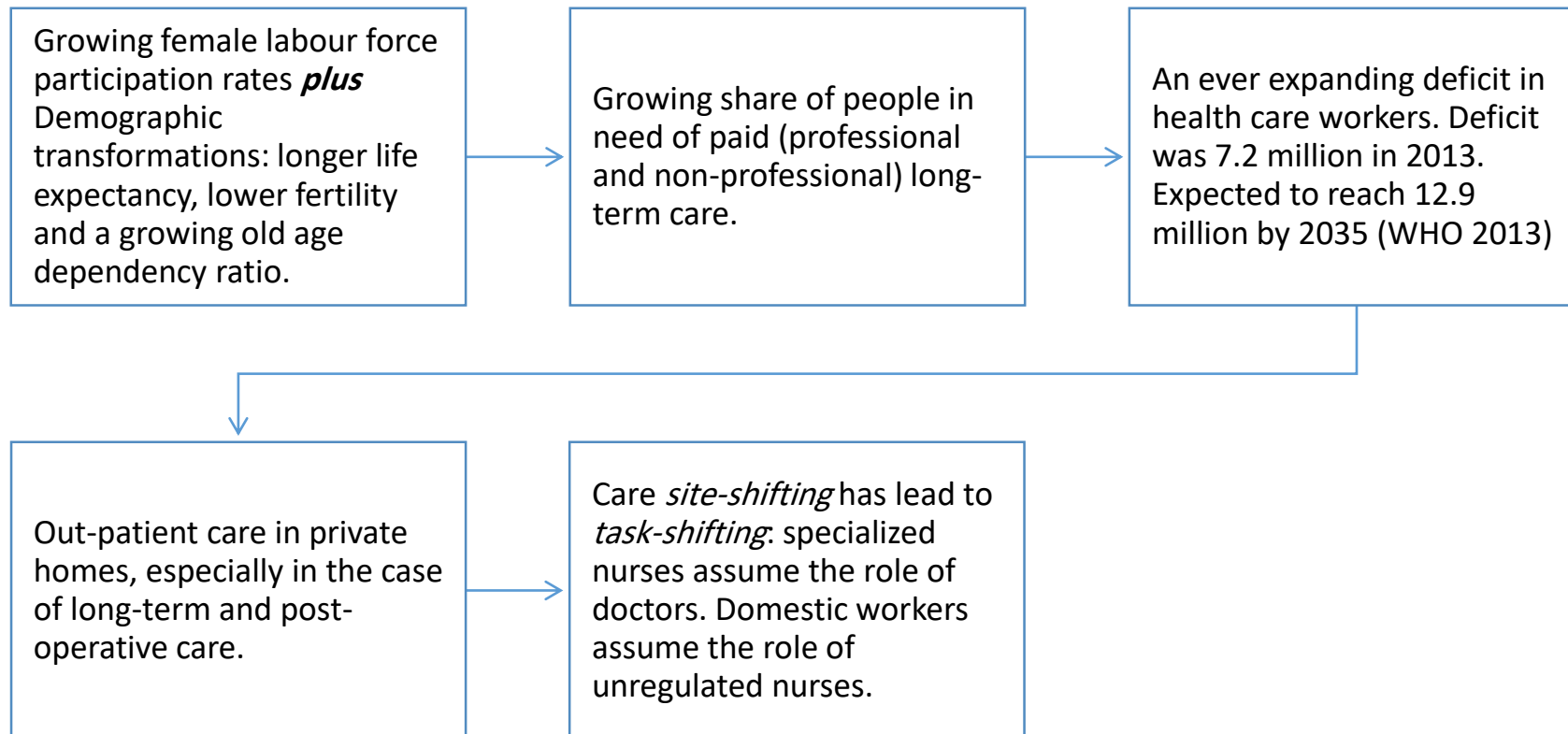
Marie Jose Tayah (IDWF) & Hadi Assaf (Consultant)

**Research commissioned by the Secretariat of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue among
the Asian labour-sending and receiving countries**

Senior Officials' Meeting in Colombo, Sri Lanka on 8-9 May 2018

Global debate: Future of work, future of domestic work

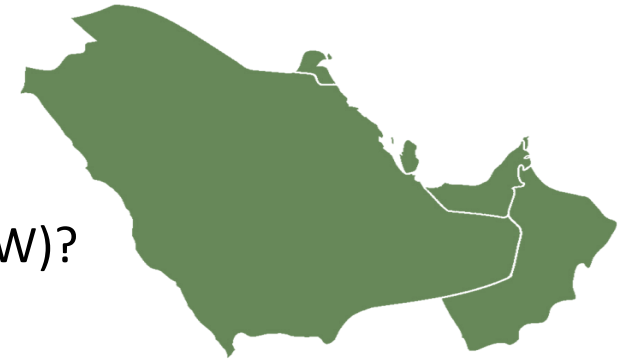
- Caring jobs require social interaction, empathy and judgment and therefore cannot be automated (*World Bank 2018*).
- Demand for occupations like childcare, early-childhood education, cleaning, cooking, and gardening will grow, creating 50 million to 90 million jobs globally (*McKinsey Global Institute 2017*).



Research questions and scope

Questions:

- Where is the GCC from these global transformations?
- What are implications for the management of human resources (DW)?



Research aims to:

- Examine the **size and composition** of the DW sector at national and GCC levels.
- Examine the **demand in the DW sector**: determinants and structure.
- Analyze the **current state of affairs in employer-domestic worker matching** (examples from Abu Dhabi and Dubai in the pre Tadbeer Center phase)
- Reflect **on human resource decisions** concerning the domestic work sector in the countries of the GCC.

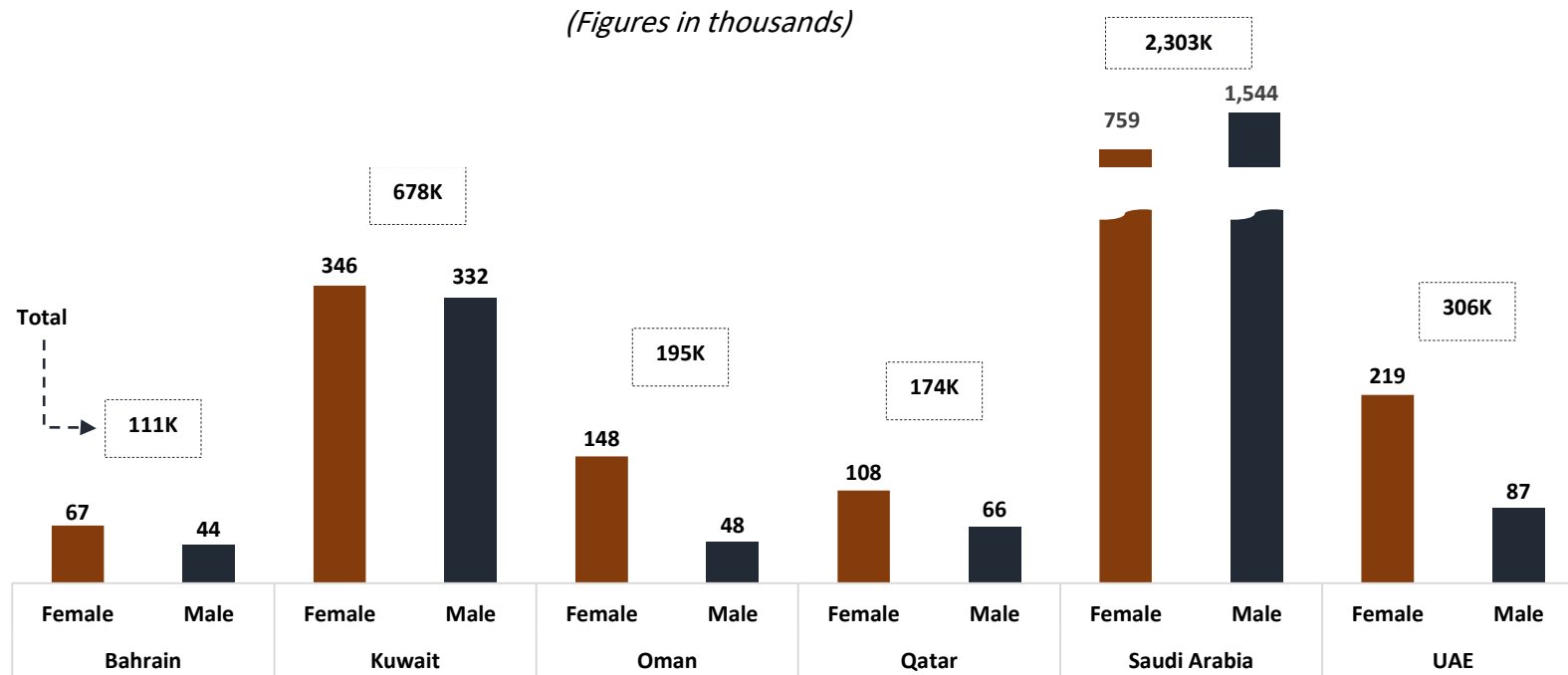


A. Domestic work is a significant sector of the GCC economy and growing



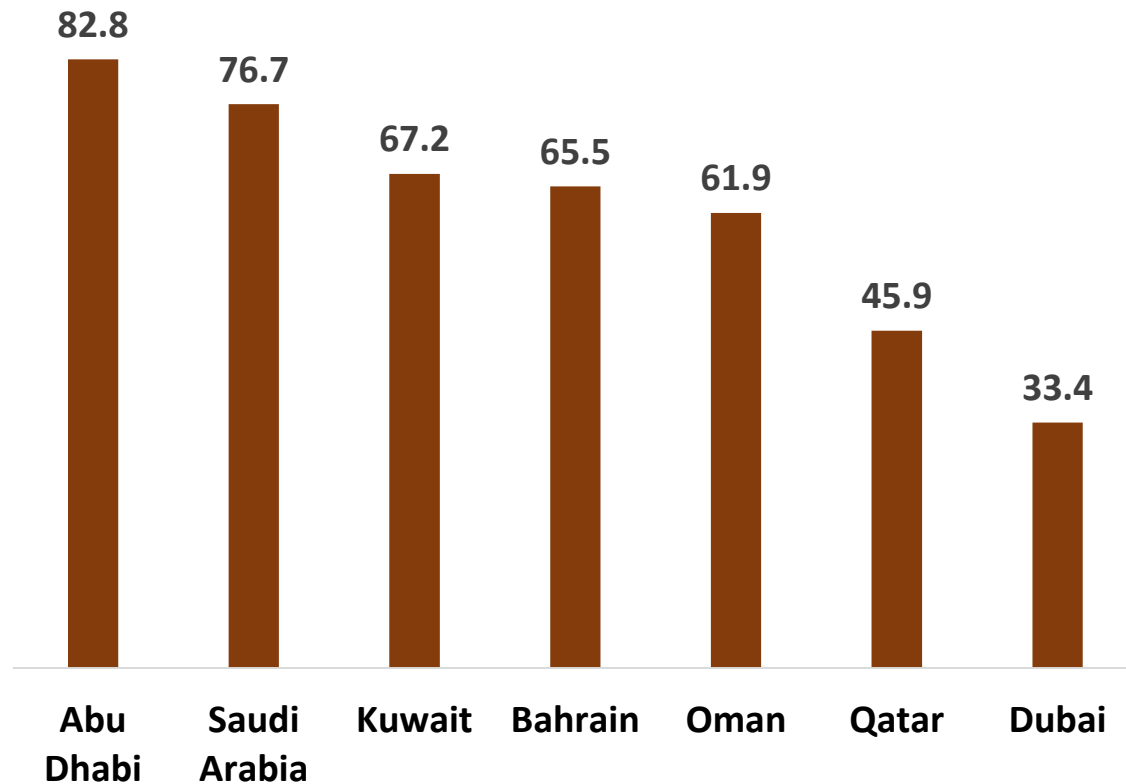
3.77 million domestic workers

- In 2016, GCC countries hosted around 3.77 million domestic workers, 1.65 million of whom (or 44 per cent) were women.
- Of the remaining 1.54 million men domestic workers, 73 percent were employed, mainly as drivers, in Saudi Arabia.

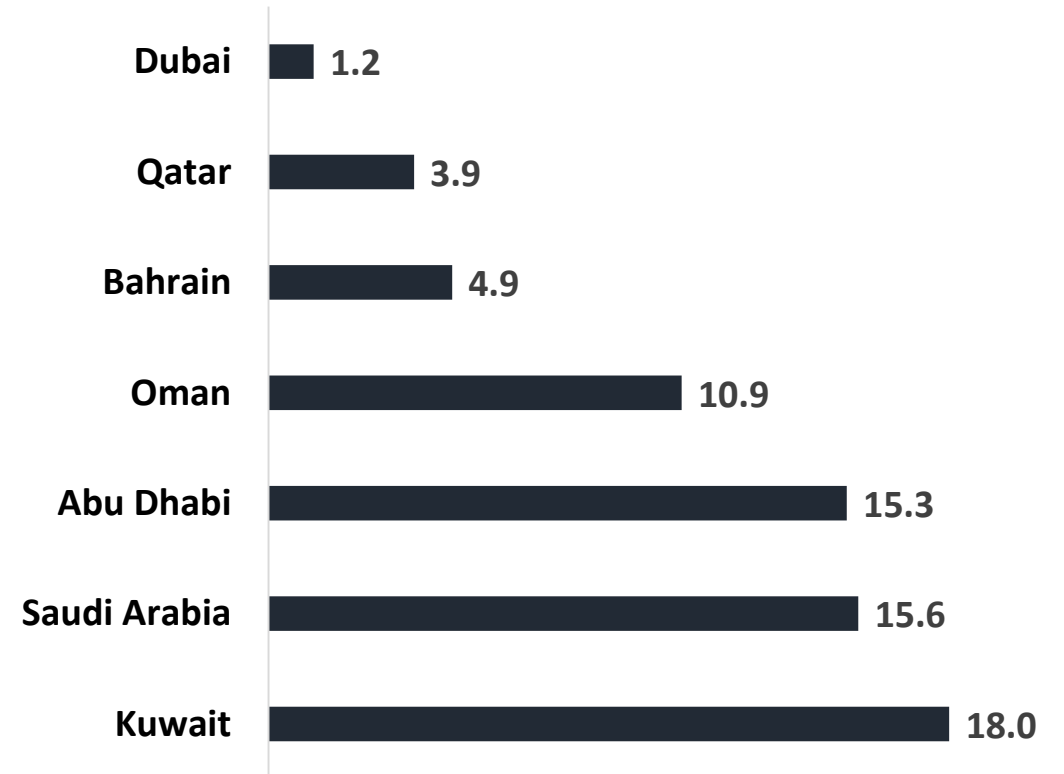


Domestic workers as a percentage of migrant workers

Women domestic workers as % of non-national female employment

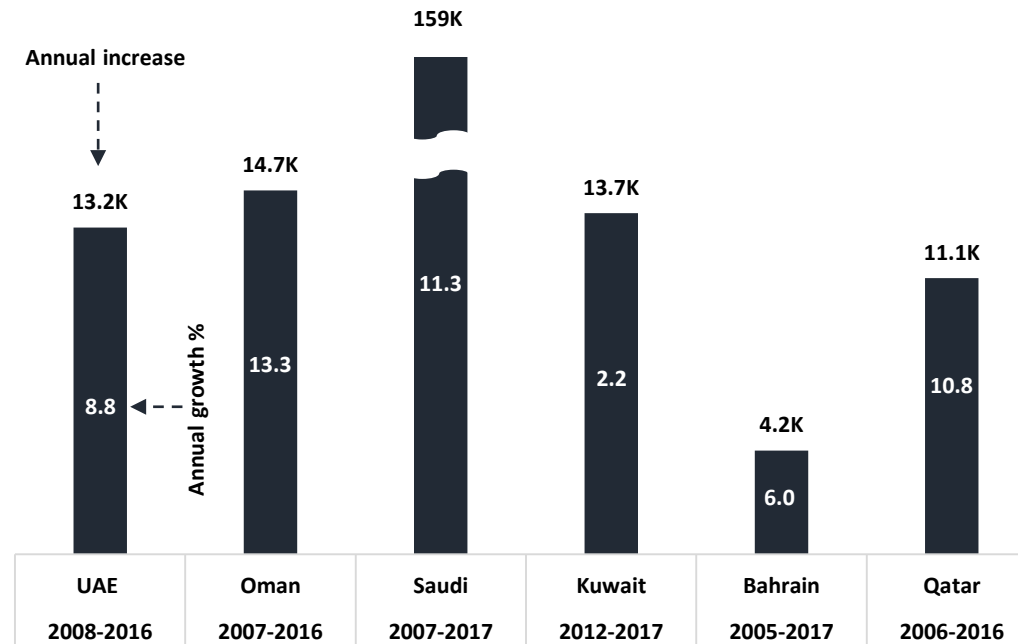


Men domestic workers as % of non-national male employment



35,970 new domestic workers every year

- Annual growth rate in the number of domestic workers is 8.7 per cent (or 35,970 domestic workers).
- If we exclude Saudi Arabia, the annual growth rate in the number of domestic workers is 8.2 per cent (or 11,400 domestic workers).



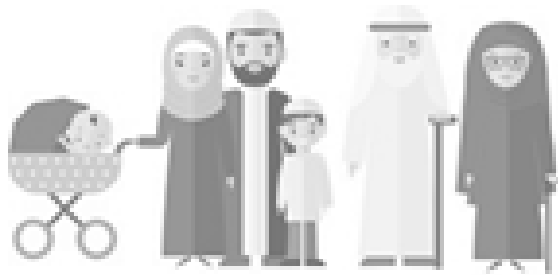
B. Explaining the demand for domestic workers: Two trends.



Two explanations

Demand among nationals

- Increasing care pressures on national households due to **higher FLFPRs** combined with **growing child and elderly care needs** in national contexts where **care is traditionally the responsibility of women** in the family and where intergenerational households are being replaced by **nuclear households**.

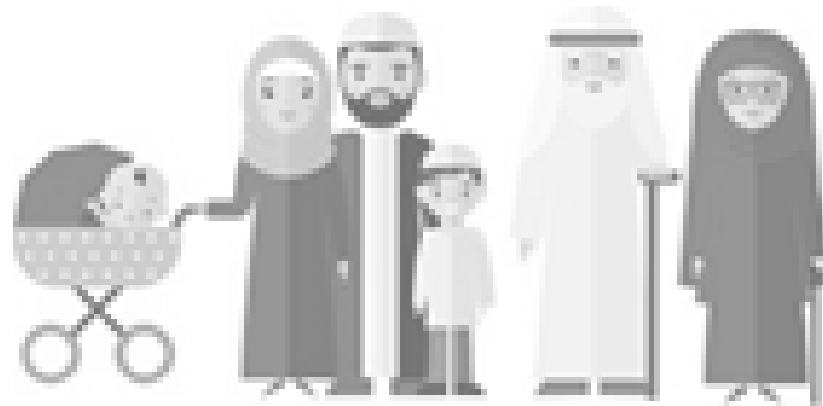


Demand among expatriates

- A growing population of **dual wage-earning** expatriate families with **child care** needs and a demand for professional housekeepers who require little supervision.



B1. Explaining the demand for domestic workers: National Households



Familializing and de-familializing child and elderly care policies

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Familializing care policies <i>(providing incentives for care by the family)</i></p> | <p><i>Time rights:</i> such as parental leave or care leave. <i>Part-time work</i> <i>Long leaves</i> (negative influence on reintegration into the labour market). <i>Cash benefits:</i> survivor's pension or free membership of the spouse's health insurance plan; parental leave benefits or care leave benefits.</p> |
| <p>De-familializing care policies <i>(de-incentivizing care by the family)</i></p> | <p>Day care: long and flexible opening hours, easy access to care facilities (high supply and low costs), and a high quality of care provision.</p> <p><i>Residential or partially residential care facilities for the elderly.</i></p> <p><i>Dense network of ambulatory care services for the elderly:</i></p> |
| <p>Source: Adapted from Leitner 2003.</p> | |

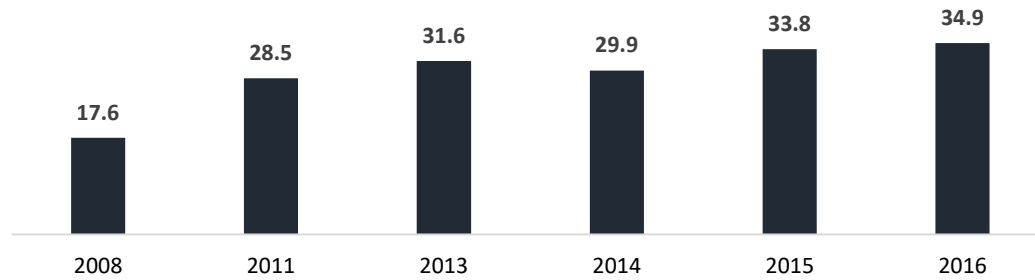
GCC: Familializing or de-familializing?

- The majority of child care policies are familializing, in the form of time rights, part-time work and long leaves.
- De-familializing child care policies are now effective in the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait (in the form of workplace crèches) among public sector employees.
- Dense network of ambulatory elderly care services in Bahrain, Oman, Saudi Arabia and the UAE, but only where no relatives exist.

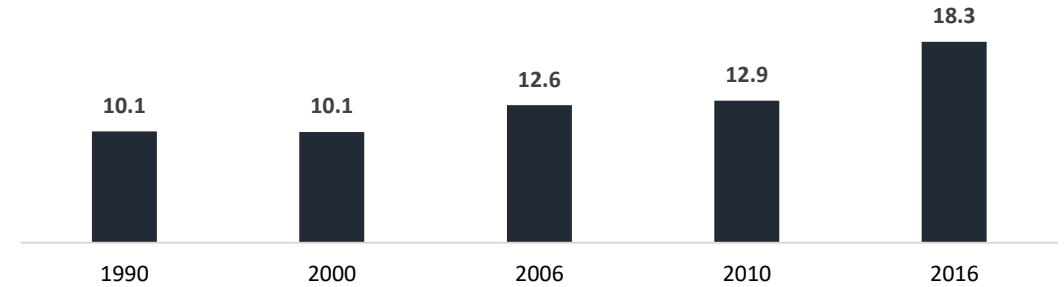
| Age Groups | Assistance Provider | | | Total |
|------------|---------------------|-------------------------|---------------|---------|
| | Nurse | Friends\Other relatives | Family member | |
| 65 – 69 | 2,094 | 1,776 | 31,660 | 35,530 |
| 70 – 74 | 1,984 | 1,318 | 38,415 | 41,717 |
| 75 – 79 | 4,859 | 618 | 29,588 | 35,065 |
| 80+ | 10,328 | 2,484 | 62,849 | 75,661 |
| Total | 19,265 | 6,196 | 162,512 | 187,973 |

Female labour force participation rates among nationals are growing

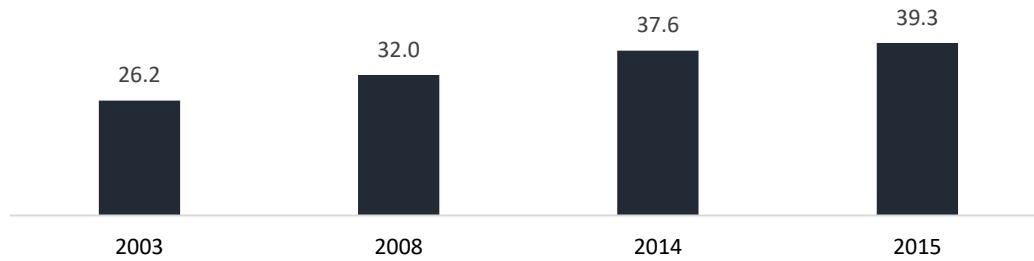
Abu Dhabi



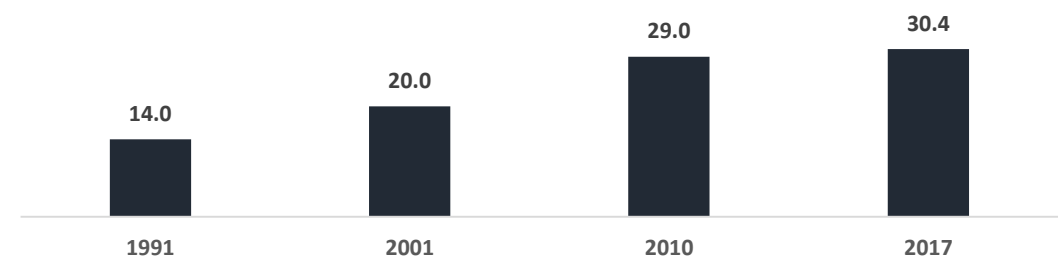
Saudi Arabia



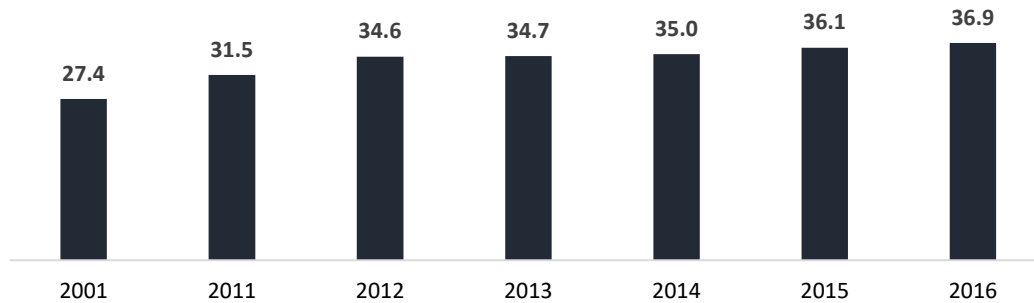
Kuwait



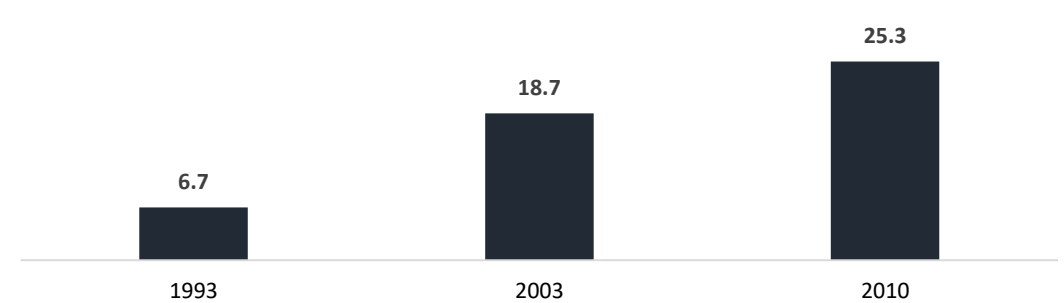
Bahrain



Qatar

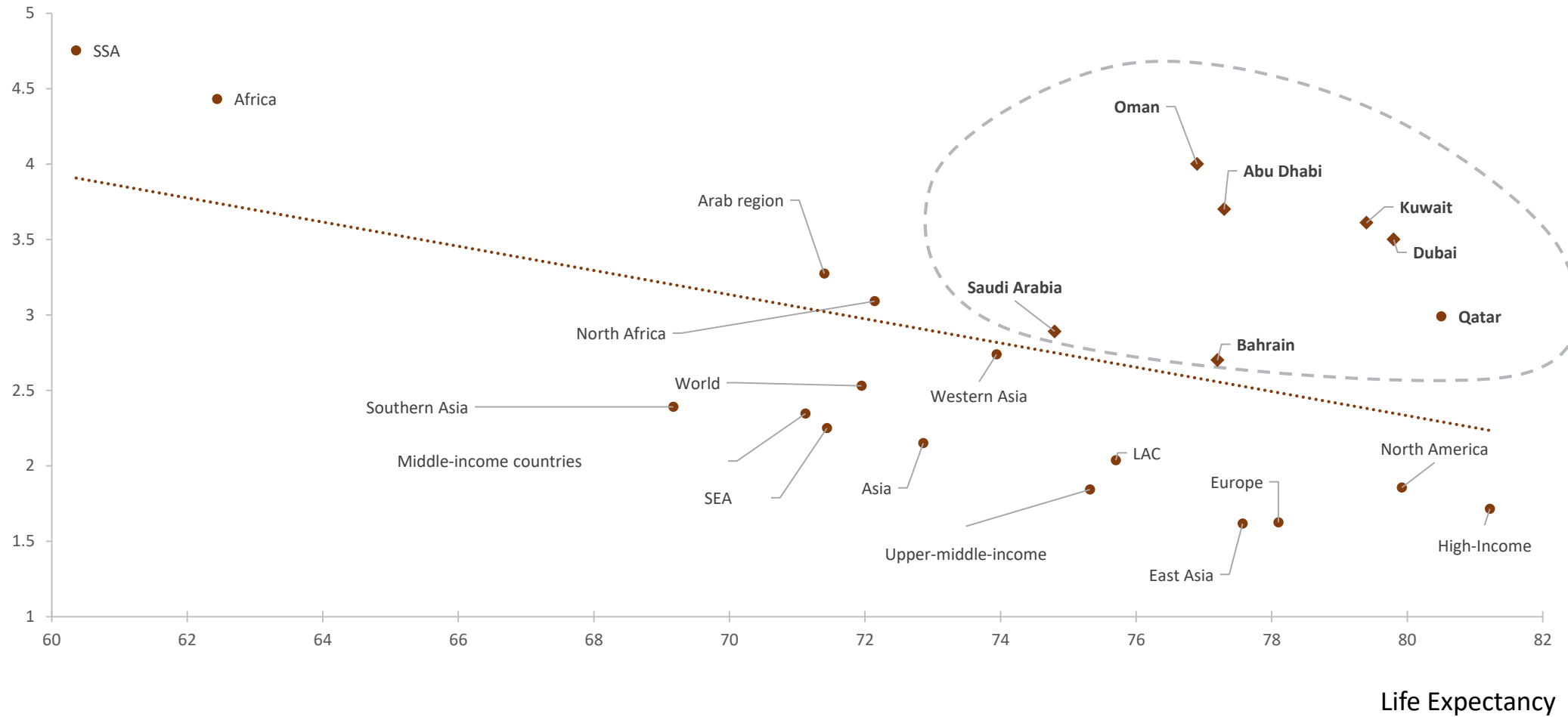


Oman

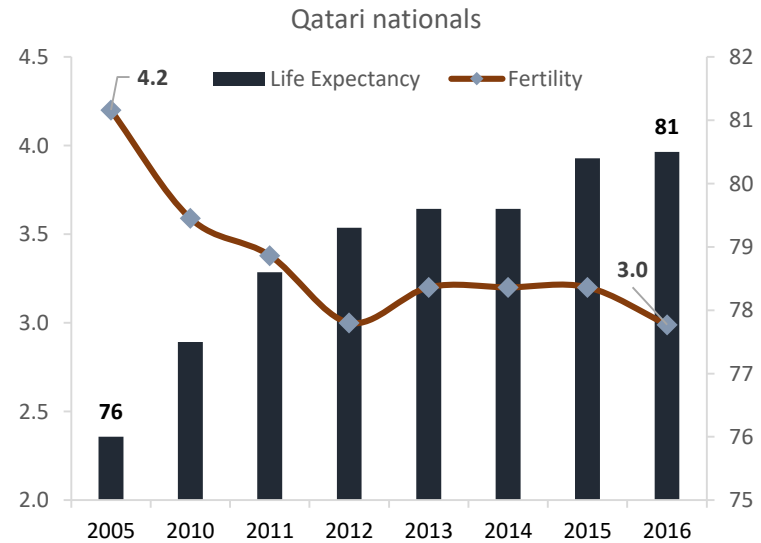
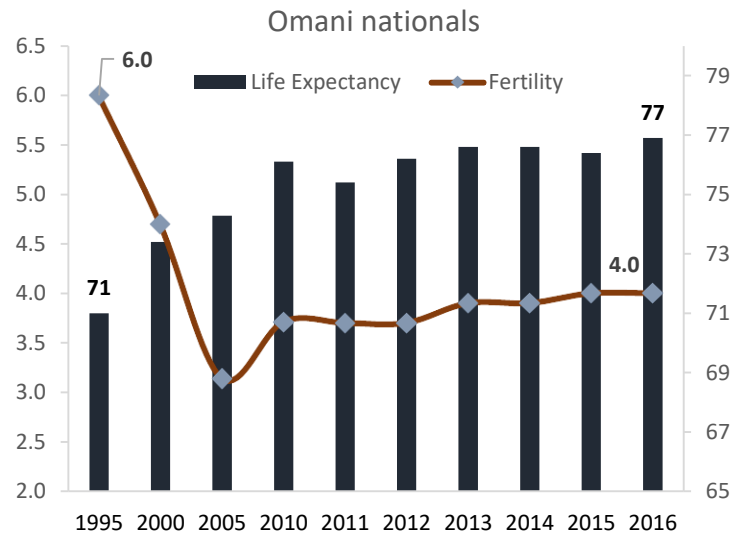
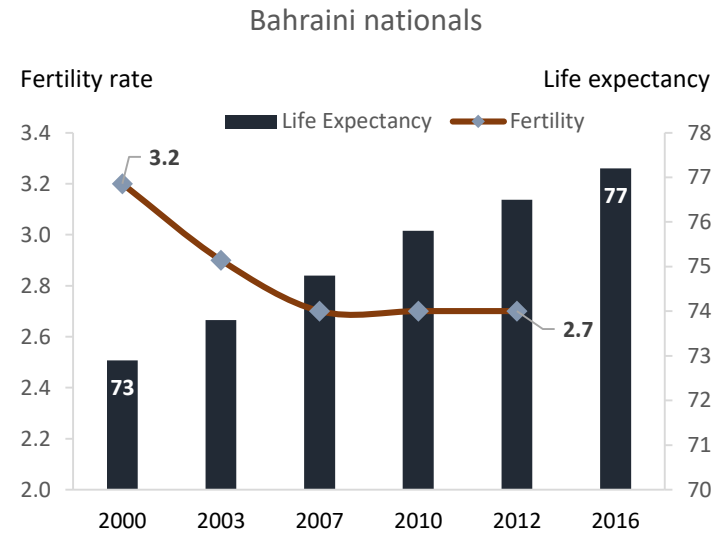
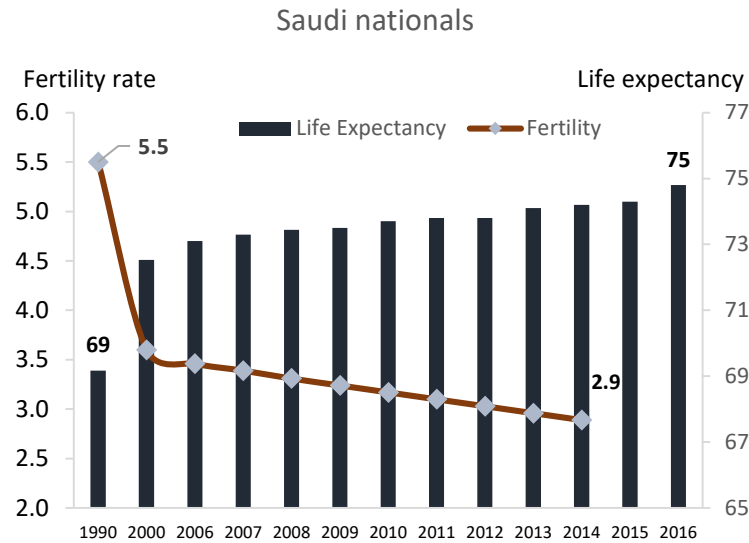


High and growing life expectancy and high and declining fertility

Fertility Rate

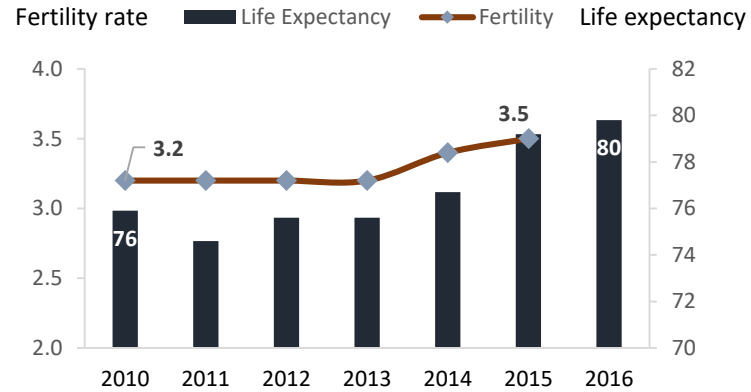


Life expectancy and fertility by country

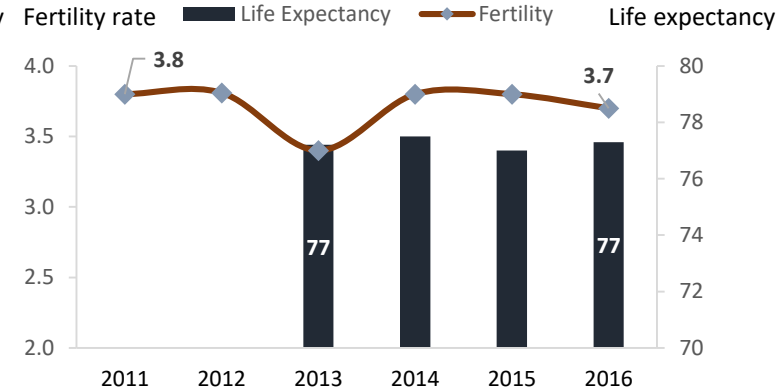


Life expectancy and fertility by country (cont'd)

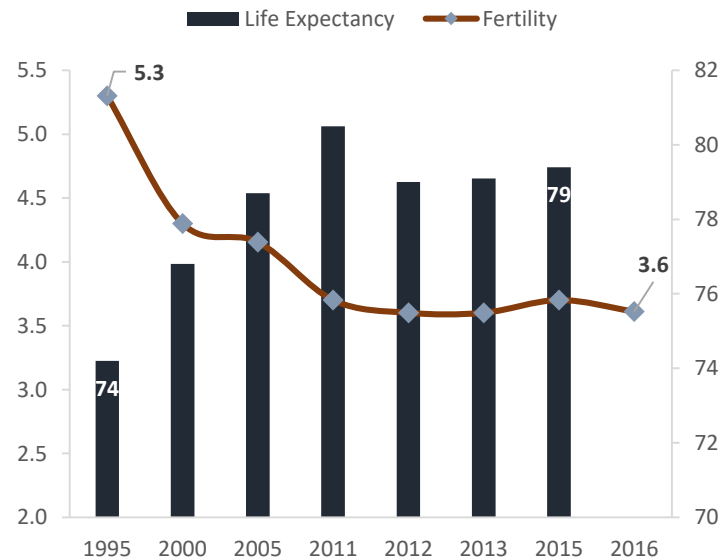
Dubai nationals



Abu Dhabi nationals



Kuwaiti nationals



Children constitute 34 per cent of the total national population

- Despite declining over time, the share of children among national population is high. Children (ages 0-14) – those who are in need of quality care – constitute 34 per cent of the total national population.

| Abu Dhabi | 2010 | 2016 | Annual growth (%) | % of total population | |
|---------------------|------------|------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-------|
| | | | 2010-2016 | 2010 | 2016 |
| Children (0-14) | 174,508 | 212,067 | 3.3 | 40.2 | 38.5 |
| Youth (15-24) | 100,836 | 108,031 | 1.2 | 23.2 | 19.6 |
| Working Age (15-64) | 249,576 | 327,310 | 4.6 | 57.5 | 59.3 |
| Elderly (65+) | 9,704 | 12,158 | 3.8 | 2.2 | 2.2 |
| Total | 433,788 | 551,535 | 4.1 | 100 | 100 |
| Saudi Arabia | 1992 | 2018 | Annual growth (%) | % of total population | |
| | | | 1992-2018 | 1992 | 2018 |
| Children | 6,060,657 | 6,298,475 | 0.1 | 49.2 | 30.3 |
| Youth | 2,377,105 | 3,873,316 | 1.9 | 19.3 | 18.6 |
| Working Age | 6,018,883 | 13,598,990 | 3.2 | 48.9 | 65.5 |
| Elderly | 401,861 | 871,162 | 3.0 | 3.3 | 4.2 |
| Total | 12,310,053 | 20,768,627 | 2.0 | 100 | 100 |
| Kuwait | 2005 | 2017 | Annual growth (%) | % of total population | |
| | | | 2005-2017 | 2005 | 2017 |
| Children | 341,651 | 450,703 | 2.3 | 39.7 | 35.5 |
| Youth | 178,161 | 247,639 | 2.8 | 20.7 | 19.5 |
| Working Age | 493,757 | 769,309 | 3.8 | 57.4 | 60.6 |
| Elderly | 24,916 | 50,189 | 6.0 | 2.9 | 4.0 |
| Total | 860,324 | 1,270,201 | 3.3 | 100 | 100 |
| Bahrain | 1991 | 2017 | Annual growth (%) | % of total population | |
| | | | 1991-2017 | 1991 | 2017 |
| Children | 132,085 | 214,748 | 1.9 | 40.9 | 31.7 |
| Youth | 61,952 | 120,559 | 2.6 | 19.2 | 17.8 |
| Working Age | 180,621 | 430,910 | 3.4 | 55.9 | 63.6 |
| Elderly | 10,599 | 31,848 | 4.3 | 3.3 | 4.7 |
| Total | 323,305 | 677,506 | 2.9 | 100 | 100 |
| Oman | 2007 | 2016 | Annual growth (%) | % of total population | |
| | | | 2007-2006 | 2007 | 2016 |
| Children | 695,804 | 877,433 | 2.6 | 36.2 | 36.1 |
| Youth | 532,720 | 462,284 | -1.6 | 27.7 | 19.0 |
| Working Age | 1,185,467 | 1,446,377 | 2.2 | 61.7 | 59.6 |
| Elderly | 41,426 | 104,015 | 10.8 | 2.2 | 4.3 |
| Total | 1,922,697 | 2,427,825 | 2.6 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

B2. Explaining the demand for domestic workers: Expatriates' Households



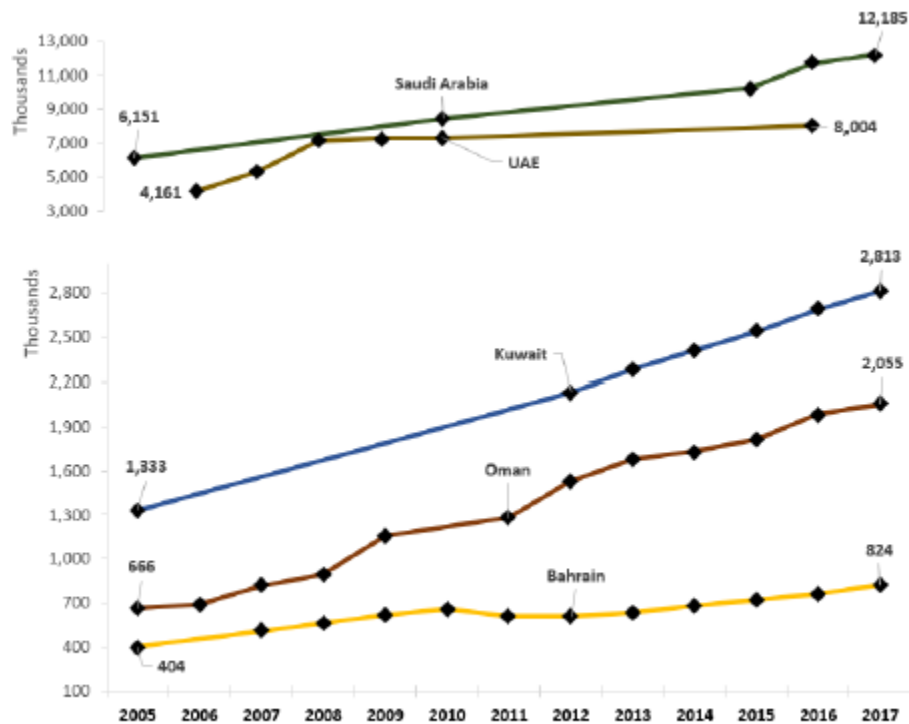
Total population has increased by 51 per cent (4.2 per cent annually)

- Over the past decade, the total population of the GCC countries has increased by 51 per cent (by 18 million) or by 4.2 per cent annually.
- On average, the national GCC population increased by 2.7 per cent annually.

| Total population by country, 2006-2016 (in millions) | | | | |
|--|------|------|----------|-----------------|
| | 2006 | 2016 | Increase | Annual Growth % |
| Saudi Arabia | 24.1 | 31.8 | 7.7 | 2.8 |
| United Arab Emirates | 4.2 | 9.1 | 4.9 | 8.0 |
| Oman | 2.6 | 4.4 | 1.8 | 5.5 |
| Kuwait | 2.5 | 4.1 | 1.6 | 4.7 |
| Qatar | 1.0 | 2.6 | 1.6 | 9.6 |
| Bahrain | 1.0 | 1.4 | 0.4 | 3.9 |
| Total | 35.4 | 53.4 | 18.0 | 4.2 |

Population growth is driven by expatriates

- Population growth is driven by expatriates of whom a significant number are dual wage earners who need and can afford the services of domestic workers to perform child care, tutoring, housekeeping and cooking functions.



Source: GCC National statistical offices.

| Average monthly household income in GCC countries (USD) | | | | |
|---|-----------|---------------|--------|------|
| | Nationals | Non-Nationals | Total | Year |
| Qatar | 24,235 | 6,707 | 11,430 | 2013 |
| Dubai | 19,671 | 7,656 | .. | 2014 |
| Kuwait | 11,148 | 3,126 | 6,448 | 2013 |
| Bahrain | 4,728 | 3,838 | 4,421 | 2015 |
| Saudi Arabia | 3,629 | .. | 2,859 | 2013 |
| Oman | 3,049 | 1,693 | .. | 2012 |

C. Current state of affairs in employer-domestic worker matching: Examples from AD and Dubai (pre-Tadbeer phase)



Scope



- Map how the **market is structured** in the UAE;
- Examine **modalities of employer-domestic workers matching** among placement agencies in the UAE; and,
- Assess the **demand for skilled workers** among employers and the **need for skills training** among domestic workers in the UAE.

Methodology

- Interviews with 10 Tadbeer operators.
- Interviews with 82 domestic workers.
- 2 FGDs with DWs.
- 2 FGDs with employers.

| Employers | Workers | Recruiters |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What were the exact needs that prompted you to hire a domestic worker (occupation(s) and employment arrangement)? - Describe the process through which you recruited a domestic worker - In the absence of agency criteria (or when the recruitment was done through informal channels), what matching (selection) criteria did you set in the process of recruitment? - What was the determining factor in your decision to recruit the domestic worker who is now in your employ? - While interviewing a nanny, did you ask candidates any of the questions listed below? - What types of conflicts have emerged in the course of your employment relationship? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employment history (following details were asked about each of the workers' employment relationships: nationality of the employer, size of the household, family size, occupation, work-sharing arrangements where more than one domestic worker is employed by the household and their nationalities) - Define your job and the skills you think are required for the job - Were you confronted with situations on the job where you did not know how to respond or behave? - How do you cope with family dislocation, nostalgia and stressful events in your country and in your own family? - If you were given the opportunity to choose employers, what profile employers would you select and why? - How do you deal with conflict (with your employers, other workers)? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Years of experience working in the sector - Profile of clientele - Profile of domestic workers sought by clientele - Their views about the occupational segmentation in the sector and the valuing of different occupations - What system have you developed to match workers with employers (matching criteria and process) - How do you assess workers' prior learning and skills? - Nature of the complaints emerging from workers and employers, both |
| <p><i>Prompting questions:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Physical development:</i> for example, is the worker familiar with different age categories that mark significant changes in children's diet? Can she develop menu plans based on age category? Can she | | |

How is the demand for domestic workers structured?

- Despite the diversity of Tadbeer operators and their experience, there is general consensus among them that the **demand is highest for “housemaids”** (who are also nannies and cooks), **followed by nannies and then cooks**. Nannies are the highest paid category (USD 500) among the three, followed by uncertified cooks (USD 400) and housemaids (USD 320-408).
- The demand was less significant for the remaining categories (tutors, private nurses, gardeners, watchmen, family drivers, housekeepers, personal assistants and farmers) because employers generally recruit them directly without the intermediation of labour recruiters. The latter are higher-skilled occupations and, in the absence of NOS, certification and proper matching processes, **employers prefer recruitment through informal networks where they can verify candidates’ references (in the case of informal education) and credentials (in the case of formal education)**.

Matching modalities

- Using **social media** platforms like WhatsApp or Facebook.
- **Online lists of matching criteria** mixing identity and occupational identifiers which employers can use to shortlist potential candidates.
- **Interviews** with the workers (usually unidirectional, with the employer interviewing the worker).
- **Direct selection by labour recruiters** without employer input or based on earlier intake with employers.

Example of video content circulated by placement agencies via social media applications

Placement agencies circulate videos via social media. These are short videos (under two minutes) during which a recruiter asks a domestic worker the following questions (verbatim):

- “Your name
- Age
- Are you married? Do you have children?
- What is your employment history? (Usually referring to countries she has worked in as domestic worker before arriving in the UAE).
- Can you clean?
- Can you cook? What meals can you cook?
- Can you “hold” a baby?
- Can you prepare deserts? Which?”

Agency criteria that employers are invited to select in order to shortlist workers for interviews

These are the matching criteria used by one of the placement agencies, now a TSC.

“Please tell us about yourself. You have:

- A preference for a Filipino maid
- A requirement for a Muslim maid
- A cat
- A dog
- Fondness for western food
- A preference for an Ethiopian maid
- A special needs child
- Fondness for Arabic food
- Fondness for Asian food
- An infant (new-born to 2 years)
- A child between 2 and 16 years
- An elderly parent”

Matching modalities (cont'd)

- Three categories of shortcuts in the matching process; personal and physical attributes, experience, and family status.

| Composite index of labour matching dimensions among recruiters | |
|--|--|
| Personal/physical attributes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nationality. - Religion. - Age: According to recruiters, 40-50 is the most desirable age category because workers have fewer family responsibilities and are less distracted by personal issues. Second best performing age category, according to recruiters, is women aged 30-40 because they possess the level of maturity required for the job. - Height and weight are determining factors in the case of elderly caregivers or caregivers for people with disabilities. |
| Experience | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ability to cook a certain style of food (Western, Asian, Mediterranean...). - Caring for special needs child (especially violent autism). - Pet minding skills. - Post-natal care skills, especially in the case of twins. - Caring for the elderly. |
| Family status | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Marital status (a recent divorce or separation are viewed as distracting and therefore divorcees are avoided by labour recruiters). - Mothers with children below the age of 7 are also avoided by recruiters. They are thought to affect worker retention and focus on the job. - Mothers with children are sought-after for childcare arrangements because of their experience in raising children of different age categories. |

Matching modalities (cont'd)

Stereotypes and assumptions by:

- (a) employers about work performed by women from different nationalities;
- (b) workers about employers from different nationalities and religious backgrounds;
- (c) workers about other workers from different nationalities;
- (d) labour recruiters about employers from different nationalities; and,
- (e) labour recruiters about domestic workers from different nationalities.

Hidden assumptions

Western Expats: Class guilt and cleaning after oneself ideal

“I personally like to do things myself; I also do not like the idea of a person depending on me...what happens when my children grow older and I have to terminate her contract” (American employer in Abu Dhabi).

“I am not comfortable telling her (the domestic worker) what to do, so I just let her be” (German employer in Abu Dhabi).

Arab expats: Compensating for the need to “outsource” care with close supervision

“Nationals and Arab expatriates are micro-managers. They monitor us closely. We prefer to work with Western expats. They trust us with the work and let us manage our time” (Focus group with domestic workers in Dubai; also confirmed in Abu Dhabi).

“Parents do not want to admit to hiring a nanny because it is their job and do not want to be judged by relatives for delegating their caregiving responsibilities” (Labour recruiter in Dubai).

Skills and prior learning assessment modalities

| Timing and type of agency skills' assessment and skilling interventions | |
|---|--|
| Timing of intervention | Type of intervention |
| Pre-departure checks | This is achieved via interviews in the country of origin and through the verification of their Facebook chatter . Previously, labour recruiters set up "training camps" to train domestic workers pre-departure. Training camps were an "opportunity to weed out workers who did not demonstrate the skills and competence required for the job before deployment." These programmes have now been replaced by national programmes. |
| On-arrival, pre-placement trainings | Only two of the labour recruiters interviewed provided trainings in "UAE model villas" before placing workers. Training is limited to housekeeping and cooking. |
| On-arrival trial-and-error placement | Most recruiters consider trial periods and, in the words of two labour recruiters, "endless worker replacement possibilities," a solution to poor matching. |
| On-the-job trainings | One labour recruiter is providing custom-made trainings in employers' household (for an employer-paid fee). The "Training and Management package" lasts 12 months and is divided into 12 weekly testing modules, offering three hours of in-house training each month. |

Demand for Skills: Employers

- A demand for **vocational** and **transversal** skills but also for skills that reduce the **transaction cost** of recruitment and the **emotional cost** of parting with the worker.
- Examples (transaction cost reducing skills):
 - employers look for domestic workers with experience working with children of different age categories so as not to hire a new work when the children's developmental needs change;
 - employers seek workers who can adjust their time management and upgrade their vocational skills when they move to larger homes with fancier finishing, furniture and household appliances, usually entertaining at a higher frequency.

Demand for skills: Workers

- A need for skills relating to **employment arrangements, self-preservation** skills and **vocational** skills.
- In relation to employment arrangements (on-demand arrangement):
 - (a) adjust to different households of different sizes, with different dynamics and work-sharing arrangements each time (sometime during the same day); (b) manage relationships with multiple employers of different nationalities and distinct household cultures; (c) manage their time better (they do not have the luxury of parsing out the tasks over a full day or week); (d) manage stress and work pressures to avoid burnout; and, (e) develop strategies to deal with repetitive movements which can cause muscle strain injuries.

Recognizing workers' employment history and providing opportunities for mobility within the sector

- Domestic workers in the UAE gain new skills on the job that allow them to move:
 - **From:** low-wage, nanny only, housekeeper only and cook only, closely-supervised live-in employment arrangements in large households
 - **To:** higher-waged housekeeping or nanny-only (or both) live-out arrangements where they are rather autonomous in carrying out their tasks.
- These skills are not formally recognized under the current system. The transition depends on the **worker's social network** among employers, **communication** skills and individual **bargaining** capacity.
- Workers unable to transition through employer networks, **sign up for on-demand cleaning** employment arrangements **hoping to find**, in the process, a suitable employer who will provide them with the **higher wage, lower workload, more autonomy, live out employment** arrangement.

D. Reflecting on the way forward



The way forward

- reflecting on what the longer-term demand in the sector means for a **labour admission** system for domestic workers;
- developing **national benchmarks or occupational standards** that capture the segmentation within the sector;
- **developing, assessing, and recognizing workers' skills against a national benchmark** to better match employer expectations with worker qualifications and to improve the quality of the services delivered to employers, especially those related to child, elderly and post-operative care where developmental, safety and hygiene protocols are paramount;
- **promoting workers' mobility within the sector** (from lower to higher complexity tasks) in accordance with these same benchmarks; and,
- progressively **moving away from the nationality-based wage differentials** to a waging system modelled after the benchmarks.








Suggestions for the way forward:

- **Linking wage increases to complexity** in the sector and tying labour admission to skill certification or to recognition of prior learning (RPL) systems.
- **Developing regional competence standards (RCS)** to recognize the regional mobility of domestic workers and to transition from the logic of “facilitating market access based on nationality” to the logic of “harmonized, transparent and efficient labour matching.”
- **Tying RCS to regional skills passports for domestic workers** to recognize the experience of workers who are mobile within the GCC and progressively promote the recognition of these passports for returning domestic workers (in the GCC-Asia or GCC-Africa migration corridors).
- **Expanding the discussion on RCS (and corresponding wage levels) to organizations representing relevant interest groups** (e.g., groups and government agencies representing the interests of families, the elderly, women, migrant workers, children, and people with disability) to garner support for these standards and to revise and adjust them in light of local economic factors and the needs of migrant domestic workers and their families.







EXAMPLE: Job classification of domestic workers and carers in Italy (CBA 2013)

| | |
|---------|---|
| Level A | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Domestic workers with no experience |
| Level B | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Assistants to self-sufficient individuals |
| Level C | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Individual assistants to non-self-sufficient individuals, unskilled |
| Level D | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Individual assistants to non-self-sufficient individuals, trained and skilled (highest earning category) |

EXAMPLE: Job classification of private household personnel in Argentina (CBA 2013)

| | |
|---|--|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Supervisors: personnel hired to coordinate and supervise the tasks of two or more domestic workers.* |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Cooks: personnel hired exclusively to cook.** |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Caseros/as: live-in personnel performing tasks for the preservation of the dwelling |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Caregivers: personnel providing non-therapeutic assistance and care to children, elders, the sick and people with disability. *** |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Personnel for general tasks: personnel hired to perform a number of household tasks such as cleaning, washing, ironing, maintenance, preparing and cooking meals. |

EXAMPLE: Job classification of domestic workers in Hong Kong SAR, China

| | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">General cleaning  | 10 USD/hour.  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Special / intensive cleaning  | 14 - 16.6 USD/hour  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Post-natal care  | 2,250 USD/month  |

EXAMPLE: Regional Model Competency Standards for Domestic Work in ASEAN (ILO 2014)

| | |
|--|---|
| Core competencies | <p>A1. Communicate effectively in a domestic work environment;</p> <p>A2. Work in a socially and culturally diverse workplace;</p> <p>A3. Maintain health, safety and security in a domestic work environment;</p> <p>A4. Plan, organize and manage own work;</p> <p>A5. Undertake calculations relevant to domestic work; and</p> <p>A6. Use a language other than the local language to communicate in a domestic work setting.</p> |
| Domestic cleaning and basic housekeeping | <p>B1. Apply basic cleaning principles to perform cleaning tasks;</p> <p>B2. Clean and maintain bedrooms and living areas;</p> <p>B3. Clean and maintain bathrooms and toilet facilities;</p> <p>B4. Wash cloths, linens and fabrics; and</p> <p>B5. Iron and store laundered items.</p> |
| Cooking and food handling | <p>C1. Clean and maintain food preparation, storage and service areas;</p> <p>C2. Follow basic food safety practices;</p> <p>C3. Organize and prepare basic food in a domestic setting; and</p> <p>C4. Serve food and beverages.</p> |
| Care for infants and children | <p>D1. Work effectively with families to provide care and support for infants and children;</p> <p>D2. Provide care and support for the infants and/or toddlers in a household; and</p> <p>D3. Provide care and support for children in a household.</p> |
| Care for elderly people | <p>E1. Provide support to elderly people to meet personal care needs; and</p> <p>E2. Assist client with medication.</p> |
| Care for household pets and plants | <p>F1. Provide care for pets in a household; and</p> <p>F2. Provide care for plants in a household.</p> |