

Caring Systems - Think big Meeting - 01Feb22
Notes - Cities Alliance

Key points raised:

The concept of care

- Holistic view over what care really is and all the services involved on it
- Care as a human right and a shared responsibility (although main responsibility over provision lies with governments)
- Caring systems as something empowering people, it is about agency and enabling
- Safety as a key point in a caring system
- Starts with the individual, responding to people's actual needs and giving a perspective on tomorrow
- Caring for people and the planet alike

The urban space

- Cities need to be seen as ecosystems, as spaces for care and inclusion
- The community as main level of intervention
- The built environment must be (re)designed to be inclusive and caring for people, working for everyone and allowing people to be cared for

Gender and social inequalities

- Sexual division of labor: need to de-womanize care, too much in the shoulders of women. How? Education and socialization, building skills
- Caring for the carers: provide a safer environment for care workers to shield them from gender-based violence, deportations, abuses, among others
- Recognize the (unpaid) work provided by women and address the inequalities it generates
- Gender-responsive budgeting
- Time management as essential to think about the division of labor and reduce the load of unpaid work
- Improve the work conditions of caregivers

Rebuilding the social contract

- Based on a new solidarity agenda
- Structures of a new social contract that promote cohesive systems and repairs historical debts
- Provides access to essential care services for all

- Public trust needs to be rebuilt, requires political commitment
- A social contract that breaks with the sexual division of work and recognizes the rights of those who provide and receive care

Participatory governance & collaboration

- innovations in the ways of building and interacting with communities
- Institutionalize participatory mechanisms, governments to be held accountable on this new social contract
- Participation in decision-making, not only consultations
- Inclusive policy design
- Renew multilateralism

Service provision

- Lack of access to basic services and facilities - unaffordable or unavailable
- Delivering policies in a way that builds upon the resources already available but which are underused, such as repurposing current existing infrastructures (like libraries)
- Need for more participatory and customized approaches, culturally-sensitive caring systems

Economy

- Recognize the interdependence of formal and informal economy
- Ensure sufficient allocation of financial resources for care services and care providers (hazard exposure vs pay level are not in line)
- Need to acknowledge non monetized services and count how much care services bring to the GDP of the community and country
- Need to decommodify caring systems while ensuring universal access

Technology for transparency and accessibility

- A digitalization process that increases the access to services, but do not undermine the benefits of sharing spaces with others
- Adequate data collection for accountability and more efficient planning based on needs
- Access to technology and information help removing barriers in care systems

Minutes

<https://www.citiesarelistening.uclg.org/>

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Opening:

Emilia Saiz, UCLG

Covid19 -> inequality important point of the problem to be addressed

We need to give content to the work that needs to be done by cities in the next few years.

What kind of leadership do we need? New ecology? New governance systems?

Setting the scene:

Greg Munro, CA

Margareth Mead: first signs of civilization in ancient culture was a femur that was broken then healed meaning that this person had help -> helping others through difficulties separated humans from animals, the first sign of civilization was caring.

- Vulnerable women and girls are often more exposed.
- Lack of access to care facilities as key difficulty
- Covid19 = pivotal moment for change, inequities worsened, showed the clear **interdependence of formal and informal economy**; opportunities for politicians to renew our social contract. Moment to increase investments in social capital and provide meaningful access to basic service delivery.
- Need to create and foster a system of caring services = how? Cities need concrete recommendations.

Inspiring talk:

Jorge Pérez Jaramillo, UCLG Ubuntu advisor, Urban Planning Advisor, Government of Antioquia

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- We have been living for many years with issues associated with inequalities
- **Cities need to be seen as ecosystems, as spaces for care and inclusion**
- Prioritization of public goods needs to be done with coherence, there is a lot of inconsistency and actors often dilate the debates in order not to concrete them
- Public health problem, but also the creation of an ecosystem for human life that allows **innovations in the ways of building and interacting with communities**, the culture of understandings based on solidarity
- What, when, how and who -> must be translated into a collective agreement
- Great need for new political leaders so that these issues can actually be resolved

- Increase the engagement of the academy with the territories = experimental work that allows to advance much faster
- These are times to collectively create and promote the intensive participation of the community and the actors
- Global solidarity, review of the social contract, new ways of understanding reality, how to renew multilateralism

Emilia Saiz, UCLG

The systems of care exist in our society but we're ignoring it, we're not paying for a large part of it and the people who work in service provision around care are the least paid. It is believed that development is linked to economic growth, but **we need to grow from that and realize the links with care provision.**

Round of introductions and answers to the following question:

What do you understand as Caring Systems and how can they be delivered?

What are the major trends that characterize this topic?

Rosa Pavanelli, Secretary General, Public Services International

- **Need to de-womanize care, too much in the shoulders of women -> sexual division of labor**
- Care is not the exclusive duty of women
- Need to open care schools for the men - not always the case
- Care is an important factor of the economy -> not giving vouchers for women to leave their jobs, professionalization
- Need to **count how much care brings to the GDP of the community and country**
- Idea of care including all that can be delivered: child care, disability, but also transport, leisure services, nursing care, social services, domiciliary care, rehabilitation, addictions support, shelter for victims of domestic violence, rehabilitation of prisoners, unemployed (communities that are also caring for them)
- Environment: are waste collectors and recyclers part of the caring systems? **Those who are caring for our environment (air, water) also providing care services?**
- Room for alliances, multistakeholder, but it is the ultimate responsibility of governments to deliver social care as public services. Major responsibility of national government but local governments are the face of citizens. **Reclaim the government responsibilities over care delivery**
- Care as a human right, and it is a shared responsibility

(Chat) See PSI briefing: "The territorial dimension of social care services":

<https://psishort.link/LRGBrief9>

(Chat) See PSI's Manifesto calling to rebuild the social organisation of care:

<https://popshort.link/CareManifesto>

(Chat) Rosa mentioned the importance of urban mobility as part of a caring approach to public services. See the ITF People Public Transport Policy addressing ownership, financing, control of technology, climate, gender: www.OPTPolicy.org

Gerald Leitner, Secretary General, IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions)

- Libraries are multi-function institutions which place the human not the markets at the center, inclusive of migrants, and minorities
- Look to help everyone, healthy life, know and inform your rights
- **Digital world** = risks of individualization of experiences of the world; what about the benefits of sharing spaces?
- Need to ensure that we are doing things that start with the individual, how we are responding to people's actual needs and also **giving a perspective on tomorrow**
- Delivering policies in a way in the **infrastructures that are already there but underused** (like libraries).
- What does it mean for the people who are working in the care area, need for professionalization and skills building

Colin Rajah, Coordinator, Civil Society Action Committee

(Largest platform of civil society engaging in migration policy)

- Many people involved in caring systems are foreign born (1/3 in US for doctors, nurses even higher)
- Women, people of color, from the Global South, particularly true in developed countries. Very cheap labor for them.
- During the pandemic, the **precariousness that these workers experience** were exposed and exacerbated. + caregivers were highly exposed to hazards
- Some cities implemented good practices such as moratorium against visa expiration for caregivers, but was the exception
- **New solidarity agenda**; it became clear that, although we've been deceived by national governments, local governments have been responding for years, e.g. cities taking a position on migrants and providing ways to access health systems, documents, etc. = **the provision of healthcare but also the reception of caregivers (hosting countries/cities)**
- How can we move to a new social contract: cannot touch on that without having a new solidarity between migrants and city authorities

(chat) For more details about our proposals for protection of migrants during the pandemic and health care systems:

Gabriela Cuevas, Co-Chair of the UHC2030 Steering Committee

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- Need for political leadership, governance as something that involves politicians and citizens
- Political will, with people at the center of interventions
- Care as a social protection network
- We need to start by rebuilding our communities
- Health as a fundamental human right
- **Ensuring sufficient allocation of financial resources**
- Solidarity as the basic element
- Good healthcare quality for communities, especially needed for women and girls whose health are often disregarded
- “Vulnerability is a circumstance that we need to overcome.”
- Focusing on communities and their health needs > empowered people, multistakeholder, ?? (3 points)
- **PPEs for instance are designed for men, not women. Different needs of the care providers as well**
- **Institutionalize participatory mechanisms**, governments to be held accountable on this new social contract
- It is a political choice, local governments need to rebuild public trust

Sri Sofjan, Senior Program Administrator & Strategist, Huairou Commission, Representative of the Feminist Caucus

- Law & policy: are they really caring or is there room for improvement? Political will for change
- Service delivery
- **Changing norms: degenderizing care. How? Education and socialization**
- Financing: how much represents the resources from the governments that goes into caring systems? How are resources for care allocated?
- **Data and accountability**
- Care of the caregivers: gender-based violence against careworkers
- **Built environment & social aspect: how is our built environment inclusive and caring for people, working for everyone?**
- Caring systems should empower people
- Gender-responsive budgeting.

(chat) supporting your point that Caring system is to remove barriers, including to access to technology and information.

Safety is a key point in a Caring system

Victor Pineda, President and Founder of World Enabled, Representative of the Accessibility Caucus

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- From the accessibility agenda, caring systems are the foundation
- Need to **decommodify caring systems**
- Structures of a new social contract that **promote cohesive systems, supported by solidarity**, provide access to essential care services for all
- Human-rights based approach that allows local governments to further their services
- Accessibility through social contract is about ... (?)
- Accessibility as a vehicle to advance caring systems, it is about the **agency** aspect
- **Adequate data collection**
- More resilient and engaged caring systems with a look at accessibility (ex. India, caregivers could not access people with disabilities)
- Need for more **participatory and customized approaches, culturally-sensitive caring systems**

(chat?) The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was the first UN Treaty to make access to technology and information a basic human right.

Peer-to-peer support is vital too. I want to share the link to the Global Compact for Inclusive and Accessible Cities www.cities4all.org and stay tuned for the Cities for All Learning Modules (by World Enabled with UCLG), C4All/UCLG Community of Practice and an upcoming Knowledge Hub on Inclusive and Accessible Cities.

Elana Wong, MYCP (migrants and youth), Representative of the Youth Caucus

- **Inclusive policy design**
- Mental health support, legal protection, housing, all very inaccessible to children, low income youth, migrants and other vulnerable groups
- Lack of access to caring systems goes in parallel with exploitation -> need to work towards decriminalization when people are seeking basic care systems, for people in irregular or exploitative situations...e.g. students losing visas when going for online education during the pandemic
- **Participatory governance, not only consultations but decision-making as well**

Camila Cociña, involved in GOLD VI report

+

Olga Segovia, the curator of the [GOLD VI](#) Chapter on [Caring](#),

- Social and gender co-responsibility

- Advancing in a social contract with care that breaks with the sexual division of work and recognizes the rights of those who provide and receive care
- There is a need to recognize the non-monetized economy
- Identifying priorities in the territory, time management is essential to think about the division of labor
- Reducing the load of unpaid work, moving on to the principles of solidarity
- Democratize and decommodify the experience (only if you can pay, you can access)
- Importance of the crossover between care and territory

(chat) PSI is contributing to the GOLD VI Process> check out the PSI-PSIRU Working Paper "Enabling access to quality local public services for all: a precondition to beat inequality" <https://bit.ly/3gfu4VT>

More information about the GOLD VI process here: <https://gold.uclg.org/reports/gold-vi>

Gissela Chalá - mayor of Quito

- Responsibility to take care of us but also of **the planet**
- Build cities where we can live well
- A social contract obligated to **repair the historical debts**
- **The indifference as a violence**
- New masculinities, care approach, continues to be a clientele theme
- Care from the rights, not from the patriarchal structures
- Let us be not objects, but subjects

Emilia Saiz, UCLG

We are proposing a shift of priorities, but how to propose it to the political world?