The well-being of individuals and societies, especially children, persons with disabilities, and older adults, depends on caregivers and the care services provided.

Traditionally, care burdens have disproportionately fallen on women as a consequence of persisting gender inequalities and stereotypes in society. Globally, women spend between 2 and 10 times more time than men on unpaid care tasks (OECD, 2022); in Latin America, for example, women assume 70% of the total burden of these tasks. More than 2 million people work 8 hours a day in caregiving roles without any remuneration.

When care is recognized, redistributed, and remunerated, it brings significant benefits: it increases employment, improves women's participation in the labour market, boosts family incomes, generates returns by expanding consumption and savings capacity, increases tax revenue, and enhances social security systems.

In this context, many local governments have begun to implement Local Care Systems, prioritizing not only the population receiving such care but also those providing it, especially women. Thus, we are witnessing the transformation from mere service provision to “caring cities”.

Care policies and programs have grown exponentially in recent years, especially following the COVID-19 epidemic, during which the importance of care work became more visible. In Latin America, the
Montevideo Strategy (2016), the Santiago Commitment (2020), and the Buenos Aires Commitment (2022) are examples of care policies led by local governments that also involve various actors in their operationalization and financing.

The time has come for local governments to turn "care" into an opportunity, creating systems that place care at the centre, aiming to provide inclusive care and services for those who need them most. These models are becoming a priority for cities seeking to address inequalities and improve people’s lives.

Caring cities represent a clear step towards achieving the SDGs, especially SDG No. 5.4: Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure, and social protection policies, and promote shared responsibility within the household and family, as appropriate in each country.

We want to generate a conversation around the experiences of two cities that have implemented Care Systems and Policies, to understand the potential of these models for both local governments and the population, as well as the challenges in their implementation.

The "Local Solutions" series of local action for the SDGs aims to establish networks and share knowledge to identify solutions and strengthen the capacities of local governments in their efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda.

To this end, we have invited the cities of Geneva and Bogotá, which have made progress in implementing these models, with positive results.

The cities and their projects

1. **Bogotá, Colombia**

It has become one of the leading cities in Latin America to establish a Care System for caregivers. This innovative model aims to contribute to gender equality and equal opportunities through a set of services, regulations, policies, and technical and institutional actions that seek to recognize, redistribute, and reduce care work, understanding it as a necessary social function for people’s daily lives and society’s functioning.

This system prioritizes the needs of those who care for those who need care the most. Thus, since 2019, 20 Care Blocks have been implemented; the Care Buses have been put into operation; and the successful Home Assistance program, funded with the support of the United Nations Development Program, has been initiated. As of January 2024, this project had benefited a total of 102 households, including 102 caregivers and 109 people with disabilities.
2. Geneva Canton, Switzerland

Canton Geneva is working to highlight how being supportive to a family member can affect their daily lives and their own wellbeing.

The canton is implementing its 2023 – 2028 strategy to set common rules of behaviour for the partners and providers, adapt the offer to the needs of the beneficiaries and to make the necessary adjustments in care practices, to develop joint projects to improve the functioning of the care network, and inform the population on the opportunities provided by the care network services.

Metropolis, the global association of metropolitan cities

In 2023, Metropolis launched the Metropolis Care Campaign, an initiative to revolutionize cities through care. The campaign's goal was to place care and caregivers at the forefront of city planning and management.

Currently, Metropolis aims to promote gender-sensitive care systems in metropolitan areas worldwide through the Connecting Caring Cities project. Leveraging examples and political leadership from Latin America, Metropolis seeks to connect major cities in the Middle East, North Africa, and Southeast Asia with Latin American cities to jointly explore care policies and address structural inequalities in care provision.

Guiding questions

1. What has been the city's role in the project implementation? Please mention the main achievement and the main difficulty in project development.
2. From the challenges encountered, what solutions have been useful for progress?
3. How to connect and generate alliances among different actors to achieve their active participation in Care Systems?
4. What are the most visible impacts on the lives of women caregivers?
5. What are the most visible impacts on the lives of care recipients?
6. How to achieve the continuity and sustainability of these types of projects?

AGENDA

5 min | Presentation of the initiative: "Local Solutions for Local Action ODS," logistical notes on translation, recording, chat usage, etc. Introduction of the moderator, by Diana Lopez Caramazana, Advisor for Cities and Local Governments, UNDP

2 min | Introduction to the session by the Moderator, Julia Monroe, Policy Officer, Metropolis.

12 min | Bogotá’s Experience: the home care system, by Claudia Mirta Luna, Project Manager, Global Mayor’s Challenge, Mayor’s Office of Bogotá, Colombia

3 min | Question from Geneva to Bogota
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<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>12 min</td>
<td>Geneva’s experience: Véronique Petoud, Cantonal Delegate for Caregivers, Department of Social Cohesion, Geneva, Switzerland</td>
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<td>3 min</td>
<td>Question from Bogota to Geneva</td>
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<td>10 min</td>
<td>Conversation between the 2 cities</td>
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<td>10 min</td>
<td>Questions and answers with the audience</td>
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<td>Closing and conclusions</td>
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