



**UCLG CONGRESS
WORLD SUMMIT OF LOCAL
AND REGIONAL LEADERS**

**New Generation
of Universal Local
Public Services**

**Tangier
Local4Action**

Caring Territories: Partnerships for Integrated Policies

Roundtable

Date and time: Tuesday, 23rd of June, 13:00–14:30

Duration: 1:30 h

Room: B - Atlantic

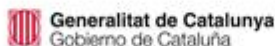
Main organizers: Permanent technical secretariat of Mercociudades and United Cities and Local Governments

Co-organizers: FAMSI, Sevilla Province, Catalonia Region, Barcelona Province, Global Alliance for Care

Introduction

In Latin America and the Caribbean, care has been recognized as an essential pillar for sustaining life and collective well-being, particularly in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, which brought its importance into sharper focus. Other regions of the world are moving in the same direction, albeit at different speeds. Care work, historically rendered invisible and unequally distributed, continues to be carried out predominantly by women. This has a direct impact on women's economic autonomy and well-being, their access to opportunities, and their full participation in social and political life.

Against this backdrop, a growing consensus is emerging, for example in Latin America and the Caribbean, on the need to develop comprehensive care systems grounded in human rights, shared responsibility, and social, economic and environmental justice. Local governments play a key role in this process, especially in urban contexts, where more than 80% of the population lives.



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Approaching care from a human rights perspective means recognizing it as a universal, individual and inalienable right. This requires an equitable distribution of responsibilities among the members and actors of society and the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all people. It means recognizing a right held by everyone, which entails corresponding obligations, as it establishes a direct relationship between the right itself, the empowerment of rights-holders, the obligations of duty-bearers and the guarantees required for its effective exercise. It also means recognizing people who receive care as rights-holders, rather than merely as passive recipients of services, while respecting their autonomy, preferences and ability to participate in decisions that affect them.

From our local perspective, this approach also means recognizing that the right to care is realized through proximity: in neighbourhoods, public facilities, everyday mobility, access to housing, community spaces, health, education, culture, social protection and the protection of our planet. From this perspective, caring territories are not merely those that provide services. They are territories that reorganize their priorities, budgets, partnerships and care infrastructures to guarantee rights, reduce inequalities and strengthen shared social responsibility.

We understand care work as encompassing all activities that are essential for people to eat, learn, remain healthy and live in an environment conducive to their well-being and development. This includes the material dimension of care, which involves work; its economic dimension, which entails a cost; and its psychological dimension, which involves emotional bonds. We advocate for a society that recognizes vulnerability and dependency as inherent features of life, rather than as unintended consequences of human activity. A caring society, in which the sustainability of life and the conditions required for its reproduction serve as guiding principles of the development model, represents a new milestone in a debate that feminist movements have sustained over the past five decades.

Care work is shaped by historically entrenched gender roles: domestic and reproductive responsibilities have traditionally been assigned to women. Although women now participate more extensively in paid employment, responsibility for care continues to fall predominantly on them. Women sustain the well-being of households and their members, as well as that of society as a



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whole. In this regard, recognizing the universal right to care is the first step towards distributing care responsibilities among the members of society and preventing them from falling exclusively on women.

The round table aims to highlight the key role of territories, cities and regions in addressing care, recognizing it as a universal right to which our societies must respond collectively and through community-based approaches. More specifically, it will demonstrate the need for strategic partnerships between local and regional governments and other actors to advance the care agenda as a fundamental pillar of development and of the protection of the rights of those who provide and receive care. This discussion takes place in a context in which feminist policies, alongside movements for climate justice, human rights and plural economies, provide the transformative foundations for structural and systemic change capable of reversing inequalities.

Objectives/Expected Results

- Recognize the role of local and regional governments in building comprehensive care systems that acknowledge care as a universal right and a shared responsibility.
- Exchange experiences and good practices among cities in Latin America and the Caribbean and other regions that have developed innovative care policies or programmes, with a view to identifying lessons that could be replicated.
- Foster debate and reflection on how to advance towards caring societies, in which equity, the sustainability of life and community well-being serve as guiding principles for territorial development.
- Promote potential commitments and future lines of action to consolidate networks and shared strategies for advancing care at the local level.
- Raise the visibility of care among World Congress participants and place it at the centre of the debate.
- Highlight the importance of feminist policies as the foundation for the transition towards more equitable care systems, alongside human rights-based, climate and plural economy approaches.



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Agenda

13:00–13:05 | Welcoming remarks and introduction

- Moderators: **Jorge Rodríguez**, Coordinator of the Permanent Technical Secretariat of Mercociudades; **Marga Barceló**, Head of the International Projects and Development Cooperation Service of the Diputació de Barcelona

13:05–13:15 | Institutional opening and setting the scene

- **Francisco Legnani**, Mayor of Canelones
- **Francisca Medina Teva**, Vice-President of FAMSI and Councillor at the Diputación de Jaén

13:15–13:25 | Presentation of the care conceptual framework

- **Paola Pabón**, Prefect of Pichincha
- **Ana Falú**, care expert

13:25–13:35 | Showcase of actors experiences and best practices

- **Francisco Toajas**, Vice-President and Councillor for Development Cooperation of the Diputación de Sevilla, project "Communities and Cities that Care", of FAMSI and Mercociudades
- **Andrea Costafreda**, Director General for Development Cooperation, project "Cities of Care, with Equality and Rights", Generalitat de Catalunya and Mercociudades

13:35–14:25 | Debate and exchange

- **Kathy Jeffery**, Councillor of Collingwood
- **Gertrude Dossa**, Third Deputy Mayor of Porto-Novo
- **Shona Morrison**, President of the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities
- **Marta Galceran-Vercher**, Researcher at CIDOB
- **Illiza Sa'aduddin Djamal**, Mayor of Banda Aceh
- Representative from **Tehran**



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- **Mayra Mendoza**, Mayor of Quilmes
- **Abigail McCall**, Officer at Nourish Scotland

14:25–14:30 | Closing remarks and summary of the discussions

- **Ana Moreno**, Technical Secretary of the GAC
- **Emilia Saiz**, Secretary General of UCLG