



Care Economy in the Multilateral System: Uniting Stakeholders for Global Impact

CSW68 Official Side Event

United Nations Headquarters - Conference Room 12 (CR-12)

Live Streaming at UN Web Tv

20-Mar-2024,

10:00 AM - 11:15 AM

Organisers: Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC); UNRISD; Global Alliance for Care; Southern Voice; CIPPEC; United Nations Foundation.

Sponsors: Government of Canada

Background

Care is an essential part of the global economy and the social contract on which human society is built. However, its value remains mostly unrecognised in the policy realm, as households -and, especially, women- are left to address their care needs on their own. Accelerating the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, as proposed by this year's CSW theme, requires the mobilisation of resources towards gender-transformative, comprehensive care systems. Multilateral fora, such as the G20, G7, and UN annual events and processes meetings, offer a key opportunity to translate countries' commitments into action. Such measures can then address poverty and inequalities by building a new socio-economic paradigm focused on caring for people, communities and the planet.

Across the world, women carry out over 70 percent of unpaid care work ([Addati et al., 2018](#)). The unequal division of household care work leads to multiple inequalities. First, as care mostly depends on households' own resources, it compromises the quality of care and, as a consequence, the development of human capabilities of care recipients. Second, as it is primarily shouldered by women, it undermines their economic autonomy and, as such, the attainment of gender equality and global prosperity. This is especially acute in the Global South, as the region has much ground to make up in order to meet development targets such as the SDGs, in part due to setbacks caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

While there is growing momentum internationally to advance the care agenda - understood as a key factor in achieving gender equality and women's economic autonomy - there is still little progress in terms of transforming international commitments and declarations into actions and investments. However, new opportunities may catalyse progress in 2024 and 2025: The Brazilian G20 presidency opens up several opportunities, as care has been explicitly underscored in the agenda of the Women 20 and Think 20 engagement groups, as well as the G20 Working Group on the Empowerment of Women. Additionally, the two consecutive presidencies of Brazil in 2024 and South Africa in 2025, as well as the recent inclusion of the African Union in the G20 also offer an opportunity to bring Global South perspectives to the forefront in multilateral discussions on gendered

poverty and inequality globally. Moreover, forthcoming global agreements such as the Pact of the Future - the expected outcome of the 2024 Summit of the Future - should also centre care in its vision for multilateral cooperation. These discussions should feed into the commemorations of the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Platform of Action, where unpaid care work was an important component. The Beijing +30 moment in 2025 remains critical to advance the care agenda in the multilateral system.

In times of interlocking crises, the relevance of care should transcend policy platforms for gender equality. Building a more caring society globally is critical to enhancing wellbeing, resilience and prosperity for all, which can foster development in several realms. One crucial dimension is addressing the climate emergency: care policies should go hand in hand with climate action to ensure a fair and just transition to sustainable economies. Therefore, the global focus on the care agenda must be widened with the goal of having it highlighted across multiple multilateral spaces and sectors for systemic reform. It is also vital that the Global South is actively involved in developing and implementing these agendas to ensure that truly representative, just and inclusive solutions and policies are deployed.

To seize these opportunities, the Government of Canada; Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC); UNRISD; Global Alliance for Care; Southern Voice; CIPPEC; and the United Nations Foundation are organising this event to bring together the ambitions of actors from across civil society, along with actors in the multilateral system, to discuss concrete steps to maximise the presence of the care agenda in multilateral platforms highlighting the voices, needs and perspectives from the Global South.

Overview of the event

This event will convene key stakeholders to map strategies for galvanising commitments on care in multilateral agendas for 2024 and beyond. The focus of the conversation will be to gather insights into the expected outcomes of care reform in the global agenda from multilateral organisations and relevant global policy platforms.

In addition to the panel, the event will provide a networking opportunity for key actors who are working on care in different sectors and dimensions to exchange experiences and share the latest developments in their care agendas.

Objectives

- Bring together actors across sectors and multilateral spaces to share knowledge and opportunities to centre care in the global agendas.
- Converge commitments and priorities for a just care economy from within and outside the UN system.
- Identify and position the needs, approaches and most important factors related to the care economy in the Global South.

Speakers

Moderator: Ana Moreno - Technical secretary at Global Alliance for Care (to speak of engagements and opportunities to advance the care agenda with COP, Pact for the Future, other key policy forums where care is not yet present.)

- Dulce Maria Pereira - Advisor to the Minister for Women, Federative Republic of Brazil (to speak on care in the G20, its gender and racial intersectionalities, and care and climate agendas).
- Paul Ladd - Director of UNRISD (to provide perspectives from the UN agencies).
- Gala Díaz Langou - Executive Director of CIPPEC Argentina (to discuss emerging priorities from the Global South based on work with CARE 20 so far, including the Global Roadmap for Action on the Care Economy being developed).

For supporting roles

- Representative from the Southern Voice Secretariat.
- Representative from the UN Foundation.
- Representative from UNRISD.

Format - 75 mins

5 min	Opening remarks	Ana Moreno - Technical Secretary at Global Alliance for Care
45 min	Moderated panel discussion	
20 min	Q&A and conversation with the audience.	Moderated discussion
5 min	Closing remarks	Carolina Robino - Senior Program Specialist, Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC)