Transforming urban care systems: a whole-of-society approach to resilient and sustainable cities

Day: 24 April 2025
Time: 12.45 – 13.45 (Indochina Time – UTC +7).
Attendance: Hybrid: Zoom/ESCAP Meeting Room MR-A

Background

Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) requires improving essential public services, fostering trust, and reducing gender inequalities. As cities across the Asia-Pacific region face rapid urbanization, increasing demographic pressures and climate vulnerabilities, transforming care systems at the local level has the potential to act as a catalytic investment to accelerate progress towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Integrating human rights-based, universal, and transformative approaches to care in planning processes has become vital in improving access and quality of care and support for all children and their caregivers and reducing unpaid care as a driver of gender inequality, thus key in developing resilient, inclusive, and sustainable caring cities. Caring cities position care as a fundamental pillar of sustainable development and address gender gaps in the provision of unpaid care work as a structural barrier to women's economic empowerment throughout the life cycle. The caring cities approach recognize that everyone requires care at some stage in life, especially women, children, older persons, and persons with disabilities and that quality care is affordable and accessible for all. Multi-stakeholder initiatives like the TransformCare Investment Initiative (TCII-AP) and the Child-Friendly Cities Initiative are already demonstrating the potential of integrated urban care approaches.

Many countries in the region are shifting towards smarter, safer, and more inclusive urban planning, integrating social services, digital technology, and sustainability into urban development. However, progress remains uneven, and comprehensive care systems—including policy and legal frameworks, financing, infrastructure, and governance—are often lacking. Regional cooperation is crucial to advancing inclusive care systems.

The UN Women and UNICEF joint side event "*A Whole-of-Society Approach to Resilient and Sustainable Caring Cities in Asia-Pacific region*" will explore practical applications of the UN's Transforming Care Systems policy paper, emphasizing urban planning's role in ensuring no one is left behind. The side event will provide a dynamic platform for experts, policymakers, urban planners, and other relevant stakeholders to examine the intersection of urban development and care systems, emphasizing the importance of data-driven decision-making, inclusive governance, and regional collaboration in ensuring child-centered and gender-responsive policies for equitable service delivery.

Expected Outcomes

By fostering cross-sectoral collaboration, this side event aims to drive forward actionable solutions for integrating care and support approaches into urban resilience strategies across cities in the Asia-Pacific region. Specific **expected outcomes** are, as follows:

- Identification of public and private sector good practices, and policy recommendations for integrating care into sustainable and resilient urban development.
- Enhanced understanding of how geospatial analysis can inform care systems strengthening.
- Linking the concepts of Caring Cities and Child-Friendly Cities and demonstrating a resource-efficient and integrative way for (local) governments
- Strengthened regional cooperation on transforming care systems in urban planning, policy and governance.
- A roadmap for integrating the rights and needs of those in need of care and those providing care at the center of urban planning and policy decision making in Asia-Pacific cities.

Agenda

Time Slot	Section	Speakers
12:45-12:55	**Welcome remarks** ***Transforming care systems in Asia and the Pacific***	**Christine Arab** Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific Representative in Thailand, UN Women **Myo-Zin Nyunt** Deputy Regional Director, UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office
12:55 – 13:10	**Keynote Presentations** ***Leveraging data ecosystem approaches to transform care systems*** Geospatial mapping for care equity and care delivery models Urban resilience and child-responsive governance	**Cecilia Tinonin**, Statistics Specialist, UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific **Mona Meienberg,** Social Policy Specialist, UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office
13:10-13:40	**Panel Discussion** ***A whole-of-society approach to transform care systems in urban planning*** Innovations for care delivery, integrating rights and needs of both caregivers and care recipients into urban planning, policy and governance.	***Moderator:*** **Katja Freiwald,** Women's Economic Empowerment and Migration Lead, UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific ***Speakers:*** **China,** Subnational government representative, City of Shenzhen **Indonesia,** Subnational government representative, City of Surabaya **Nepal,** Subnational government representative, City of Kathmandu Malaysia, Kiddocare, Social Enterprise **India,** Dharma Life, Social Enterprise

13:40-13:45	**Closing Remarks**	**Rachael Joanne Beaven,** Director of Statistics, UN ESCAP **Karla Correa,** Child Rights and Business Specialist, UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office

Registration

The side event will be held in hybrid format.

Registration for in-person attendance:

- All participants attending side events in-person are required to register online at https://indico.un.org/e/CS81.
- Please select Category 6) Registration for Side Events, Associated Events, Exhibitions and Volunteers" and "participants" accordingly.
- Kindly note that side event participants will obtain the badges which can access only meeting rooms designated for the side events.
- Individuals who have already registered as accredited representatives to attend the 81st Commission Session are not required to register again.
- The final deadline for side event participant registration is **15 April 2025**.

Registration link for virtual attendance on Zoom:
https://unwomen.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_wqAEu778RreAO0HtMcBp0w

Focal person for the event:

For any queries, please contact Ms. Cecilia Tinonin, UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific at Cecilia.tinonin@unwomen.org