

Unpaid family care for older people in low and middle income countries

Peter Lloyd-Sherlock

Expert Group Meeting on
**“Care and Older Persons:
Links to Decent Work, Migration and Gender”**

United Nations Headquarters, New York
5-7 December 2017



Knowledge gaps: what are the key issues?

That unpaid family caring is unpaid?

Alternatives to unpaid care

Families employing carers

intersectionality and exploitation

Cash benefits for older people/carers

Argentina, Chile, South Africa

“Non-family care”

hospitals, residential care homes

Knowledge gaps: what are the key issues?

That some women are coerced
into taking on this role?

Which woman??

“Allocating Family Responsibilities for Dependent Older People in Mexico and Peru”

Pedro 92 frail

Irene 87 dementia

Main carer = daughter Natalia

Temporary carer = Veronica (wife of grandson)

Which woman??

Veronica

Natalia told me she was going to Arequipa and she wanted me to cook for them as a favour, for a year.... But I didn't know; I couldn't have imagined what a huge burden it was going to become....My husband was away...I couldn't leave my children alone with Leticia because she would attack them...So I called my mother in law and family... but they.... wouldn't send their children to help.

Knowledge gaps: what are the key issues?

That the role exacts a heavy toll on carers?

That unpaid family carers are not always able to provide good care?

Knowledge gaps: what are the key issues?

That unpaid family caring is unsupported
and unrecognised?

Unsupported family care

Veronica:

As soon as Natalia arrived, she gave them something to eat and didn't even say "Thank you, Veronica. I'll take over now." ...She doesn't speak to me at all now; I don't know why.

Natalia:

When I got back, I saw that my father was blind, he had nothing, he could hardly walk...I don't know how this could happen in such a short time... I can't explain it.

Supporting family care

https://www.alz.co.uk/1066/caregiver_intervention_rct.php

https://britishgeriatricsociety.wordpress.com/2014/01/09/easy_care-project-a-new-world-for-older-people/

Beyond piecemeal pilots

Integrated community-level primary health and social care

“Care literacy”

Understanding

ageing, frailty, etc

what care-giving involves

Knowing

how to access appropriate forms of external assistance

how to evaluate care quality and what to do if bad

“Proactive care literacy”

<http://www.redmayorlaplata.com>

Supporting family care

Reduces non-monetary costs

Empowers carers

Reduces care burden

Improves care outcomes

A win-win for older people and carers!