

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

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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://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/](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!**