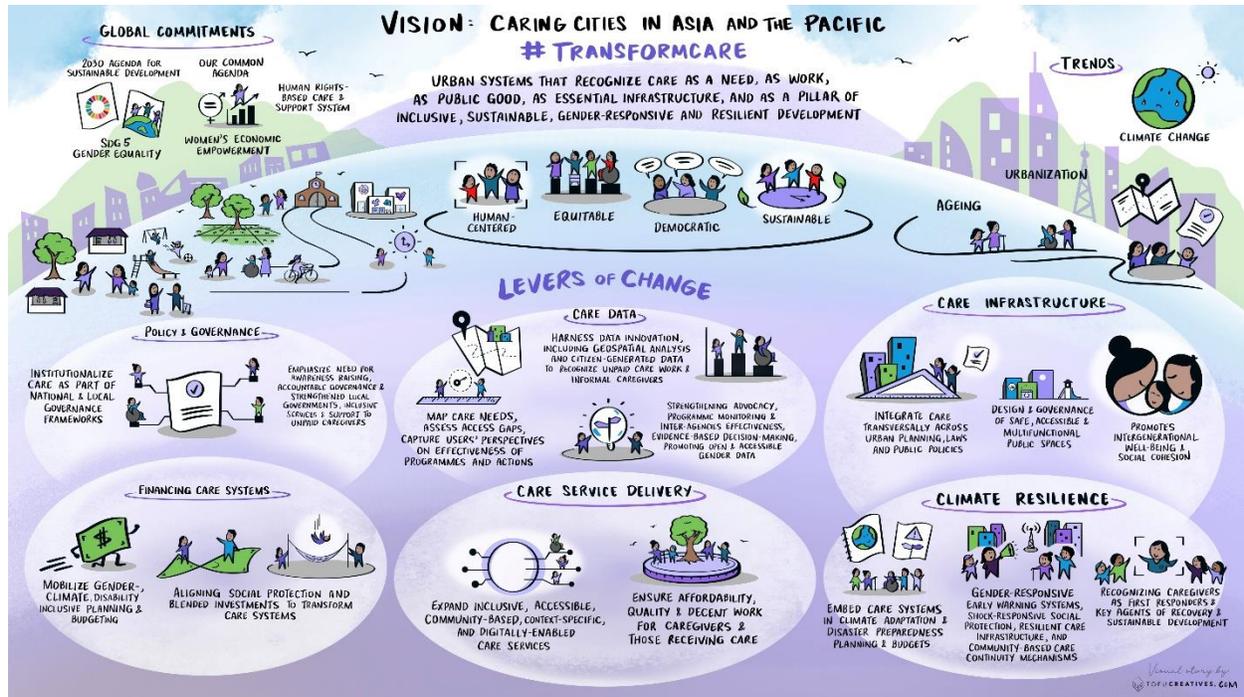


Vision Statement on Caring Cities in Asia and the Pacific



Across Asia and the Pacific, cities, local governments and communities stand at the forefront of an unprecedented transformation. As engines of growth and diversity, cities are also spaces where gender inequalities in care, time, and opportunity converge.

Our shared vision is to build **Caring Cities**: urban systems that recognize care as a *need*, as *work*, as *public good*, as *essential infrastructure*, and as a *pillar of inclusive, sustainable, gender-responsive and resilient development*.

Anchored in the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** and the UN Secretary-General's **Our Common Agenda**, Caring Cities place **gender equality, women's economic empowerment and human rights-based care and support systems** at the core of their actions.

Building on stakeholder contributions provided during the *Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) Associated Event*, this vision statement positions care as a collective responsibility, as an investment in people, prosperity, and planetary well-being.

Caring Cities are **human-centered, equitable, democratic, and sustainable**. They nurture both people and the planet, transforming economies while upholding the rights and dignity of all.

To operationalize this vision, **six interconnected levers of change** guide our regional engagement, anchored in inclusive and participatory approaches:

1. **Policy and Governance:** Institutionalize care within national and local governance frameworks, by embedding care responsibilities across urban, social, and labour policies. This should uphold human rights-based care and support systems across the life cycle and strengthen inclusive, participatory, and accountable governance. Such approaches should ensure that women, girls, persons with disabilities, caregivers and community organizations meaningfully shape urban planning, budgeting, and service delivery. This also requires awareness-raising, strengthened local government capacities, and improved accountability, as well as more inclusive services and support for unpaid caregivers, to ensure that no one is left behind.
2. **Financing Care Systems:** Empower local governments to mobilize gender-, climate, and disability-inclusive planning and budgeting that centers the voices of communities, including the private sector and civil society, while aligning social protection and blended investments to transform care systems. These efforts should not only drive labor force participation but, more importantly, provide access to quality and affordable care services in which every individual is valued and actively engaged.
3. **Care Data:** Harness data innovation, including geospatial analysis and citizen-generated data, to recognize unpaid care work and informal care givers, map care needs, assess access gaps, capture users' perspectives on the effectiveness of programmes and actions. This will strengthen advocacy, programme monitoring and inter-agencies effectiveness, and support evidence-informed decision-making that leaves no one and no place behind, while promoting open and accessible gender data.
4. **Care Service Delivery:** Expand inclusive, accessible, community-based, context-specific, and digitally enabled care services, ensuring affordability, quality, and decent work for caregivers and those receiving care.
5. **Care Infrastructure:** Integrate care sustainably across urban planning, laws and policies, through both hard and soft infrastructure. This includes the design and governance of adequate housing, shelter, health, social and education facilities, as well as of safe, accessible and affordable multifunctional public and community spaces, in ways that promote intergenerational well-being and social cohesion and fulfil the rights of women and all populations.
6. **Climate Resilience:** Embed care systems in climate adaptation and disaster preparedness planning and budgeting to protect vulnerable populations and ensure continuity of

essential services. This includes gender-responsive early warning systems, shock-responsive social protection, resilient care infrastructure, and community-based care continuity mechanisms, while recognizing caregivers as first responders and key agents of recovery and sustainable development.

We, the participants to this APFSD Associated event, highlight the role of **local governments, the UN system, civil society, the private sector, and communities** to accelerate this care-centered transformation, turning the promise of Caring Cities into a regional reality that ensures every person, regardless of sex, age, ability, or origin, amongst others, can thrive in safety, equality, and care.

This Vision Statement was co-created with participants during the 13th APFSD Associated Event “[Caring Cities: Gender-Responsive Pathways to Ageing, Inclusion, and Transformation in Asia and the Pacific](#).” The event was organized by the UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, with financial support from the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family of the Republic of Korea, and co-organized by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), CityNet, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), United Cities and Local Governments Asia-Pacific (UCLG ASPAC), the Global Alliance for Care, and Data-Pop Alliance. The recordings of the event can be accessed [here](#).

