
Global mapping of the provision of care through cooperatives: Preliminary findings

Lenore Matthew

International Labour Organization (ILO)

Cooperatives Unit (COOP)

Gender, Equality and Diversity Branch (GED)

ILO-ICA Cooperatives and the World of Work Research Conference

Antalya, Turkey

9 November 2015



Context 1: What is care?

▶ Tasks

- ▶ e.g., cooking, cleaning, minding, bathing, assisting with daily living

▶ Takes place in a variety of settings

- ▶ e.g., beneficiaries' homes, specialized facilities

▶ Performed by a variety of caregivers and care workers

- ▶ Families

- ▶ e.g., social workers, nurses, home aids, nannies, domestic workers

▶ Many care workers and caregivers are informal

▶ Paid and unpaid care work

Care is:

Looking after the physical, psychological, emotional and developmental needs of one or more other people, namely the elderly, children, and people living with disabilities, physical illness and/or mental illness.

-Adapted from Susan Maybud, *Women and the Future of Work – Taking care of the caregivers*, 2012.

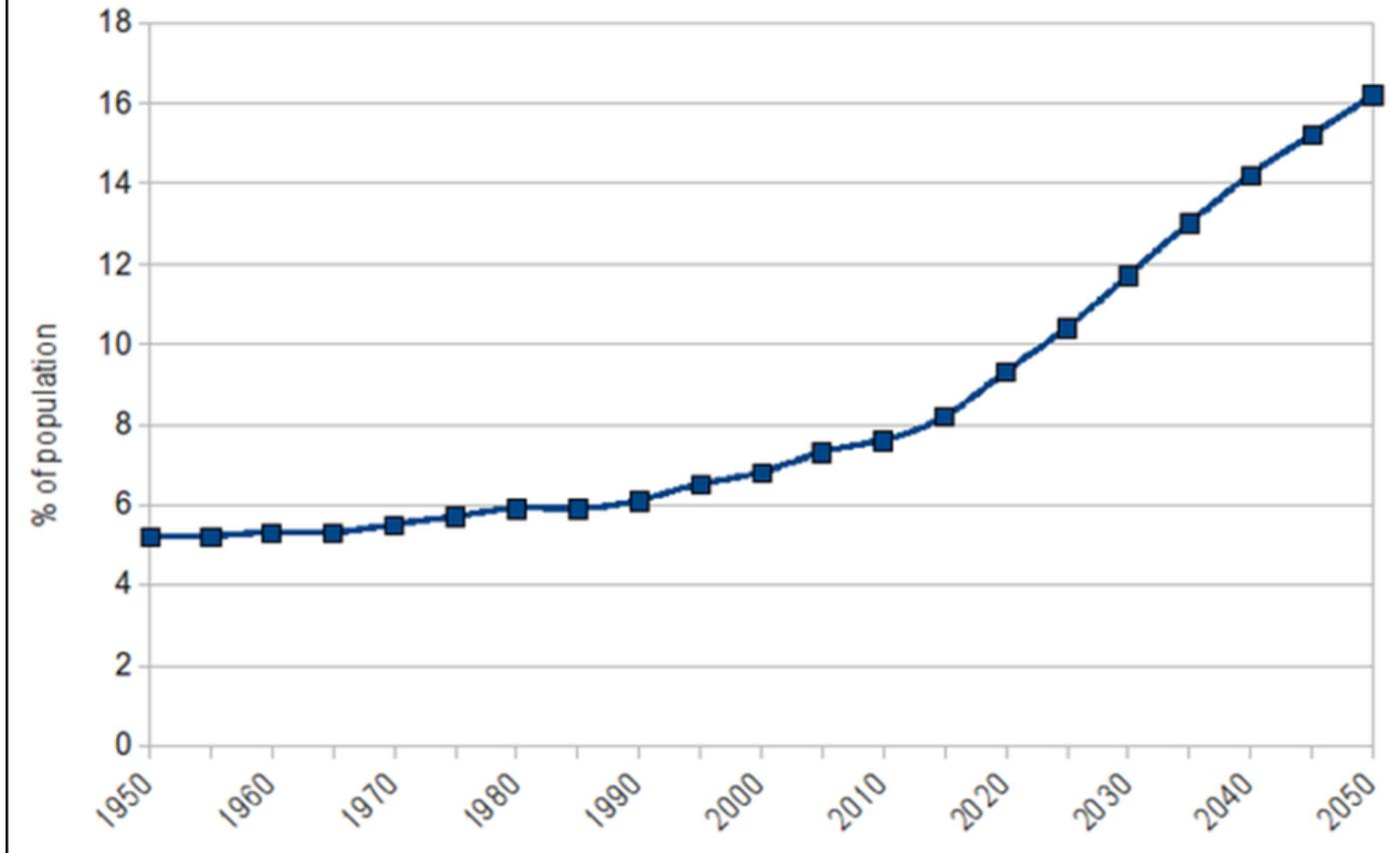
Context 2: Growing need for care worldwide

- ▶ **Demographic shifts**
 - ▶ Growing ageing population
 - ▶ Rise of non-communicable diseases
 - ▶ Increase of women entering the labor force
 - ▶ Filling unpaid care
- ▶ **Gender dimensions of supply of and demand for care**



Percentage of the World Population Over 65, 1950-2050

Source: UN World Population Prospect, 2008



Context 3: Gendered nature of care work

- ▶ Care as employment generator for women
- ▶ Persistent inequitable conditions in care work
- ▶ ILO research shows:
 - ▶ Lack of contracts and contract enforcement
 - ▶ Low and unpaid wages
 - ▶ Long hours and uncompensated overtime
 - ▶ Precarious and unsafe work conditions
 - ▶ Physical, sexual, emotional abuse



Context: The need for new solutions

- ▶ New solutions to care are needed on two fronts
 - ▶ Innovation in the provision of care services
 - ▶ Improving the terms and conditions of work for care workers

*“Two commonly identified sources for future job growth in both developing and industrialized countries are the green economy... and the **care economy**, given the aging population in much of the world.*

But what will it take to realize that potential?

Already, many existing needs for care either go unmet because of financial constraints or are covered by resorting to underpaid or unpaid carers...”

Director General Guy Ryder
The Future of Work Centenary Initiative



Cooperatives and Care

- ▶ Emerging as a type of care provider
 - ▶ Particularly in the absence of or due to retreat in viable public or private options
- ▶ Appear well-positioned to:
 - ▶ Serve as vehicles that generate access to the labour market
 - ▶ Be responsive providers of care services
- ▶ Remains unknown:
 - ▶ Care provided through cooperatives
 - ▶ Employment in cooperatives that provide care

A cooperative is:

An autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise.

-International Cooperative Alliance (ICA). Repeated in ILO R193 - Promotion of Cooperatives Recommendation, 2002.



Mapping Approach

- ▶ **Stage I**
 - ▶ Literature review
 - ▶ Informal conversations with partners and practitioners
- ▶ **Stage II**
 - ▶ Online survey with practitioners and experts from care sector and coop movement
 - ▶ Interviews with key informants
- ▶ **Stage III**
 - ▶ Validation through presentations, discussions and feedback
 - ▶ ILO policy community
 - ▶ Cooperatives movement
 - ▶ Research community
- ▶ **Stage IV**
 - ▶ Publication and dissemination
- ▶ **Stage V**
 - ▶ Policy and programming initiatives



Stage I Findings

- ▶ **Cooperatives responding to myriad care needs**
 - ▶ Eldercare, childcare, care for persons with illness and/or disabilities
- ▶ **Emerging under a variety of care contexts**
 - ▶ Austerity, demographic shifts, efforts centered upon improving work conditions of care providers
- ▶ **Emerging in diverse forms**
 - ▶ Care coops
 - ▶ “Add-ons” as a part of existing coop or organization
 - ▶ “Out-growths” with birth of new separate care coop



Care is, "looking after the physical, psychological, emotional and developmental needs of one or more other people, namely the elderly, children, and people living with disabilities, physical illness and/or mental illness."



Stage II Methods

▶ Online survey

- ▶ Survey Monkey administered through cooperative, gender and care networks
 - ▶ Connected to ILO and ICA networks
- ▶ Global approach
- ▶ 52 closed- and open-ended questions
- ▶ English, Spanish, French and Italian
- ▶ 182 respondents

▶ Key informant interviews

- ▶ Identified through survey and network referrals
 - ▶ 15 semi-structured questions
 - ▶ Telephone and Skype
 - ▶ English, Spanish, and Italian
 - ▶ 29 interviews
-



Sample

Response Language		
Language	Count	Per cent
English	101	55%
Spanish	61	34%
French	8	4%
Italian	12	7%
Total	182	100%

Respondent Region	
Region	Per cent
Europe and Russia	31%
Latin America and the Caribbean	23%
North America	15%
Sub-Saharan Africa	11%
Asia and Pacific	12%
Other	7%
Arab States	1%
Total	100%

Respondent Institution Type	
Institution Type	Per cent
Primary cooperative	27%
Cooperative support inst.	25%
Academic or research inst.	16%
NGO	13%
Other	7%
International organization	6%
Government ministry	3%
Care provision institution that is not a coop	3%
Healthcare institution that is not a coop	1%
Total	100%



Stage II Findings: Identified Themes

- ▶ Recent trends and developments
- ▶ Nature and scope of care
- ▶ Employment data
- ▶ Key actors
- ▶ Cooperative structure and operations
- ▶ Gender issues
- ▶ Cooperative value-added
- ▶ Legal and policy frameworks
- ▶ Finance issues
- ▶ Challenges
- ▶ Opportunities



Stage II Findings: Cooperative Value-Added

- ▶ **Distinct approach to care**
 - ▶ Inclusive decision-making in care provided
 - ▶ Moving towards interdependence and away from dependence
 - ▶ Wellness over sickness
- ▶ **Quality and affordability**
 - ▶ Cost compared to private
 - ▶ Quality compared to public
 - ▶ Slight advantage over non-profits
- ▶ **Working conditions**
 - ▶ Increased bargaining power
 - ▶ Professionalization
 - ▶ Written contracts
 - ▶ Improved wages and benefits



Stage II Findings: Gender Issues

- ▶ **Work-life balance and trade-offs**
 - ▶ Time investment in cooperative activities
 - ▶ Regularization of hours
 - ▶ Time for self-care and family life
- ▶ **Workplace safety for care work in beneficiaries' homes**
 - ▶ Mediation and bargaining power
 - ▶ Function of the fundamental of coop negotiating
- ▶ **Care worker burnout**
 - ▶ Cooperatives may be a solution
 - ▶ Or may exacerbate burnout



Stage II Findings: Challenges

- ▶ **Knowledge gaps across constituents and other stakeholders**
 - ▶ Gaps of awareness across cooperative movement of the scope of care provision
 - ▶ Gaps of cooperative know-how across care sector
 - ▶ Particularly regarding management and legal issues
 - ▶ Gaps of provision of care through coops across other stakeholders
- ▶ **Financing issues**
 - ▶ Particularly during start-up and incubation phases
- ▶ **Incentivizing care recipients away from “cheap care” towards being more ethical and fair consumers of care services**
 - ▶ Professionalization may be a tool



Limitations

- ▶ **Representativeness of sample**
 - ▶ Specific sample from networks stemming from ILO and ICA
 - ▶ May not be representative of entire population of cooperatives providing care
- ▶ **Self-selection of respondents**
- ▶ **Data from survey and interviews largely opinion-based**
- ▶ **Higher responses from certain countries and languages**
 - ▶ English and Spanish
 - ▶ Europe, Latin America, North America



Conclusions

- ▶ Cooperatives are an option but require support to provide care services and decent work opportunities
 - ▶ Legislation
 - ▶ Financing
 - ▶ Knowledge and expertise on care and cooperative operation
- ▶ There is no “one size fits all” cooperative solution for care
 - ▶ Care needs in a specific country and community context matter
- ▶ More evidence and data are needed in order to move forward
- ▶ Recommendations



Next Steps

- ▶ **Stage III continues (end of 2015)**
 - ▶ Validation through presentations, discussions and feedback
 - ▶ ILO policy community
 - ▶ Cooperatives movement
 - ▶ Research community
- ▶ **Stage IV (first quarter of 2016)**
 - ▶ Publication and dissemination
 - ▶ Survey and interview findings report
 - ▶ Care though Cooperatives and Gender issue brief
 - ▶ Executive summary
 - ▶ Full report
- ▶ **Stage V (mid-2016 and beyond)**
 - ▶ Possible initiatives discussed
 - ▶ Workshop bringing coop practitioners and researchers together
 - ▶ Curriculum development and delivery for university students of social work
 - ▶ Country-specific pilot program



Thank you

Care through Cooperatives Team

Simel Esim, Head of Cooperatives Unit, COOP, esim@ilo.org

Susan Maybud, Senior Gender Specialist, GED, maybud@ilo.org

Satoko Horiuchi, Cooperatives Specialist, COOP, horiuchi@ilo.org

Lenore Matthew, Research Intern, COOP & GED, matthew@iloguest.org

