



CARE ECONOMY PARTNERSHIPS FOR CHANGE

PROMOTING GENDER JUSTICE IN CARE FOR OLDER PEOPLE IN POOR BRAZILIAN COMMUNITIES




Main objective:

The project objective is to assess whether “Programa Maior Cuidado”-Program Care of the Older (PMC) reduces the caregiving burden on family caregivers, mostly women, and whether the program increases caregivers’ capacity and confidence to care well in the cities of Belo Horizonte, Salvador and Contagem. In addition, to assess whether the new professional category of PMC care support worker represents an extension of the low-status, mainly female paid care work that prevails across LAC, or if it empowers paid carers and (with reference to male carers) challenges gender norms.

Description of the Public policy/innovation:

PMC has operated in the city of Belo Horizonte since 2011 and in Salvador and Contagem since October 2023 and March 2024, respectively. PMC supports care-dependent older people living with vulnerable families in poor urban communities. Health posts and social assistance centres work together to identify eligible families and provide integrated support. Trained paid caregivers provide families with 10-20 hours of support a week.

Expected impacts:

-  The collected evidence about PMC’s effects on gendered family care burdens and gender care norms will directly influence Brazil’s National Care Plan (NCP) drafting.
-  The evidence will support greater gender sensitivity in PMC’s operations in the three cities where it operates and new locations. Examples will include gender-specific training modules for professional social caregivers and their direct superiors.
-  New evidence about gender norms and the professional status of PMC caregivers, including whether this role represents decent and valued work or follows the wider regional trends of a mainly low-status paid care workforce.

Project progress:

- 1** In Salvador, the team measured family care burden and care capacity at baseline and six-month follow-up.
- 2** The team completed a survey on gender norms in eldercare to 100 PMC social caregivers in Salvador and Contagem.
- 3** In Belo Horizonte, the team reached an agreement with local government agencies to modify their previous monitoring system, starting in June 2024.

Research partner:

Cuidadosa Association

Implementing partner:

Secretariat of Social Assistance, Belo Horizonte (and Federal Ministry of Health, and local government departments of health and social assistance in Belo Horizonte, Contagem and Salvador.

Timeframe:

17/03/2024 - 17/06/2025



Credits: Cuidadosa Association