

# IDB Cares

## Accelerating investment in care systems, policies and services in Latin America and the Caribbean

In 2026, IDB Cares consolidates a decade of IDB work on the care agenda alongside the countries of the region, with a comprehensive public-private approach across the entire IDB Group to meet care needs throughout the life cycle.

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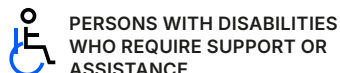
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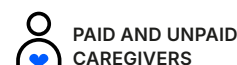
CHILDREN



DEPENDENT OLDER PERSONS



PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES WHO REQUIRE SUPPORT OR ASSISTANCE



PAID AND UNPAID CAREGIVERS

## Three pillars

### Governance and financing of care systems

Institutional capacity, coordination across sectors and levels of government, regulatory frameworks and sustainable financing.

### Coverage and quality of care services

Public and private infrastructure, person-centered care models, and a professional, qualified workforce with adequate working conditions.

### Shared responsibility for care

Policies and practices that distribute care more equitably among families, communities, businesses and government.

## What IDB Cares does

### Finances

Investment loans, policy-based and results-based loans, and private sector financing through IDB Invest.

### Provides technical assistance

Technical cooperation to design, implement and evaluate policies, services and information systems.

### Generates knowledge

Evidence on costs and returns, costing tools and communities of practice among countries, such as RedCUIDAR+.

### Mobilizes partnerships

Concessional resources, co-financing and innovation with IDB Lab and the private sector.

## WHY INVEST IN CARE

# In Latin America and the Caribbean, demand for care is growing faster than the capacity to respond.

### THE REGION IS AGING FASTER THAN ANY OTHER IN THE WORLD

#### 28 years

The region will take 28 years to go from 10% to 20% of its [population aged 65 and over](#). Europe took 60 years, with much higher incomes.

#### 23 million

[older persons will need care by 2050](#), almost three times as many as today.

#### 150 million

persons with disabilities will live in the region by 2050, twice as many as today, largely due to population aging.\*

### GAPS IN COVERAGE AND QUALITY OF CARE SERVICES

#### <5%

of dependent older persons have access to [publicly funded long-term](#) care in most countries.

#### 5%–40%

[Childcare coverage](#) ranges from 5% to 40% depending on the country, with gaps in quality.

#### 14 million

The region will need 14 million [paid caregivers](#) by 2050 to care for older persons, almost five times the current number.

### HOUSEHOLDS, AND WOMEN IN PARTICULAR, BEAR THE BURDEN OF CARE

#### 3 times

Women do three times [more unpaid care work](#) than men.

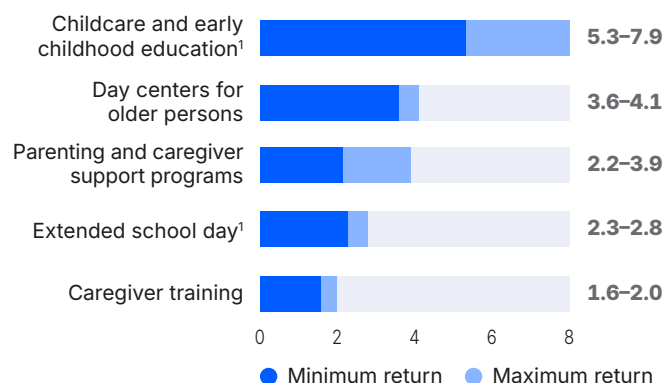
#### 210 million

Women's [8.4 billion hours per week](#) of unpaid care work are equivalent to 210 million full-time jobs.

#### 52%

of women [participate in the labor market](#), compared with 74% of men. Care is one of the main barriers.

## Care is a high-return investment: every dollar generates between US\$1 and US\$8



Note: Dollars (US\$) generated per dollar of public investment. IDB estimates for the region.

<sup>1</sup> The main objective of early childhood education and the extended school day is child development and learning.

## Economic and social benefits

### SHORT TERM • MORE JOBS

Expanding care services could create up to [300 million jobs](#) worldwide by 2035.

### MEDIUM TERM • MORE WOMEN IN THE LABOR MARKET

Care services free up time to work, study or start a business: public childcare has increased [maternal employment](#) by between 5% and 47%.

### LONG TERM • HUMAN CAPITAL AND MORE EFFICIENT PUBLIC SPENDING

Quality childcare improves learning and future earnings; long-term care prevents between 7% and 12% of [hospital days](#) among older persons (Brazil and Mexico).

\* Not all persons with disabilities require care or support. There is not enough data to estimate the prevalence of care dependency among persons with disabilities and project its growth in the coming years.

2016–2026: A DECADE OF WORK

## **Building on a decade of experience, IDB Cares now scales up action across the entire IDB Group**

### **2016**

The IDB supports Uruguay, the first country in the region to build a comprehensive care system.

### **2017**

The IDB launches the Early Childhood Development Innovation Fund.

### **2018**

The IDB publishes the Panorama of Aging and Long-Term Care.

### **2020**

The IDB launches RedCUIDAR+, a network that now has more than 250 members from 25 countries.

### **2022**

Care becomes firmly established as a development issue in policy dialogue with countries.

### **2024**

IDB Lab launches Silver Region, the first multilateral fund dedicated to the care of older persons, mobilizing 1,800+ organizations and accelerating 35 initiatives.

### **2025**

The IDB Group launches IDB Cares and approves its first operation: US\$250 million for Costa Rica.

### **2026**

IDB Cares scales up financing and technical assistance across the IDB Group, with 5 loans and 10 technical cooperation projects approved.

## **Why the IDB Group is a strong partner to advance the care agenda**

### **For governments**

Ten years supporting reforms in 21 countries, from legal and institutional frameworks to service development, with support tailored to each starting point.

### **For the private sector**

A growing market in services, infrastructure, technology and training, backed by the IDB Group: IDB Invest, IDB Lab and public-private models.

### **For donors and investors**

Accumulated experience, evidence-based solutions and measurable results, with an active project portfolio that takes resources to scale in countries.

# Countries with care operations

- With operations
- Other member countries

## US\$ 3.2 billion

invested in care since 2016  
(closed or under execution)

**110** operations: 32 loans and 78 technical cooperation projects

**21** countries with financing or technical cooperation projects

## Operations by population served

**57**

Older persons

**39**

Caregivers

**55**

Children

**29**

Persons with disabilities who require support or assistance

There may be double counting: one operation can benefit several populations at once, so the sum exceeds the total of 110 operations.

## IDB CARES IN ACTION

**Operations already leading the way****COSTA RICA**

Older persons

**US\$250 million**

IDB Cares' first operation (2025) measures levels of care dependency and identifies public spending on care. It will reach 160,000 dependent older persons and 170,000 caregivers.

**MEXICO**

Care System

**US\$500 million**

Supports the National and Progressive Care System (2026). By 2030, it is expected to reach 272,000 children in IMSS centers and certify 10,500 caregivers.

**PERU**

Children

**US\$50 million**

Strengthens Cuna Más: 25 new Comprehensive Childcare Centers and 28 renovated ones, benefiting more than 320,000 children under the age of 3.

**DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**

Caregivers

**US\$5 million\***

Consolidates the inclusive social protection system, including a long-term care component that trains and certifies 2,000 caregivers, assesses how much support each older person needs and expands day centers.

**PANAMA**

Persons with disabilities who require support

**US\$20 million\***

Strengthens the disability certification system, expands early detection services and promotes personal autonomy through assistive devices and support.

**URUGUAY**

Care System

**US\$13.5 million**

Strengthens the management and planning capacity of the National Integrated Care System, as well as care in schools for children with disabilities, home care and care cooperatives.

\* For these operations, only the amount invested in care is included, although the total project amount may be higher.

**Lessons from a decade**

- 1 Integrate the entire life cycle.** Serve children, older persons, persons with disabilities who require support or assistance, and caregivers at the same time, rather than separately.
- 2 Build on what exists and manage it comprehensively.** Integrating fragmented programs into a single system, with progressive targets, stable financing and coordination across sectors, levels of government, the private sector and civil society, accelerates results.
- 3 Measure to plan and prioritize.** Measuring levels of care dependency and having information systems in place makes it possible to know who needs support, define benefits and estimate costs.
- 4 Invest in caregivers.** Quality care requires trained, certified caregivers with decent working conditions, alongside respite services for families.
- 5 Support autonomy.** Personal assistance and community-based day centers expand the autonomy of older persons and persons with disabilities who require support.
- 6 Innovate in care delivery models.** Telecare, remote and hybrid models, home care and family programs expand coverage when they are evaluated and scaled up based on evidence.

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