



Why should

we care about

UNPAID CARE WORK?

Debbie Budlender

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(GA Resolution 39/125)

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United Nations Development Fund for Women
Regional Office for Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean States
7th Floor Takura House
67-69 Kwame Nkrumah Avenue
P.O. Box 4775
Harare
Zimbabwe
Tel: + 263-4-792681-6
Fax: 263-4-704729
E-mail: unifem.zw@undp.org
Web: www.unifem.zw.org

Design and layout by Fontline Electronic Publishing (Pvt) Ltd, Harare
Printed by Précigraph, Mauritius

ISBN 0-7974-2783-X

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Foreword

The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) commissioned the writing of this guidebook on unpaid care work under its Regional Programme to promote African Women's Economic Security and Rights.

The Regional Programme seeks to contribute to the empowerment of African women to realize their economic security and rights in the context of globalization and the feminization of poverty. A major action to be undertaken in order to achieve this is to influence macroeconomic and trade policy making to focus on feminized poverty and African women's access to and control over resources, while ensuring that women's contribution to the national economies through care, domestic and reproductive work are recognized in macroeconomic policy frameworks.

Unpaid care work is a major contributing factor to gender inequality and women's poverty. The assumption that unpaid work is elastic and valueless is a major concern to women. Feminist and gender analysts have consistently called for a thorough analysis of the implications of excluding unpaid work on women's time, opportunities and economic growth and development in general. The development of this guidebook is one step towards realizing that call.

The amount and intensity of unpaid care work in Southern Africa has been exacerbated by the HIV and AIDS pandemic. Mainland Southern Africa is said to be the most affected region in the world. Southern Africa has less than 5% of the world's population and yet has the highest rates of HIV and AIDS infection. The worst affected countries include Swaziland, Botswana, Lesotho, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

At the same time most economies in the region are undergoing a process of restructuring which includes the health sector. This inevitably involves attempts at reducing costs and introduction of service fees, much to the chagrin

of the poor who constitute the majority of the population in all the countries in the region. Indeed this has also led to the transference of the care giving responsibility from Government institutions to women and children.

This guidebook also very importantly makes a connection between unpaid care work and gender responsive budgeting. Gender responsive budgets ensure that the needs and interests of individuals from different social groups are addressed in the Government budget. In particular it ensures that the needs and interests of women and men, girls and boys are included.

By understanding the distribution and nature of household responsibilities it is possible to make budgets sensitive to the needs of various households.

The guidebook is intended to assist in advocacy activities aimed at influencing economic policy makers to acknowledge and account for women's contribution in national and global economies through statistics, national accounts, budgets, and taxation. The purpose of the guidebook and subsequent activities is to make unpaid work visible and to make it accounted for in macro- and micro-level policy making. This will enable policy makers to formulate and implement gender-sensitive policies that will counter the feminization of poverty.

We owe a special thank you to Debbie for her cutting edge work in the area of gender responsive budgeting and her willingness to share her skills and knowledge with a wide variety of individuals and organizations.



Nomcebo Manzini
Regional Programme Director

1 Background

1.1 The approach

The guidebook covers an enormous area. It provides a broad sweep, rather than technical details on any of the many areas. It provides the why and what rather than the detailed how-to of investigating unpaid care work. In many other sources, the topics covered in this guidebook are discussed in a very academic or very technical way which excludes many people. The approach used here is to provide the basics in as simple a way as possible, but also to provide references so that interested readers can go further on their own.

We have adopted the broad-brush and non-technical approach because we hope that this guidebook will stimulate groups to take up the issues through advocacy. If advocacy is our main aim, we want as many people as possible involved, and we want as many people as possible to understand enough to make the arguments themselves.

Some of the issues covered in this guidebook involve statistical and economic terms and concepts. The guidebook is written for non-economists and non-statisticians. However, it is the statisticians who produce the figures and the economists who build the economic models which provide the building blocks on which much policy is made. If the non-economists and non-statisticians want to influence the statisticians and economists, and engage them in argument, they need to know the basic terms and concepts.

The guidebook is intended primarily for use in countries covered by UNIFEM's Regional Office for Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean States¹. It does, however, draw on examples from beyond this region. Some of these examples might be directly applicable to our region. Others will need to be adapted to suit the specific conditions in the region.

¹ These are: Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Advocacy around unpaid care work is particularly important in the twenty-first century, and especially in Southern Africa, as we face the many challenges of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. In addition to its many other consequences, the HIV/AIDS pandemic is likely to increase the burden of unpaid care work of the women and girls in the region as they spend even more time than before caring for loved ones who are ill or orphaned. This extra responsibility could reverse some of the gains that women and girls have made in recent decades.

1.2 Defining unpaid care work

In this guide, we use the term ‘unpaid care work’ in the same way as was done in *Progress of the World’s Women* (Elson, 2000). In brief, we refer to tasks such as housework, cooking, and caring for children, old people and sick people where the person doing this work is not paid. The term includes work done for the family as well as what is sometimes called ‘volunteer’ work, where individuals assist other households or the community more generally.

Each of the three words making up ‘unpaid care work’ is important:

- The word ‘unpaid’ stresses that the person doing the activity does not receive a wage for it.
- The term ‘care’ stresses that the activity serves people and their well-being.
- The term ‘work’ stresses that the activity has a cost in terms of time and energy. It also stresses that the activity arises out of a social or contractual obligation, such as marriage or less formal social relationships.

Many other terms have been used for what we call ‘unpaid care work’. Elson explains why some of these terms can be ambiguous:

- Domestic labour: Does this refer to what we call unpaid care work or does it refer to the work of paid domestic workers?
- Unpaid labour: Does this refer to what we call unpaid care work or does it refer to the work a woman does without pay in the family business?
- Reproductive work: Does this refer to what we call unpaid care work or does it refer to giving birth and breast-feeding?
- Home work: Does this refer to what we call unpaid care work or does it refer to paid work done in the home on subcontract from an employer?

Elson stresses that the term ‘care’ does not mean that the work is always done willingly, or with love. Whether the work is done willingly depends on the relationship between the caregiver and the receiver and perhaps other people in the family or society. In some cases the care is given unwillingly, because the woman feels forced by psychological, social or even physical pressures. The debate is however, by no means closed.

1.3 Roadmap to the guidebook

- Section 1 of the guidebook provides an overview of why the guidebook and defines unpaid care work in the context in which it will be used throughout the guidebook.
- Section 2 looks at the relationship of women’s unremunerated (unpaid) work in Southern Africa to their poverty. We do this because one of the important aims in raising issues of unpaid care work is to address the relative and absolute poverty of women in the region.
- Section 3 looks at the different types of work which women (and others) do. The section examines what types of work are fully counted, partially counted and undercounted in standard statistical and economic systems. It links this to which types of work are unpaid and underpaid.
- Section 4 discusses statistical tools and methodologies for data collection, production and analysis on unpaid care work. It includes a summary of the work that has been done in Africa on this topic to date.
- Section 5 examines measurement of unpaid care work with an economist’s eye. It asks how we measure – or value – this type of work, so that it can be ‘seen’ by economists and considered in economic policy making.
- Section 6 discusses how unpaid care work can be inserted into the national accounts, the standard system for measuring the size and shape of an economy.
- Section 7 concludes by suggesting some of the ways in which the idea of unpaid care work can be used in advocacy. This is the most important part of the guidebook as, unless our interest in unpaid care work leads to changes in the lives of ordinary women and men, it is not worth too much effort.



2 Unpaid care work and poverty

In this section we look at the relationship of women's unremunerated (unpaid) work in Southern Africa to the incidence of, and their vulnerability to, poverty. We look at whether and how women might be poorer than men. We look at how the types of work that women do might cause them to be poor. We also start to differentiate between unpaid care work and other forms of unpaid and underpaid work.

2.1 Poverty has a women's face

In 1995, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) wrote that: 'Poverty has a woman's face – of 1,3 billion people living in poverty, 70 percent are women.' It is not clear on what data this estimate was based, but it is often quoted. The wording is also loose, in that presumably many of the 'women' are actually 'girls'.

The Human Development Report of the UNDP is another source of crude estimates on the relative poverty of women and men. The table below gives information from the 2002 edition (UNDP, 2002: 150-1; 222-225) for the fourteen countries which fall under UNIFEM's Regional Office. The first column of figures gives the human development index (HDI) ranking). The second column shows gross domestic product (GDP) per capita. The third and fourth columns show average female and male income. The final column shows the female average income as a percentage of male average income.

The table suggests that for every country for which data is available, female income is only a fraction of male income. The fraction is as low as 39% in Swaziland. Further, there is no clear relationship between the level of wealth of a country and the relative position of female and male.

Country indicators of wealth and income, 2002

Country	HDI rank	GDP per capita	Female income	Male income	Female as % male
Angola	161	2187	-	-	
Botswana	126	7184	5418	9025	60%
Comoros	137	1588	1136	2038	56%
Lesotho	132	2031	1223	2853	43%
Madagascar	-	-	-	-	-
Malawi	163	943	506	726	70%
Mauritius	67	10017	5332	14736	36%
Mozambique	170	854	705	1007	70%
Namibia	122	6431	2019	5068	40%
South Africa	107	9401	5888	13024	45%
Swaziland	125	4492	2557	6479	39%
Seychelles	47	12508	-	-	
Zambia	153	780	562	995	56%
Zimbabwe	128	2635	1946	3324	59%

Source: UNDP Human Development Report, 2002: 150-1; 222-225

Although we know that this pattern is correct in general, the UNDP notes that the disaggregated income figures are 'crudely estimated' on the basis of the ratio of female non-agricultural wage to the male wage, the female and male shares of the economically active population, the total female and male population, and GDP per capita.

Strong statements and crude estimates like this are useful in shocking people. They are not useful for policy-making. For policy-making we need more reliable figures, because otherwise we cannot measure whether the situation is improving or deteriorating over time. And, if we introduce policy changes, we cannot see if the new policies are working well. For policy-making we also need to understand why women are poor, because this will enable us to tackle the causes of their poverty, rather than only the consequences.

2.2 The link between low-paid work and unpaid care work

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) describes how women's poverty is linked to their disadvantage in the labour market (1995). Overall, women tend to be concentrated in economic activities with low earnings, where

earnings are irregular and insecure, and where there is little protection through labour law and social protection. For example, in Africa women often work in unpaid subsistence agriculture, in low-paid domestic work, as street traders, and as low-paid clerks.

The ILO argues that the following factors work together to create these patterns:

- Society sees women's primary function as fulfilling reproductive and domestic functions. This view restricts their access to education, training, land and productive assets. It limits the time available for (paid) productive work. It limits women's choice of income-earning activities.
- Men are seen as the main breadwinners, while women's earnings are seen as an 'extra'.
- Women's work is often undervalued. The occupations and sectors which are dominated by women are generally seen as being less important, requiring lower skills, and thus deserving of lower earnings than the occupations and sectors dominated by men.

Both the first and last points are related to unpaid care work. The first point has a direct link, because it is precisely the reproductive and domestic functions which make up unpaid care work. The last point is related because many of the occupations and sectors dominated by women involve work which is similar to the unpaid care work. For example, in many countries women are concentrated in the clothing and textile industries. In many countries the jobs which involve work with children are female-dominated. In many countries paid domestic work is performed primarily by women. The fact that these types of work – sewing, child care, and housework – are done 'free' by so many women within their own households, suggests (a) that there are few skills involved – it is something that women, at least, can do 'naturally'; and (b) that the work has low value, because it can be obtained free in other circumstances. The result is low wages and low status.

2.3 Feminisation of poverty

Just as we often read that 70% of poor people are women, we often read the term 'feminisation of poverty'. This term can mean several different things, but the authors and we, as readers, do not always think about which meaning is intended. To make good policy, we need to be clear what we are talking about.

BRIDGE (2001) suggests that the term 'feminisation of poverty' has at least three (different) meanings:

- Women have a higher incidence of poverty than men i.e. a higher percentage of women than men are poor;
- Women's poverty is more severe than that of men i.e. poor women are even poorer, on average, than poor men; and
- The rates or levels of poverty among women are increasing. In particular, the rates and levels might be increasing because of an increase in the number of female-headed households.

The first two meanings describe a 'state' in which women suffer more in some way from poverty than men. The last meaning describes a process through which women are becoming poorer over time, and doing so faster than men. The first two points are probably true in most countries. The third point may be true, but is not always true.

2.4 Female-headed households and poverty

BRIDGE notes that female poverty may be assumed to be increasing because of an increase in the number of female-headed households. But we need to avoid simplistic assumptions, such that all female-headed households are poor. In fact, very close to home, the results of the 2000/1 Household Budget Survey in Tanzania found that female-headed households seemed, on average, to be slightly better off than male-headed in that 45% of female-headed households were below the poverty line, compared to 49% of male-headed households.

Instead of talking about female-headed households as one homogeneous group, we need to think about the different types of household within this category. A widow living alone is different from a widow living with her children. A widow living alone is also different from a widow who is looking after her grandchildren because their parents died of HIV/AIDS. All these types are different from the young professional woman who decides to bring up her children alone because she feels that a man will be a drain on her resources.

We also need to think more carefully about both advantages and disadvantages for women of being household heads. On the one hand, women who head households may be less restricted in taking on paid work, may have greater control over finances, and be less subject to physical and emotional abuse. On the other hand, they may have less access to resources of all types, and suffer from social and other forms of discrimination. Importantly for our purposes, where a woman lives alone with her children, she alone will be responsible for all the paid work and all the unpaid care work. Or she will have to ensure that her children take on some of these responsibilities.

3 **Uncounted and undercounted, unpaid and underpaid**

In this section we look at the different types of work which women (and others) do. We look at work which is paid, as well as different types of work which are unpaid. We look at which forms of work are 'counted' by statisticians and economists, and which are usually uncounted.

In discussing 'counting', we note Diane Elson's skilful use of the word 'count' to show the different ways in which women's work can be ignored:

Women have challenged conventional views [of economics] and proposed new visions of economic life in which women's activities count, in several senses: counted in statistics, accounted for in representations of how economies work and taken into account when policy is made. (Elson, 2000: 21, italics added).

INSTRAW describes the problem of what it calls 'one-eyed decision making', where policy making is based on incomplete data. It notes as follows:

Government policy is designed either to maintain or to change the status quo. Knowledge of the need for change, what needs to be changed, what can or will be the object of change, and what will change, depends greatly upon the knowledge (data and information) base available to inform policy makers. If the knowledge base is inaccurate or is insufficient the resulting policy at best may have no effect, and at worst may have deleterious effects... (INSTRAW, 1995: 1).

The first parts of this section describe the standard rules which govern labour and economic statistics. A separate part discusses the informal sector and the informal economy. This part is included because of the confusion that surrounds these concepts, and the importance of informal work in our economies. The final part of the section suggests what the discussion in the previous parts means for the way forward.

3.1 Standard labour statistics

Most, if not all, countries in our region conduct a census, labour force surveys and other household surveys which provide information on the patterns of work in the country.

The difference between a census and a survey is that in a census everyone must be counted, whereas in a survey a sample is counted. The advantage of a census is that, because everyone is counted, it should be more accurate. The disadvantage is the huge cost in terms of money and labour. To cut these costs, the census questionnaire is usually kept quite short. This has implications for how well the questions about work capture all forms of work. Another disadvantage of a census is that it is usually conducted only once in every ten years.

The ILO makes rules about how countries must measure 'work' in its census and survey. It does this to make comparisons between countries more meaningful.

Employed, unemployed and not economically active

Using the ILO, statistics agencies usually divide the population of working age into three groups:

- Employed;
- Unemployed; and
- Not economically active

People who are employed are usually defined as those who 'worked' in the past seven days. Work is defined as any activity which would be counted as work when calculating the GDP. This is discussed more below. For the moment, we note that it includes work for a wage or salary, work done by self-employed people, work as an employer, work in subsistence farming, and work (including unpaid) in a family business.

There are different ways in which the question about work is asked in censuses and surveys. Some countries simply ask whether the person 'did any work, for pay, profit or family gain'. The problem with this way of asking is that many people will not recognise that work such as subsistence farming, or the work done by a woman 'helping' her husband in 'his' business, must be counted. So the respondents to the survey will say that they did not work.

Statistics South Africa tried to circumvent this problem in its surveys by asking whether the person did each of a list of activities. For each person, the interview prompts for each of the following activities:

- Run or do any kind of business, big or small for himself/herself? (Examples: Selling things, making things for sale, repairing things, guarding cars, brewing beer, hairdressing, crèche businesses, taxi or other transport business, having a legal or medical practice, etc.)
- Do any work for a wage, salary, commission or any payment in kind? (Examples: a regular job, casual or piece work for pay, work in exchange for food or housing.)
- Do any work as a domestic worker for a wage, salary, or any payment in kind?
- Help unpaid in a family business of any kind? (Examples: Help to sell things, make things for sale or exchange, doing the accounts, cleaning up for the business, etc. Don't count normal housework.)
- Do any work on his/her own or the family's plot, farm, food garden, cattle post or kraal or help in growing farm produce or in looking after animals for the household? (Examples: ploughing, harvesting, looking after livestock)
- Do any construction or major repair work on his/her own home, plot, cattle post or business or those of the family?
- Catch any fish, prawns, shells, wild animals or other food for sale or family food?

This way of asking the question resulted in a significant increase in the number of people reporting work in subsistence agriculture and work in the informal sector. These are both forms of work in which there are a lot of women.

The ILO's standard definition of an unemployed person is someone who has not done 'work' in the past seven days, but who is available for work. Ideally, the person should also have taken active steps to look for work in the last month. If the person does not satisfy these criteria, they are classified as 'not economically active'.

However, the ILO acknowledges that in some situations looking for work is not a viable option for many people. For example, where there are very few jobs available, where there is no established advertising system for jobs, or where the person is far away from potential jobs and does not have money for transport or other communication, it does not make sense to ask whether the person looked for work. The people who would like work but have not actively looked for it can be considered 'discouraged workseekers'.

Countries can choose whether they include looking for work as a criterion to be classified as unemployed. Most of the countries in the world exclude

the category 'discouraged workseekers' because, by so doing, they can record a lower unemployment rate. They think that a lower unemployment rate will make the economy look healthier and attract investors.

The decision to exclude discouraged workseekers has gender implications. In 1998, Statistics South Africa compared the unemployment picture with and without discouraged workseekers. It found that women and rural people are disproportionately represented among those who would be counted as unemployed if it dropped the criterion of looking for work, but would not be counted if the criterion were included. The decision as to whether to exclude discouraged workseekers also has policy implications. If discouraged workseekers are not counted, they will be invisible to policy makers.

Key Indicators of the Labour Market

The ILO's Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM) provides comparative statistics from around the world. Unfortunately, KILM does not have a full set of statistics for all African countries. The extracts below are nevertheless useful to highlight some important points about labour market indicators. It also shows some of the ways in which statistics can confuse and hide the real picture. For each of the tables, we have taken the most recent statistics available. All the statistics are for 1995 or later.

KILM 1 measures the labour force participation rate. This is the percentage of the working age population (usually 15 years and above) that is economically active i.e. either employed or unemployed. It shows what proportion of the working age population is available for 'work'. The table shows that in every country for which data are available, the labour force participation of women is lower than that of men. (Unfortunately, KILM does not include any statistics on Madagascar and Comoros.) The difference is largest in Mauritius and smallest in Tanzania. Namibia has the lowest participation rates for both women and men. Angola has the highest rate for men, and Mozambique for women. The large differences between countries to some extent reflect real differences. But the extent of the differences must also make us suspicious whether the countries are all measuring employment and unemployment in the same way.

Labour force participation rate

Country	Male	Female
Angola	89.6	73.3
Botswana	60.1	45.7
Lesotho	69.2	56.2
Malawi	87.2	78.8
Mauritius	80.1	38.8
Mozambique	90.8	83.4
Namibia	35.8	28.3
South Africa	57.7	43.9
Swaziland	80.1	41.1
Tanzania	88.6	82.6
Zambia	86.0	65.5
Zimbabwe	78.6	64.5

Source: International Labour Organisation, 2001

KILM 2 measures the employment ratio. This is the percentage of the working age population that is employed. This measure is, unfortunately, available for far fewer countries. Zambia has an overall statistic, but no disaggregation by sex.

Again, the table shows lower employment rates for women than men for all countries. And Mauritius again has the largest difference between women and men. The high percentage in Tanzania compared to other countries is almost certainly because Tanzania's surveys ask about employment in a way which encourages respondents to report subsistence work.

Employment ratio

Country	Male	Female
Lesotho	40.2	24.8
Mauritius	74.4	33.6
Namibia	46.0	33.5
South Africa	49.9	40.3
Tanzania	85.0	79.2
Zimbabwe	72.5	64.2

Source: International Labour Organisation, 2001

The fact that 85% of men and 79% of women in Tanzania are employed does not mean that policy does not need to consider them. In the first place, most surveys ask whether the person 'worked' in the past seven days, even if only for one hour. A person who works for only a few hours in a week is underemployed, and needs to be considered by policy makers if they and the country are to be optimally productive. Further, the fact that a person works does not mean that they have what the ILO calls 'decent work'. To qualify as decent work, both the pay and conditions must be satisfactory.

The next table shows the proportion of employed people who work as 'contributing family members', which usually means unpaid work in a family business. This table, unlike the previous ones, shows higher percentages for women than men in all countries except Lesotho. This type of work is not the topic of this guidebook. But it is clearly one which has gender implications!

Contributing family members as percentage of employed

Country	Male	Female
Botswana	18.2	15.5
Lesotho	1.7	3.1
Mauritius	1.6	4.1
Namibia	6.4	18.5
Zimbabwe	12.7	15.4

Source: International Labour Organisation, 2001

The above are just a few of the standard labour force categorisations. Other common disaggregations include the following:

- Status in employment, which distinguishes between employees, employers, self-employed, unpaid family members, and so on
- Economic sector, which distinguishes between primary (agriculture and mining), manufacturing and construction, and services
- Occupation, which distinguishes between managers, professionals, skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled.

All of these disaggregations will provide patterns which reflect the sexual/gender division of labour of the society. Often these patterns reflect what happens in unpaid care work. For example, in terms of sectors women predominate in services rather than in manufacturing. And in terms of occupation, women predominate in areas such as teaching and nursing, which involve care. The female-dominated occupations also tend to cluster at the lower-paid end of the continuum because they are seen as involving less skill and value than male-dominated occupations.

3.2 Standard economic statistics

The Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) has a statistics committee which brings together the heads of the statistics agencies as members. It also has sub-committees, one of which deals with national accounts. National accounts are the statistical system which forms the basis for the calculation of GDP. The aim of the SADC national accounts sub-committee is to ensure that the GDPs of the different countries are comparable. The sub-committee is chaired by Mauritius.

In all countries except South Africa, the statistical agency is responsible for calculating GDP. In South Africa, the statistical agency works together with the Reserve Bank to do the calculations. Statistics South Africa calculates the input side of the accounts, while the Reserve Bank is responsible for the expenditure side.

As noted above, statistics bureaux base their definition of 'work' in censi and survey on what gets counted in GDP. What gets counted in GDP is, in turn, determined by the rules of the System of National Accounts (SNA). The GDP is a key economic measure used for all sorts of decisions, including decisions on debt and investment. The rules about how to measure it are drawn up by multilateral institutions to ensure that countries calculate this important measure in the same way.

The latest revision of the SNA rules was done in 1993. The 1993 SNA states that the following types of activities are included in its 'production boundary' (para 6.18):

- production of all individual or collective goods or services that are supplied to units other than their producers, or intended to be supplied, including the production of goods or services used up in the process of producing such goods and services;
- the own-account production of all goods that are retained by their producers for their own final consumption or gross capital formation;
- the own-account production of housing services by owner-occupiers and of domestic and personal services produced by employing paid domestic staff.

The first item covers goods and services produced for the market. The second item covers subsistence production. The third item covers housing and domestic work.

African countries have played a leading role in advocating for a more

inclusive definition of 'work' to be used in calculating GDP. Tanzania was among the first countries to include subsistence production in national accounts. The issue was important for Tanzania because the informal sector accounts for half of GDP in that country. In 1960 a working group of African statisticians recommended that estimates of rural household activities could usefully be added to estimates of subsistence production. The group noted that this approach would be consistent with the ILO definition of the labour force as 'all persons of either sex who furnish the supply of economic goods and services' (Quoted in Beneria, 1992: 1548).

The 1993 SNA is better than earlier SNAs in gender terms because it includes subsistence production, where women often predominate. In fact, even the fetching of fuel and water is meant to be included in the SNA production boundary since 1993. However, most statistics bureaux do not include collection of fuel and water in their calculations. They say that they do not have the necessary data, and that the calculations are too difficult. They could also argue that there is no good reason for including collection of fuel and water when other household tasks are excluded.

However, the post-1993 SNA still does not include all types of work. In particular, while it includes unpaid household production of 'goods', it excludes household production of 'services'. In other words, it includes unpaid care work.

The SNA documents explain the exclusion of unpaid care work as follows:

A large volume of household services including the imputed values derived from production would distort the usefulness of the accounts for policy purposes and for the analysis of markets and market disequilibria – the analysis of inflation, unemployment, etc. (quoted in Varjonen et al, 1999:12; also see paragraph 6.21 of SNA93).

The documents also argue that household production 'is relatively isolated from, and independent of, market activities' (quoted in Varjonen et al, 1999:14). And they say that the necessary data are not available, that unpaid care work is difficult to measure, and that it would be difficult to make GDP comparisons over time if unpaid care work were suddenly included.

Some of these arguments are stronger than others, but there are counter-arguments for all of them. The lack of data and difficulty of measurement are what this guidebook is all about.

On the supposed 'relative isolation' of SNA and non-SNA production, INSTRAW notes how, in the course of development, some activities that were previously done unpaid in the household are moved onto the market. For example, a household may choose to take its laundry to the laundromat

rather than do it at home. Or a woman may decide to hire someone to care for her child while she goes to do paid work rather than look after the child herself.

When these sorts of ‘marketisation’ changes happen, the value of the production involved shifts from being uncounted in GDP to being counted. GDP thus increases, even though the same services as before are being produced. If we are not aware of unpaid care work, we may interpret the increase in GDP as an improvement in living standards, while in fact this is not the case. Meena Acharya (1995:2) suggests that living standards can even deteriorate with marketisation because of hidden costs, for example for transport.

To address the problem of lack of comparability of time, the SNA itself suggests that countries develop a set of unpaid labour accounts parallel to the ‘national accounts’ which make up the GDP. By keeping the unpaid labour accounts parallel and separate, comparisons are possible both between the ‘old’ GDP measure and the new, fuller one which includes unpaid labour. Parallel, or satellite, national accounts for unpaid care work are discussed in section 6.

3.3 The informal sector

The ILO is not yet collecting information on the informal economy in a comprehensive way. If one looks at the world as a whole, most countries also do not collect this information properly, although many acknowledge that informal employment is growing.

African countries are performing better in terms of acknowledging the informal sector than some other parts of the world. The term ‘informal sector’ was, in fact, first used in Africa – in Kenya in the 1970s. Tanzania was among the first countries to conduct a specialised informal sector survey. Today most, if not all, SADC countries include estimates of the informal sector in GDP. If it is not included, this would probably be because of lack of data. However, there is still room for improvement even in countries where the informal sector is included, as the value is usually an estimate based on limited data and assumptions about the value of what is produced. Often these assumptions will tend to underestimate the true value of what is produced.

As in other areas, the international bodies have tried to draw up rules on the informal sector to promote comparability of statistics across countries. In order to meet the needs of both labour statisticians and national accounts, the international definition of the informal sector is based on the characteristic

of the production unit (enterprise) where the work takes place rather than the characteristics of the person who does the work.

The 15th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) defined informal sector enterprises on the basis of the following criteria:

- enterprises owned by individuals or households that are not constituted as legal entities separate from their owners, i.e. where there are not separate financial accounts for the 'business' and the 'household'.
- enterprises where the number of employees is below a certain amount (usually 5 or 10); the business is not registered under national legislation such as tax or companies act, and employees are not registered;
- enterprises engaged in non-agricultural activities, although they could be using agricultural products e.g. making jam (Hussmanns, 2002: 3).

The final criterion is that at least some of the goods and services produced by the enterprise must be intended for the market. This criterion is relaxed in respect of paid domestic workers, who are considered to be part of the informal sector even though they produce only goods for the household itself.

The ICLS allowed countries a lot of flexibility in how they define the informal sector. Many international comparisons use a more narrowly-defined subset of the informal sector which allows more countries to give comparable statistics. The narrower definition is good in terms of achieving statistical comparability. It might be less useful for policy purposes in a particular country.

Some countries do not use the concept of informal sector at all in their data collection and statistics. Some, instead, use the concept of small and micro-enterprises. However, this is not the same as the informal sector, as some small enterprises are formal, while some larger enterprises are informal.

Many countries do not include rural areas and/or agriculture in their statistics on the informal sector. Many do not include paid domestic workers employed by households. Both of these inclusions undercount women, because women predominate in both these areas. South Africa includes paid domestic workers in the informal sector, but tabulates them in a separate column. It does so both because of the large number of people (mainly women) employed in paid domestic work, and because there are important differences between paid domestic work and many other parts of the informal sector.

3.4 The informal economy

As noted, the informal sector is defined on the basis of the enterprise. But many workers today, in both developed and developing countries, work in

formal sector enterprises but have informal conditions of work. For example, the workers may not be subject to labour laws and taxation, social protection and employment benefits. Casual workers, in particular, are employed on an informal basis whether they work for formal or informal enterprises.

The ILO report on 'Decent Work and the Informal Economy' therefore puts forward a definition of informal employment which is wider than the informal sector. The definition focuses on the person rather than the enterprise.

Informal employment, or the informal economy, includes:

- Own account workers and employers with their own informal sector enterprises. This would include street traders;
- Contributing (unpaid) family workers, whether they work in formal or informal sector enterprises;
- Employees with informal jobs, whether paid by formal or informal sector enterprises, or working as domestic workers in households;
- Members of informal producers' cooperatives;
- People engaged in own account production of goods for own final use by their households.

All of these forms of work should be included in GDP. They are not part of unpaid care work, and thus not the direct focus of this guidebook. Nevertheless, they will tend to be undercounted, and thus not considered adequately in policy making.

3.5 Moving towards counting the uncounted and undercounted

INSTRAW (1995) suggests that in developing countries the first priority should be to ensure that all the elements that should be included in GDP are measured and valued accurately. This is an important area of work, but is not the focus of this guidebook. However, *Progress of the World's Women 2000* notes that time use surveys – the main method used to collect information on unpaid care work – are also useful for improving data collection on other un- and undercounted economic activities (United Nations, 2000: 131).

Beneria (1992) suggests that undercounting of women's work in labour force statistics and national income accounts occurs in four main areas:

- subsistence production,
- informal paid work,

- domestic production and related tasks, and
- volunteer work.

To improve counting of paid work and subsistence work, it is mainly a question of lack of data rather than a conceptual problem. The main area of need is for better instruments. Above we give one example of how Statistics South Africa has tried to improve instruments. In India, there was a big improvement in the capture of women's work when they employed women fieldworkers in surveys and censi. In addition to improving instruments, there might also need to be some conceptual work on subsistence production, in that sometimes respondents – and analysts – do not distinguish in a consistent way between housework and subsistence production.

This lack of distinction is sometimes carried over into national accounts. The SNA-93 manual recommends the inclusion in GDP calculations of all products for home consumption or for sale. But the manual also says that goods and services produced in 'unimportant amounts' can be ignored. The Nepalese manual on national account statistics notes that much of post harvest or later food processing done within the household by women is left out of calculations of GDP. Time use data provides information for advocacy around what is 'important'.

In respect of informal work, as discussed above, there are conceptual problems related to the definition and measurement. For domestic production and volunteer work, full (ac)counting will only happen if there is both conceptual work and development of better instruments.

Beneria sees the four sources of resistance to efforts to obtain better data as:

- lack of awareness of the problem and possible solutions;
- belief in the adequacy of current approaches and resistance to change;
- technical conceptual and methodological problems; and
- cost (Beneria, 1992: 1555).

She suggests that work is needed on four fronts:

- definitional and conceptual issue in surveys, etc;
- technical and methodological issues which influence accuracy;
- cultural issues; and
- practical issues of implementation e.g. training interviewers against class and sex bias.

These are all important areas of potential advocacy and work. However, they are not the main topic of this guidebook.

4 Collecting and analyzing statistics on unpaid care work

This section discusses tools and methodologies for data collection, production and analysis on unpaid care work. The first part looks at the range of available methods, focusing on the more statistical side. The second part summarizes the work that has been done in Africa on this topic to date.

4.1 Methods

Unpaid care work is difficult to measure. There is no obvious money measure, because the work is unpaid. There is no obvious measure of what is produced, because unpaid care work produces intangible services. The main available option is to find out (a) whether people did any unpaid care work; and (b) how much unpaid care work they did. Time use surveys studies of different kinds are the most common way of implementing this option.

INSTRAW provides a detailed description of the commonly available methods for collecting information on time use (1995: 61 onwards). These methods can be used to monitor the time spent on any type of activity. They are most commonly used to measure unpaid care work because of the difficulties of measuring this activity in any other way. They could, however, also be used to capture other forms of undercounted activity, such as subsistence work and informal sector work. For example, Statistics South Africa used its time use study to show that even with the prompted question on work described above, it was not picking up on all the SNA work done in the country. For example, 2% of people who reported doing SNA activities in the previous day were classified as unemployed by their answers to the 'work' questions, while 16% of people who reported doing SNA activities in the previous day were classified as not economically active (Budlender, 2001: 52).

The INSTRAW publication includes illustrations of instruments (such as questionnaires) used in different countries. The methods they describe are the following:

Observation

This method is used more by anthropologists than by statisticians, while the other methods described below are more commonly used in questionnaires for statistical research. The observation method involves the researcher observing what the person is doing at particular times and recording the activities. There is no direct involvement by the person being observed.

The advantage of the method is that it does not require that the person whose activities are recorded can read and write, or that they have a western concept of time. The disadvantage of the method is that it is very researcher-intensive, because the researcher can only follow and observe one person at a time. One alternative is to do random observations, for example coming back every hour to see what the person is doing. This method allows one researcher to monitor more than one person in a day. But it gives an incomplete picture of activities.

Stylised questions

This method would normally be used in a questionnaire, among a series of other questions. It involves questions such as:

Yesterday, how much time did you spend preparing meals?

How much time do you spend each day preparing meals?

During the past week, how much time have you spent preparing meals?

One disadvantage of this method is that there is no way of checking whether the answers make sense. For example, the different activities prompted do not need to add up to 24 hours for a day. Also, where a person does unpaid care work intermittently – a bit early in the morning (breakfast), some late morning (lunch), some mid-afternoon (snack), some in the evening (supper), it may be difficult for them to estimate the different bits and get an accurate total. Meals may be fairly easy because there are standard times. Looking after children may be more difficult.

Activity log

With an activity log, the person whose activities are being studied is asked to write down on the questionnaire each time they do a particular activity. For example, the questionnaire might look like this:

During the next three days, each time you prepare any food, or get or prepare a drink, please provide the following information:

Time started:

Time ended:

Purpose: (morning meal, midday meal, etc):

This method assumes that the person is literate, and that they have a watch or clock. It also assumes that the person is motivated enough to remember and write down each time they do the activity.

Stylised activity list

This method would also usually be part of a questionnaire, or constitute a questionnaire on its own. It involves a question such as the following, with a block in which the person can write the number of hours and minutes for each activity:

What does your actual day look like? How many hours per day do you usually spend upon the following activities:

- Housework and related errands:
- Child care:
- Occupation (include travel to work and secondary work):
- Training/education:
- Handiwork/repairs in the home and car
- Garden work:
- Television/video:
- Hobbies and other free time activities:

Ideally, the question should be asked separately for weekdays and weekend days, as the activities are likely to be different. As with the stylised questions, there is no way of checking the answers, unless you are sure that the activities listed cover every possible activity.

Stylized time-activity matrix

This method is similar to the activity list, but includes all possible activities and should add to 24 hours. One suggestion for the list of activities is:

- Paid gainful employment
- Education
- Eating, sleep, personal hygiene, other essential personal needs
- Domestic work, including shopping, childcare
- Maintenance and repair of home
- Leisure

This method assumes that the person is able to remember all the activities undertaken and assign them to the categories. It assumes both a good memory, and good calculation skills.

Time activity matrix

This method is similar to the stylised time-activity matrix in having an activity list. However, it adds a list of time periods. The INSTRAW example has the activities listed along the top, creating a column for each of the activities. The time periods are listed along the side, creating rows. The periods could be 10-minutes for a very detailed sub-division, or an hour, for a much cruder division. The person recording the activities marks off in each row which activity was being done. There must be at least one activity for every time period.

This method assists the respondent with remembering. By insisting on at least one activity for every time period, it produces a comprehensive record. It does not avoid the conceptual problem whereby the respondent must be able to classify each of their activities according to the activity categories provided.

Time diary

INSTRAW names this method as the 'tool of preference' (1995: 69) because it avoids some of the problems associated with the other methods described above. With the time diary, the questionnaire does not provide a list of activities. Instead, the respondent describes each activity in their own words, from the beginning of a day until the end of a day. In some cases, the diary will have time slots along the side or top against which the activities must be recorded. In other cases, the respondent just names each activity, with a beginning and ending time.

There are two main types of time diaries.

- In the 'yesterday' diary, the respondent is asked what they did for each period of the previous day.
- In the 'tomorrow' diary, the respondent is given a diary and asked to fill it in during the following day as they do each activity.

The 'yesterday' diary has the advantage that it can be filled in through an interview. It is therefore a good method if respondents are illiterate or have difficulties with writing and reading. Its main disadvantage is that the person may not remember well what they did on the previous day.

The 'tomorrow' diary has the advantage that it does not require the respondent to remember what happened. One disadvantage is that it requires commitment from the respondent to carry the diary with them during the following day and remember to write things down. In both South Africa and Mauritius, the statistical agencies found that many people did not fill in their diaries as requested. A second disadvantage is that it requires literacy skills.

All methods are open to bias. All methods may not give a true picture of a 'normal' day. For example, with observation, the fact that the person knows they are being observed could result in a change in behaviour. With self-reporting, the person can decide which activities they want to report and which they do not want to report.

All methods struggle to cope with simultaneous activities. Simultaneous activities happen when, for example, a woman looks after her child at the same time as cooking supper, or someone watches TV at the same time as eating supper. Some methods simply do not allow for multiple activities. Where methods allow for multiple activities, respondents may not always remember them. In particular, previous research suggests that women do not remember to mention all the child care work that they do. It seems that many women assume that their children will always be with them and must be cared for – they do not see it as an 'activity'. Where simultaneous activities are remembered, analysts struggle to find ways to analyse them. In particular, they struggle with the fact that simultaneous activities suggest that more than 24 hours work is done in a 24-hour day.

The simultaneous activity problem is an important one for us, as most research suggests that it is women, more than men, who do simultaneous work. Ignoring simultaneous work thus results, once again, in an undercounting of women's work.

4.2 – Strength and weaknesses of the different methods

INSTRAW (1995) provides two matrices which reflect the strengths and weaknesses of the different methods of collecting information on time use. In both matrices INSTRAW distinguishes between ‘constrained’ methods – where the activities must add up to 24 hours and so can be checked – and ‘unconstrained’ methods. As noted above, constrained methods tend to be more exact than unconstrained methods.

The first matrix looks at strengths in terms of ‘inputs’ – what is required from the researcher and respondents. It categorises each method in terms of respondent cooperation, respondent knowledge, cost, and how easy the data is to process.

Strengths and weaknesses of methods by input

	Respondent cooperation	Respondent knowledge	Cost	Processability
Unconstrained				
Stylised questions	Medium-high	Variable	Medium	Medium
Activity list	Medium-high	Variable	Medium	Medium
Activity log	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
Constrained				
Interviewer administered				
Activity matrix	Medium	Medium	Medium+	Medium+
Recall diary	High	Medium	High	Low-medium
Respondent completed				
Tomorrow diary	Medium	High	Low-medium	Low-medium
Observation				
Continuous	Low-medium	N/A	Very high	Medium
Random spot	Medium	N/A	High	Medium

Source: INSTRAW, 1995: 89

The second matrix looks at strengths and weaknesses in terms of output – the information produced. It categorises each methods in terms of:

- **Validity** – whether it gives an accurate picture;
- **Reliability** – whether a particular activity is likely to be reported accurately;
- **Usability** – how easy it is to use the data; and

- **Flexibility** – how much variety can be included in the reporting of activities.

Strengths and weaknesses of methods by outputs

	Validity	Reliability	Usability	Flexibility
Unconstrained				
Stylised questions	Low	Low	Medium+	Low
Activity list	Low	Low	Medium+	Low
Activity log	High	High	High	Medium
Constrained				
Interviewer administered				
Activity matrix	Medium+	Medium+	Medium+	Medium+
Stylised questions	Medium+	Medium+	High	Medium
Recall diary	Medium	Medium	High	Very high
Respondent completed				
Activity matrix	High	High	High	Medium+
Tomorrow diary	High	High	Medium	Very high
Observation				
Continuous	Medium+	Medium+	Medium+	Very high
Random spot	Very low	Medium	Medium	High

Source: INSTRAW, 1995: 89

Which method you choose will depend on many things. Often the best method is not possible because of cost or time or personnel constraints.

Big vs small studies

A statistical agency will be in a better position to do a full-scale time use survey. If the study is big enough, it can reveal patterns in who does the different activities – women or men, young or old, rural or urban, rich or poor. These disaggregations are important. Too often we talk loosely about ‘women’, and the disadvantages they face. But we must avoid a simple division into women and men, or female and male. In addition to these differences, there are also differences among women and among men. Many better-off women are not particularly disadvantaged by the burden of unpaid care work because they have the resources to employ other, poorer women to do the work for them. Some who are not particularly rich, have the status because of their age or because they are a mother-in-law which ensures that other (female) family

members bear the responsibility of the unpaid care work. There are also differences between women with young children and those who are childless. Generally, women with children do more unpaid care work than others.

A few people working together, for example in a non-governmental organisation, will want to do something smaller scale and less ambitious. These small studies can be useful, especially if government has not conducted a full-scale survey. Small studies can illustrate the nature of the problem and why it is important that government investigates further. Small studies can suggest patterns that can be investigated in bigger studies.

Quantitative vs qualitative methods

Most of the methods described above are quantitative. They attempt to produce numbers on which types of activities are done and how much time is spent on them. Mark Blackden notes that quantitative time use studies 'say little about the social and cultural conditions that determine why people do what they do, or why the gender division of labour is the way it is' (Blackden, 1996: 1). He also quotes a UNDP report which suggests that the amount of effort and drudgery involved in unpaid care work will differ between different countries and different situations. Small studies allow for more qualitative insights. These insights add to our understanding of what the numbers from the bigger studies mean. Often NGOs or academic researchers are better placed to do the qualitative studies, while government statistical agencies are better placed to produce the big numbers.

Tshatsinde's (1998) work in a rural area of what is now Limpopo province of South Africa illustrates some of the benefits of a qualitative approach, particularly if we are interested in changing current patterns of unpaid care work. Tshatsinde's methodology included direct observation and informal interviews. Some of her quotes suggest the resistance that will come from women to attempts to change the gender division of labour.

An older woman told Tshatsinde: 'It is proper for men not to help with household duties, so that family members can respect them... If I can find my son cooking, while the wife is not sick, I will definitely refuse to eat and bid them goodbye because I will be most hurt.' (1998: 164). Another woman said it 'does not feel right for my husband to go and fetch water, people will think that I am failing in my duties because I am married for that purpose.' (1998: 165).

These views are understandable in the context of socio-cultural norms and values which classify certain types of work as only to be done by men and

boys other types only to be done by women and girls. It is these same socio-cultural values and norms that need to be changed if unpaid care work, considered women and girls' work, is to be recognized as having both a social and economic value.

4.3 Classifying activities

In stylised questionnaires the different activities that make up unpaid care work are asked about directly. In full-scale time diaries, on the other hand, respondents are usually asked to describe activities in their own words. The researcher or analyst must then classify and code all the activities to distinguish between unpaid care work and other categories of activities.

In the late 1990s, the United Nations Statistical Division (UNSD) came up with a trial International Classification of Time Use Activities (ICATUS). ICATUS was intended to provide a classification that would work for all countries – developed and developing. The UNSD started work on ICATUS because most of the earlier time use studies had taken place in developed countries and did not suit activities in developing countries very well. South Africa was one of the first countries to use ICATUS, in its 2000 time use study. Mauritius is now using the same classification in its 2003 study.

One of the strengths of ICATUS is that it divides activities into categories according to the way different activities are treated in the SNA. All activities are divided into ten broad categories numbered 1 through 9 and 0. The ten categories are:

- Work in establishments, e.g. working for government, in a factory or mine;
- Primary production, e.g. growing maize on a household plot or collecting fuel and water;
- Work in non-establishments, e.g. doing hairdressing at home;
- Household maintenance, e.g. cooking and cleaning the house;
- Care of persons, e.g. looking after children or the elderly;
- Community service, e.g. attending a political meeting or helping other households;
- Learning, e.g. attending school or doing homework;
- Social and cultural, e.g. socialising with family or friends;
- Mass media use, e.g. watching TV or listening to the radio; and
- Personal care, e.g. sleeping, eating, drinking, dressing, washing.

These ten categories are then grouped together into three bigger categories. Categories 1 through 3 are activities within the SNA production boundary. These activities should be included in calculations of the GDP. Categories 4 through 6 are 'work' activities, but fall outside the production boundary. They are the unpaid care work that is the topic of this guidebook. Categories 7 through 9 and 0 are 'non-productive' activities.

We can distinguish between productive and non-productive activities by using the 'third-person' rule. This rule says that any activity which we cannot pay anyone else to do for us – i.e. which cannot be marketised – is not production. So, for example, we cannot pay anyone to sleep for us, to learn for us, to watch TV for us, or to eat for us. But we can pay someone to look after children for us, or to do the housework.

The UNSD is planning to publish a manual on time use studies during 2003. You can find out about the manual and about ICATUS on their website, at www.un.org/unsd/depts/timeuse.

4.4 Work on unpaid care work in Africa

In 2000, the UNSD (UN, 2000) reported on recent time use surveys in five African countries:

- Morocco had a stand-alone time use survey in 1997/8. The survey only covered women aged 15-70 years old;
- Benin had a time use module in their multi-purpose household survey in 1998. The survey covered all people 6-65 years. The time use questionnaire used pre-listed activities rather than open-ended time slots;
- Chad included some questions on time use in their household survey of 1995;
- Nigeria conducted a stand-alone time use survey in 1998. The survey covered people aged 10 years and older, in four states and in Lagos. It included both rural and urban areas; and
- South Africa conducted a stand-alone time use survey in 2000. The survey covered people aged 10 years and older in all parts of the country.

More recently, Mauritius decided to do a time use survey. They are doing the survey throughout 2003, as an add-on module to their existing continuous multi-purpose household survey. The Central Statistical Organisation is drawing heavily on South Africa's experience in doing the survey. But it is making adaptations to suit their country.

As can be seen from the five country examples, some of the surveys are conducted as stand-alones – they focus only on time use. Others are conducted as modules – extra sections added on to an existing survey. The stand-alone approach is more expensive, because you need to find money for a full survey. The advantage is that there is more 'room' for the time use questions without the questionnaire becoming too long. The modular approach is cheaper, and makes it more likely that time use surveys can be conducted regularly.

The above surveys were not the first studies of time use in Africa. The World Bank has compiled a bibliography of earlier time use studies in sub-Saharan Africa. The bibliography includes only quantitative studies, although the methodologies include participant observation as well as questionnaires. The table which follows summarises the studies covered in the World Bank bibliography. The table shows which country each study was conducted in, the date of the study, the main methodology, the 'unit' or object which was the focus, and the sample size (the number of units covered).

The table reveals that many of these studies had very small samples. Six studies focused primarily on agriculture and related time use. Further, many focused only on women, and thus do not allow for gendered comparisons of how men and women spend their time. In evaluating both these and the qualitative time use investigations, the Bank commented that most studies did not make the links between macro policies and their impact on the time use patterns of women and men.

Quantitative time use studies in sub-Saharan Africa

Country	Date	Methodology	Unit studied	Sample size
Nigeria	1998	Participant observation Questionnaire	Women	40
Uganda	1993		Women	
Kenya	1998	Questionnaire	Women	
Botswana	1981	Survey 12 months	Entire household	4600 persons
Kenya	1990		Women	
Kenya	1990	Questionnaire	Household	69
Kenya	1990	Participant observation Survey	Entire household	75 households
Kenya	1990	Participant observation Open-ended interview	Women	44
Senegal	1986	Participant observation Questionnaire	Women	122
Zimbabwe	1992		Households	331
Botswana	1981	Survey	FHH & MHH	
Nigeria	1976	Participant observation Questionnaire	Women	82
Ghana, Botswana, Cameroon	1984			
Kenya	1985	Participant observation	Entire household	115
Cote d'Ivoire	1982	Interview	Women	880
Kenya	1998	Interview	Family	317
Nigeria	1982	Interview	Household	69
Kenya	1989	Participant observation	Entire household	260 individuals
Zimbabwe	1991	Interview Direct measure	Household	132
Senegal	1983	Spot observation	Mothers & children	139
Nigeria	1992	Participant observation	Household	429

Source: Derived from World Bank, undated.

4.5 Children's time use

Often we think only about women when we talk about unpaid care work. We forget that other people – and children in particular – may also do this type of work.

Most time use surveys have a minimum age cutoff. They do this because of the difficulty of asking children about what they do. For example, South Africa used a cutoff of ten years in its time use survey.

A good source for information on children's unpaid care work is the child labour surveys which have been conducted under the ILO's International Programme for the Eradication of Child Labour (IPEC). The objectives of these surveys is to determine how many children are engaged in child 'labour' rather than simply child 'work'. In other words, they accept that some work may not be harmful, and attempt to focus instead on work that is detrimental for children's well-being. The surveys differ in their methods. However, most of them include some types of unpaid care work among the issues covered.

The Zimbabwe child labour survey was conducted as an add-on to the June 1999 Indicator Monitoring Labour Force Survey. The survey adopted the usual ILO definition of employment described above. In producing the tables for the report, the analysts used the following cutoffs to define possible child labour:

- A cutoff of three hours or more per day for economic activities;
- A cutoff of five hours or more per day for 'housekeeping'.

The Zimbabwe report notes that the ILO recommends that seven hours or more per week of household chores be regarded as child labour. However, Zimbabwe reports on these activities mainly in terms of those who do five hours or more per day – amounting to 4% of children. Of those doing five hours or more, 60% are female.

In addition to the direct impact on children who actually do the unpaid care work, there are also ways in which unpaid care work affects the well-being of children indirectly. For example, a 1987 study in the United States of America found that single mothers spend about three hours a week less than married mothers providing child care. Overall, children in fatherless families have about six hours less care per week than those with both parents. This is particularly serious in respect of babies and very young children.



5 Assigning economic value to unpaid care work

The previous section looked at measuring unpaid care work mainly from a statistical point of view. It looked at how we can find out how much work women and men, boys and girls and individuals in other social groupings do. This section looks at measuring unpaid care work through the eyes of an economist. It asks how we measure – or value – this type of work, so that it can be ‘seen’ by economists and considered in economic policy making. It also discusses why it is important that economists ‘see’ unpaid care work, and how it could be built into their models.

5.1 Assigning a wage

Economists measure things in money terms – in dollars, rands, meticais or pula. We therefore need some way to convert the time measurements obtained by methods described in the previous section into money measures. We do this by assigning an hourly ‘wage’ to the time spent. The levels to be used for these wages are taken from other surveys, such as the labour force survey which most countries conduct at regular intervals.

There are many different approaches to finding the correct wage to use in the calculations. These approaches can be grouped into four broad categories:

- the mean (average) wage approach;
- the opportunity cost approach;
- the generalist approach; and
- the specialist approach.

The mean wage approach

This approach calculates the mean wage in the economy as a whole and assigns this wage to each hour. Usually, the mean is calculated separately for male and female and the male value is assigned if a male performed the unpaid care work, while the female value is assigned if a female did so. This sex-disaggregated approach, in fact, lowers the overall estimated value of unpaid work. This happens because (a) women generally perform more unpaid work than men; and (b) the average female wage is usually lower than the average male wage.

The opportunity cost approach

This approach uses the economic concept of 'opportunity cost'. Opportunity costs are the benefit that someone loses by making one choice over another. In this case, the person loses the benefit of earnings that they would have earned in paid work if they had not done the unpaid care work. We therefore take their normal wage or income from paid work as the value of the opportunity cost.

There are theoretical problems with the opportunity cost approach. Because the approach uses the wage that the person would earn if they were working in their paid job, it uses different wages for the same activity when the work is performed by different people. This suggests that the time spent cooking a meal by a university graduate has more value than time spent cooking a meal by someone without formal schooling, even if that person is a better cook.

A second problem with the opportunity cost approach is what wage to use for people who are unemployed and so do not have a usual wage, as well as for those who work in subsistence agriculture where there is no wage. This is a serious problem in many countries in our region because of our relatively high unemployment rates and the relatively large number of people employed in subsistence agriculture.

The generalist approach

This approach uses the mean wage of workers performing similar work to the unpaid work. For housework, it could use the wage of paid domestic workers. For child care work it could use the wage of workers in creches.

The specialist approach

The specialist approach focuses on the activity rather than the person who does the activity. For each activity it uses the wage earned by paid workers

whose functions and circumstances match the unpaid care work concerned. For example, time spent on cooking activities could be valued at the wage of a paid chef or cook, while time spent on cleaning activities could be valued at the wage of a paid cleaner.

In most countries that have done the calculations, the opportunity cost approach gives the highest values, and the generalist approach gives the lowest values. The differences between the values from the different approaches will be particularly big where there are large inequalities in wages and salaries in the economy. This is the situation in many countries in Southern Africa.

5.2 Why bother to value unpaid care work

Lorna Bailie (1997:3) quotes a Canadian respondent to a time use survey who asked: 'What business is it of the government as to how I spend my time?' The first time use studies in Canada were justified on the basis of their ability to measure unpaid work for the system of national accounts. In the mid-1990s, policy makers realised that the surveys could also inform policy that would contribute to the country's three main goals of economic growth, human resource development and social cohesion (Bailie, 1997). A few questions on time use are now included in the Canadian census.

In this sub-section we explain why it is important for economists and policy makers to make unpaid care work their business.

In economists' terms, we can think of unpaid care work as a form of 'public good' that involves 'externalities'. An externality can be described as a 'third-party effect', where the people affected were not the original target of the 'production'. Positive externalities bring a benefit to other people because of the activity of an individual or enterprise which the people who benefit do not pay for. Negative externalities impose a cost on other people which the individual or enterprise who does the activity which results in the cost does not pay for.

Unpaid care work brings positive externalities for employers because the care and pre-school education of children and the feeding and care of the workforce improve the quality of the labour force. The 'cost' of this work in terms of time and effort is largely borne by women. The benefit is derived by the society more generally. The value of the labour force is partly covered by payment of wages. And it is partly covered by government when it pays for education and health services. But no payment is made to the people who perform the care work part of the 'production' of workers.

The BRIDGE glossary notes that valuation of unpaid care work ‘would make such externalities visible in the national accounts.’ (Alexander & Baden, 2002: 10) This is important because, although these goods appear to be free, they have an economic cost. The economic cost is that while women (or children, or men) are doing this work, they are prevented from doing other things. They are restricted in the other activities they undertake. They are also often restricted in where they can go, in that unpaid care work is often bound to a particular location. The things that did not get done because the unpaid work was done are the ‘opportunity cost’.

Because there is no price tag for unpaid care work, and because society does not pay for it, policy makers often assume that there is a limitless supply – that they can have as much as they want. But there is a limit to unpaid labour. If the suppliers (mainly women) of unpaid labour are pushed too far, and if the burdens placed on them are too heavy, the quality and amount of care they can provide will deteriorate. As Palmer writes, when the ‘use’ of unpaid labour begins to affect its quantity or quality, it is no longer ‘limitless gifts from the gods’ (Palmer, 1997).

Some economists have recognised the externalities related to the environment. In some countries policy makers have imposed a cost on environmental negative externalities, for example by making factories which pollute pay to clean up the pollution.

Very few economists and policy makers have recognised the externalities associated with unpaid care work. In Palmer’s word, ‘reproduction of the population has been seen as a separate private choice, a family issue with no ramification for the main economy’ (1997).

5.3 Putting unpaid care work into economic models

Once economists can ‘see’ unpaid care work, and have a value for it, they can use it in their models. To date, there is very little experience in inserting unpaid care work into economic models. However, Marzia Fontana and her colleagues have done some interesting work showing how this could be done with social accounting matrices (SAMs), which are one type of macro-economic model.

A social accounting matrix is a linked set of statistical tables which models the circular flow of income in the economy. The matrix includes activities and commodities (goods and services), factors of production (such as labour),

and certain institutions (such as government and households). These models allow economists to look at a number of direct and indirect effects simultaneously as a change in one part of the flow has an effect on other parts of the flow. Standard SAMS do not include gender-disaggregated data. But they could be disaggregated, just as many SAMs already disaggregate households by different income levels.

Fontana (2002) shows how a SAM can be used to investigate the gender impacts of international trade in Zambia. She takes the standard SAM for Zambia and adds four 'social reproduction' (i.e. unpaid care work) and four leisure sectors. She adds four of each type of sector because the standard Zambian SAM provides for four different types of household, and households cannot 'trade' unpaid care work and leisure between themselves because these activities are not marketised. Fontana also disaggregates earning from labour into eight groups – four female and four male, at different levels of education.

She demonstrates the use of the model by looking at the impact of a number of different policies and events: (a) the abolition of tariffs on manufactured imports; (b) non-traditional agricultural export promotion; and (c) a rise in the world price of copper. Her investigation thus includes policy that can be controlled by government as well as external factors that are not so easily controlled.

The table below shows the results of her experiment with increasing the export price of copper by 50%. The table is simplified so that there are urban/rural and income breakdowns (in italics) only for unpaid care work ('social reproduction' in the table). The full table gives a similar breakdown for leisure, and disaggregates the market into 12 sectors.

Each figure in the table shows the percentage change in employment for women with different levels of education caused by the higher export price. The table shows, for example, that employment of women in paid work (the market sectors) is likely to decrease if the export price of copper increases. The decrease is largest for women with secondary education. Unpaid care work will decrease slightly for urban women with secondary education. The biggest increases in unpaid care work will occur among rural women – especially those with no education. This example illustrates the importance of thinking about different types of women, rather than considering all women as a single category.

Percentage change in employment of higher export price of copper

	No education	Primary	Secondary	Post-secondary
Market sectors	-2.8	-1.1	-3.1	-1.5
Social reproduction	1.4	1.1	0.2	0.2
Urban high income	0.5	0.2	-0.3	0.0
Urban low income	0.5	0.5	-0.1	0.2
Rural high income	1.2	1.0	0.6	0.9
Rural low income	1.5	1.3	0.8	1.2
Leisure	2.7	2.0	1.1	0.6

Source: Fontana, 2002: 11

Fontana's experiment suggests that tariff abolition would cause smaller employment and wage gains for women than for men in Zambia. Incentives in non-traditional exports are more beneficial for women if they happen in horticulture and groundnuts than when they happen in tobacco and coffee. In terms of unpaid care work, when assets are reallocated from maize to female-intensive crops, women are more 'productive', but have less leisure time. On the other hand, a rise in the world price of copper results in better educated women getting more leisure time and better wages.

Fontana's conclusion is that 'when there is great rigidity in gender roles, as well as in market structures, the positive effects of better price incentives are likely to be small. It is thus important to design complementary policies to reduce the many competing demands on women's time and to enhance their ability to respond to economic reforms.' (2002: 26).

5.4 – An example from Tanzania

Unfortunately, we cannot build a single macroeconomic model for use in all countries. If we want to advocate for gender to be inserted into macroeconomic models, we first need to find out more about the models currently being used by the government and other economic decisionmakers in our country. We also need to find out what data are available if we want to add elements to the existing model.

The following input was used in a workshop which the Tanzania Gender Networking Programme conducted for officials of the Ministry of Finance, Planning Commission and other economic agencies in the country. The focus of the session was how gender could be incorporated into their existing

economic models, MACMOD for macroeconomics and TAXMOD for tax. The session was entitled ‘Opportunities and Challenges of Introducing Gender into MACMOD and TAXMOD’:

We can consider two main approaches which we can use to integrate gender into MACMOD:

- We can disaggregate existing elements of MACMOD
- We can add new elements to the model – in particular, we can add unpaid labour/ the care economy to the market economy elements.

Making these additions will allow us to test the effects of different policies or external events and their impact on women and men.

Disaggregating existing elements of MACMOD

MACMOD, like many other macro-economic models, divides the economy into different sectors which pay for goods and services from each other. The sectors include households, a range of sectors in the private economy, government, and the rest of the world (to capture trade). The other sectors pay ‘factor payments’ to the household in the form of wages and salaries for their labour. We are proposing that we disaggregate these factor payments into payments to women and payments to men.

Disaggregation can help us see several different things:

- The relative labour burden of women and men – how much labour each offers to the different sectors;
- The relative cash rewards of women and men – how much, overall, women and men earn from each of the different sectors. This is important, because money is an important source of power in our society. So this is one measure of women’s empowerment; and
- Welfare of families, and especially children – research in many countries has shown that money that goes into a woman’s pocket is more likely to be used for the benefit of the family and children than money that goes into a man’s pocket.

MACMOD already disaggregates the private sector into nine sectors – for example, agriculture, mining, tourism, etc. Agriculture is further sub-divided into three sub-sectors – subsistence agriculture, commercial agriculture, and export agriculture. The female proportion of the labour force differs in each of these sectors. By disaggregating the factor payments to household, we can see how the relative labour burden, and relative employment and rewards of women and men will change as some parts of the economy grow faster than others.

The data to disaggregate factor payments to households already exists, as all the necessary information – employment, industry, hours of work, and wage rates – are contained in the recent labour force survey (LFS).

Adding the care economy to MACMOD

We said that at present MACMOD's sectors include households, the private economy, government, and the rest of the world. Most of the transactions that happen between these sectors are paid. Some parts – for example, the subsistence economy, are not paid. To get quantitative measures for these transactions, economists 'impute' the value of what is produced.

We are suggesting that we add a new sector – the care/reproductive economy – and impute the value of what is produced in it.

We propose that the care economy is modelled in a very similar way to other sectors, with many of the same economic assumptions. (We base this suggestion on work by Adrian Wood and Marzia Fontana, reported in *World Development* of 2000. However, we are suggesting that we include only reproductive work, not leisure as Wood and Fontana do.)

- The production function for the care economy converts the input labour into an output of services.
- The demand for these services depends on household preferences, just like for any other good or service.
- The demand is a function of the 'price' of the services.
- The price is calculated as the opportunity cost, which we can take as the average male and female wage in the paid economy.
- Labour use is measured in hours rather than numbers of persons, because many people – especially women – do both paid and unpaid work.

As with all parts of the model, there are some constraints. For example, the maximum hours that a person can spend in paid and unpaid work combined is set biologically. It cannot be more than a certain amount because the person will not be able to sustain him or herself in the long term without enough time for sleep and other personal care. The elasticities (how much demand changes with a change in price) for unpaid labour will also be different for the care economy and other sectors.

By adding the care economy to MACMOD, we will be able to see what happens with policy changes and external events. For example, Fontana and Wood model the effects on unpaid labour and on the paid labour of women and men of a rise in the world price of food inputs, a rise in investment, and the introduction of manufacturing incentives.

One big problem in adding the care economy to MACMOD is that we don't yet have the data to do this. The Tanzanian Demographic and Health Survey of 1992 had some time use questions, but we need a more recent, and full national time use survey, to have reliable data for adding this element.

In the meanwhile, even if it is not yet in the model, policy makers need to think when interpreting the output of the existing model what the impact will be on the care economy.

Thinking about gender in TAXMOD

Most taxes and other forms of revenue have a different impact on different citizens – for example, on women and men, rural and urban, rich and poor.

- Personal income tax affects men more than women because (a) men are more likely than women to be in paid employment; (b) men are more likely than women to be in the formal economy; and (c) on average, men earn more than women.
- With value-added tax (VAT), rich people pay more than poor people in absolute terms because they have more money to spend. However, in relative terms, calculations in many countries show that poor households spend a bigger proportion of their income on VAT than rich households. Also, each shilling paid in VAT affects a poor household more than a rich household because the importance (marginal utility) of every shilling is more the fewer shillings you have.
- VAT affects producers and sellers as well as consumers. At present, VAT is not imposed on many parts of the economy, particularly smaller operators and the informal sector. The plans of the Tanzanian Revenue Authority (TRA) to widen the VAT net and extend it to the informal sector will affect women more than men, because women are more likely than men to work in the informal sector.
- Customs and excise affects the relative growth of different sectors depending on what tariffs are imposed and how quickly they are lowered to meet World Trade Organisation demands. Because different sectors employ different proportions of women and men, the tariffs affects employment patterns of women and men differently. For example, if tariffs on clothing are lowered fast, this will probably decrease women's employment faster than that of men.

Data on some of these things are easy to find. For example, the TRA can easily collect the number of women and men who pay personal income tax. For the impact of VAT on consumers, we can use the expenditure data from the household budget survey. For the impact of customs and excise, we can look at employment patterns from the labour force survey.



6 Putting unpaid care work into the national accounts

The previous section has discussed, in general, how we can get unpaid care work to be 'seen' by economists. This section discusses how unpaid care work can be inserted into the national accounts.

6.1 Satellite or core?

As discussed above, the national accounts are the set of figures that are used to calculate GDP. As also discussed, the SNA which sets the rules for national accounts states that unpaid care work must not be included in the calculation of GDP. Instead, it suggests that a 'satellite' account be drawn up parallel to the 'core' national accounts to reflect unpaid care work.

Most economists will support this separation. And most Finance Ministries will be horrified if we suggest interfering with 'their' GDPs by adding unpaid care work. In support of their position they will raise the arguments discussed in an earlier section, such as difficulty of measurement, lack of comparability over time, lack of international comparability, and the supposed lack of interaction between the paid and unpaid economies.

On the other hand, Murgatroyd & Neuberger (1997:65) note that the danger of having unpaid care in a satellite account rather than the 'core' national accounts is that it will probably attract less attention. Further, 'satellite' is a strange word because it suggests a small appendage when, in fact, Australian Duncan Ironmonger suggests that the household industry produces a value larger than any single one-digit industry within the counted economy.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) supports the SNA's exclusion of unpaid care work from the core accounts. However, it acknowledges that the exclusion 'gives a distorted picture of the magnitude, composition and trends of production activities' (Blades, 1997: 1). In particular, the macroeconomic measures produced by the national

accounts will not accurately reflect changes in total household well-being when there is a shift in provision of services such as child care and health care between the market and non-market sphere.

The OECD also notes that, because unpaid care work is done mainly by women, women might see its exclusion as an attempt to ‘downplay their contribution’.

6.2 Approaches to constructing satellite accounts

There are different approaches to constructing satellite accounts for unpaid care work. Varjonen et al (1999:7) describe how to construct a ‘household’ satellite account, which measures all production taking place in the household. This approach includes some production that is already included in GDP, as well as unpaid care work. For example, it would also include subsistence work and the wage of a domestic worker. Schafer and Schwarz (n.d.:6) also argue that satellite household production accounts should include both household work that is already included in national accounts, and that which is not.

The alternative approach is to estimate the value only of production that is excluded from the GDP calculations. This method is simpler, because it covers less. It is also easier to understand, because then total production is simply the sum of the ‘ordinary’ national accounts and the satellite accounts.

In the previous section we looked at how to assign a value, or ‘cost’, to unpaid care work. This is an important first step because labour is the main ‘input’ to the production involved in unpaid care work. Most studies use the costs of the inputs to production to value household production. The input method is also used as one method in standard national accounts, for example to value the production of government and non-profit institutions.

However, for private sector production the national accounts use the ‘output’ method. This calculates the value of what is produced, rather than what goes into producing it. The approach is better than the input approach if we are interested in welfare as it focuses on the goods and service produced or enjoyed. Unfortunately, it is usually not possible to use it for unpaid care work.

The output method is relatively easy when the goods and services are sold on the market, as the value is then assumed to be the same as the price. The output method is difficult when the goods and services produced are not sold on the market, as is the case for unpaid care work. We could, as with

wages for input, try to find the same sorts of goods and services in the market, and apply the price. For example, we could look at the price of a meal, or the price of a crèche, or the price of nursing services. But these data are not as easily available as data on wages.

One criticism of input-based methods is that they do not take different productivity levels into account. For example, two households may spend an equal number of hours cooking meals of similar nutritional value. However, because one household uses an electric stove, while the other uses woodfuel, the first household will spend far less time in preparing the meal. With the input-based approach, the meal of the second household would be given a higher value than the meal of the first household because the estimate is based primarily on time. With the output-based approach, the two meals would be assigned the same value. The input method measures the burden, while the output method measures the values of the goods produced.

Most critics assume that the input-based method will exaggerate the value of household production because people take longer to produce the goods and services than in the private sector, where they produce in bulk. For example, Blades (1997) suggests that the values in the household sector should be adjusted downwards by 50%-70% to reflect lower productivity.

However, Schafer and Schwarz (n.d.:8) argue that households are sometimes more productive than private firms. They note that when services are delivered to people, households may have better information about the exact needs, be more willing to provide services at inconvenient times, be more flexible, and adjust more rapidly to unexpected circumstances. Households will also usually not have the extra expenses related to travel, idle time and breaks which happen in the private sector.



7 Forward into advocacy

The previous sections reveal that a lot of work needs to be done if we want to find the value of unpaid care work in a way that satisfies economists and policy makers. This amount of work is not worthwhile unless it can lead to changes in the lives of ordinary women and men. In this section we discuss some of the ways in which the idea of unpaid care work can be used in advocacy.

7.1 Broad areas of possible advocacy

Working in the 1980s, before the SNA was revised, Luisella Goldschmidt-Clermont used the terms ‘non-market household activities/production/labour’ to cover housework and care work as well as the production of commodities for own use. Our definition of unpaid care work excludes production of commodities because this should now be covered in the SNA.

Goldschmidt-Clermont lists nine ways in which household economy measures can be used:

- To fill a statistical gap and produce extended labour statistics and extended production accounts;
- To monitor changes in the allocation of extended labour resources and monitor actual economic growth;
- To ensure that government policies help non-market household production to be allocated an amount of productive resources which matches its economic significance;
- To identify the least productive activities and introduce more satisfactory technologies;
- To help formulate labour market policies and for labour market planning;
- To establish household income comparisons, measure standards of living and formulate welfare policies;

- To help ensure that unpaid household workers are granted the same social status and social benefits enjoyed by other workers;
- To help formulate population policies; and
- To promote appropriate legislation, protect women's economic status and assist courts in financial settlements (Quoted in Ironmonger, 1993 :12).

Marzia Fontana's work shows that measurements of unpaid care work can also be used to predict and monitor the effects of new policies on women and men and on women from different social groups.

Lourdies Beneria suggests that time-use data are needed from a policy perspective:

- To get more accurate data on which to base national and international policies and planning;
- To construct more comprehensive indicators of welfare;
- To do better human resource planning and estimates of potential output;
- To design better adjustment and stabilisation policies;
- To study savings and consumption patterns of women and men, household dynamics, etc; and
- To design policies around income distribution, social security, pay equity (Beneria, 1992).

These lists give some idea of the breadth of issues that can be addressed with the use of information on unpaid care work. In the next section we look at examples of where unpaid care work has been taken account of in policies or advocacy. We focus on examples where the change in policy affects people fairly directly. We do not discuss examples of the setting up of ways to monitor and measure unpaid care work, for example time use studies or compilation of satellite accounts. We choose to ignore these types of activity because we see them as means to an end rather than an end in themselves. Unless we know what we will fight for once we have the time use survey or the satellite accounts, it is not worthwhile to put too much effort into fighting for the survey and accounts.

The examples below show close links between advocacy around unpaid care work and gender budget work in many of the countries. For example, Canada, Israel, South Africa and the United Kingdom have all looked at the ways in which government budgets disadvantage women by not taking account of the unpaid care work that they do. This link provides particular opportunities in Southern Africa, because many of the countries in the region have already done some gender budget work. On the one hand, advocacy and

research on unpaid care work can build on the gender budget work. On the other hand, initiatives around unpaid care work can strengthen the gender budget work.

7.2 Examples of advocacy on unpaid care work

Israel

The issue of unpaid care work has been used recently in advocacy by a policy research NGO, the Adva Centre, in Israel. In July 2002, the Israeli parliament voted to change benefits for single mothers. Up until then, single mothers with children under the age of seven were eligible for income support payments if their monthly income was below a minimum fixed by law. After the child reached age seven, the mother had to pass an employment test – she had to prove that she had worked or tried to find work. The mothers of children under seven years received the payments whether or not they worked, as the payments were intended to give them the choice of taking a full-time job or taking care of their own young children. In total, about 50 000 single mothers received these payments.

The Finance Ministry tried to portray the single mothers as ‘free-loaders’ who refused to work. Adva Centre’s arguments in favour of retaining the benefit included the following:

- 40% of single mothers receiving benefits were working outside the home;
- Their low standard of living should not be cut any lower;
- Women of young children who stay home full or part time are doing work in caring for their children – the next generation. They should be given the option of staying home and doing that work.

Unfortunately, the last Israel time use survey was conducted in 1991, and the data were out of date. If more recent time use data were available, Adva would have calculated the value of the time spent by single mothers taking care of young children. They would then have argued that the Finance Ministry was probably saving money by allowing mothers to take care of their children.

The Israel budget was finally passed in December 2002. It contained a compromise solution that income support would be paid to single mothers until their child was two years old without their having to prove that they had worked or tried to find work. This was worse for women than the previous seven years, but better than the three months suggested by Cabinet.

The Adva Centre is interested in working further on unpaid care work, and collected many of the other examples in this sub-section of ways in which time use surveys can be used for social policy.

Australia

In the past, the Australian government conducted time use surveys every five years – in 1987, 1992 and 1997. The next time use survey is planned for 2005 or 2006.

During the period that the surveys were conducted, they helped in making policy makers aware of the unpaid care work issue. Policy changes introduced as a result of this awareness included subsidised child care services and job training schemes to encourage women's involvement in paid employment. The government also began to provide incentives such as tax relief and parenting allowances so that parents (mainly mothers) of young children could stay at home and look after them. These measures were relatively successful. But government was less successful in influencing behaviour in the home and family. Each new time use survey showed that women in Australia continue to do the bulk of unpaid care work.

Within the state of Victoria, the Office of Women's Affairs looked at the time spent by individuals caring for elderly and disabled people. The Office suggested several strategies to help the carers. One strategy was to provide payment for home care. This was not implemented. Another strategy, which was implemented, was to replace a tax rebate for dependent spouses paid primarily to men with a cash payment for home child care to the full-time child care givers, who were mainly women.

Despite these advances, time use data has not been used as much as it could. A statistician of the Australian Bureau of Statistics writes as follows:

In some areas, such as gender equity, information collected in time use surveys in Australia has had a direct bearing on public policy. In other respects, time use data are more or less untapped resources which have the potential to inform social and economic policy. To a large extent, time use data appears to be the province of statistical agencies and specialist researchers. Our task is to communicate the informative power of the data to a wider audience of policy makers... (Webster, 1999: 1)

Andrew Webster's words are important. They remind us that producing statistics or satellite accounts is not enough. We need to find ways to bring them to the attention of policy makers.

Canada

Canada is another country that has conducted regular time use surveys. It is in a fortunate position in that, because telephones are widespread, it is able to conduct these surveys telephonically. It also includes questions on time use in its national census.

Canada's national pension plan includes a provision that ensure that the pensions of parents are not reduced as a result of their being out of the paid workforce for a period to care for young children. Further, in 1998, after lobbying on the basis of time use statistics, the Canada's federal budget included a tax credit for unpaid work by caregivers.

Korea

The activity around unpaid care work in Korea is part of a broader initiative in that region. Over the last few years, the Statistics Division of United Nations Eastern, Southern and Central Asian and the Pacific (UNESCAP) has coordinated work around a guidebook on collection, analysis and use of statistics on unpaid work so as to inform policy making. The guidebook is narrower than this one in that it focuses on statistics. It is broader than this one in that it includes other types of unpaid work beyond unpaid care work. The UNESCAP guidebook is also different from this one in that it provides much more technical detail on things that are only described in broad brushstrokes in this guidebook. The UNESCAP manual will be important background reading for those who want to take work in this area forward. It is available on the web at:

http://unescap.org/stat/meet/wipuw/wipuw_guidebook.htm

The final section of the UNESCAP manual consists of country case studies of how countries have, or intend, to take forward advocacy. Many of the countries are focused on getting statistics on unpaid labour included in national accounts and other systems. As discussed above, this is about establishing the means to address unpaid care work. The Korean case study gives more practical examples of how they see valuation of unpaid work affecting the lives of ordinary women (and men).

The objectives of the Korean advocacy are to have:

- An 'economic rating' of the monetary value of unpaid work, and in particular the value of full-time housework. This rating could then be the basis for insurance and social security, taxation, and property division in cases of divorce. The document suggests that government should

play a lead role in publicising a socially agreed upon 'household labour value method' for calculating a monetary wage per hour for household labour so that public sector and government – particularly the Ministry of Gender Equality – can use it to make recommendations to the private sector.

- Accident compensation paid equitably between paid and unpaid workers, for example compensation for full-time housewives should be equitable with that of working women who also perform housework.
- Men increase their participation in housework. The advocates note that this could reduce men's involvement and perhaps productivity in paid work, but will greatly increase women's involvement and productivity in paid work.

Advocacy began in 1998 when the Presidential Commission on Women's Affairs promoted time use data collection, analysis, valuation, and utilisation for decision-making. In February 2002, the President instructed the Commission to find ways of including the value of unpaid housework in the country's national accounts. Currently the Ministry which replaced the Commission is pushing for three major policy reforms:

- Insurance for full-time housewives calculated on the basis of the value of their household labour;
- Family friendly policies in the areas of family support, child care, after school care, and others; and
- Equality of compensation at work and sharing of marital assets in case of divorce.

Mongolia

Mongolia was also part of the broad UNESCAP initiative around statistics on unpaid work. In Mongolia, participants came up with advocacy points in relation to labour and employment statistics, workers in the informal economy, child work and education, as well as unpaid care work.

On unpaid care work, as well as adding the household economy to national accounts, participants recommended the following:

- Introduction of programmes to ease the domestic burden, especially that of young women;
- Improvement of social protection laws to cover people doing unpaid care work;
- Development of paid work skills among women;

- Promotion of a campaign among women to learn about information technology; and
- Promotion of positive images of the role of women and men through mass media.

Netherlands

The Working Hours Act of 1996 allowed shops to stay open later in the evening and on Sundays. The 2000 time use survey showed that more Dutch women have entered the paid work force than in 1995 and that Dutch men are doing more of the unpaid household labour – although still not as much as women. It is possible that the Working Hours Act contributed to this change.

Norway

Norway has conducted four time use surveys, the last one in 2000. In 1992, Norway introduced 'care credits' for social security entitlements. These credits were intended to compensate for the paid work time lost by individuals who cared for family members. The credits were available in respect of care for children under seven years of age, care for the elderly, and care for ill persons if the work prevented the carer from doing paid work.

South Africa

During the apartheid years, government created institutions to care for vulnerable groups among the white population – for orphans, for old people, for those who were disabled. After 1994, the government did not have the money to expand these institutions to cater for people from all race groups. Instead, the government's Budget Review of 1998 argued that 'communities themselves are often able to provide more appropriate social services than institutions . . . community care is also usually a more cost efficient alternative to institutionalization'. The Women's Budget Initiative pointed out that in using the word 'efficient', the government was thinking only about the costs that appear in money accounts. They were not thinking about unpaid labour, the costs that this imposes, and who bears the costs. The Initiative has called for government to assist community carers in some way – financial or otherwise – to do the work that relieves government of tasks it would otherwise have to perform.

In 2000, South Africa became the first sub-Saharan country to conduct a national time use survey. As expected, the survey revealed the time spent by women and others collecting water. It also revealed another hidden time cost for households without running water and electricity. Already in the piloting before the main survey, interviewers reported an activity not included in the international codes – the time needed to light fires to heat the water for bathing and washing once it was fetched. This activity shows the interlinkages between different policies – that provision of water has some benefit, but the benefit is vastly increased if it goes together with provision of electricity.

Unpaid labour of a different sort has come up in the area of housing. South Africa has a huge housing backlog. To address this backlog, it introduced housing subsidies for poorer households. After a few years, the policy was changed and households were required to make some contribution of their own to qualify for the subsidy. Government recognised that some households were too poor to make this contribution in cash. Instead, they allowed households to make the contribution in ‘sweat equity’, by working on building the house.

In an economist’s terms, this policy recognises that the ‘opportunity cost’ of the time of household members is low relative to the ‘opportunity cost’ of other assets, such as money. The opportunity cost of their labour is low because of the high unemployment rates, so that there are few opportunities to earn money. The acceptance of the unpaid household labour of the household instead of money recognises that unpaid labour has value. What we are asking in this guidebook is that unpaid care work is recognised in the same way.

United Kingdom

In the United Kingdom, the Women’s Budget Group has used arguments around unpaid care work in its interaction with the British Treasury. In March 2002, the Chancellor announced that the child tax credit would, from 2003, be paid to the main caregiver. In practice, then, it would usually be paid to the woman. The Treasury was mainly convinced by arguments of efficiency – that money paid to a woman is more likely to be used to the benefit of the child than money paid to a man (St Hill, 2002).

7.3 — Where to from here?

The examples above are mainly from developed countries. Many of the policies and advocacy revolve around ways of compensating women for the unpaid work they do. In many of the developed countries this compensation works through the tax system. In particular, people who do unpaid care work are given credits which mean that they pay less tax.

These policies provide ideas for developing countries in sub-Saharan Africa, but are not very useful in terms of detail. In particular, relatively few people in our countries pay personal income tax, so tax credits would not be much use. Instead we have to find ways of compensating unpaid care work, or relieving the burden, in other ways.

Some of the non-tax issues raised in the country examples are relevant in sub-Saharan countries, at least for some groups of women. We could, for example, think about how unpaid care work should affect policies on retirement benefits, and occupational health and safety.

One problem is that in many of these policies, the payout provided to the person is dependent on how much the person was earning before. Such payouts have gender bias both because men tend to earn more than women, and because women are more likely to take time out of the paid workforce to do unpaid care work. Further, even when they are employed in paid work, women are usually less able to do overtime because of their unpaid care work responsibilities.

A second problem is that payouts that are based on earnings from paid work ignore the losses and associated costs related to unpaid care work. For example, a woman who loses an arm in an accident at the factory will lose her money earnings. She will also be less able to do her household tasks and perhaps have to pay someone else to assist.

The Korean example suggests that unpaid care work can be considered when determining how assets are split between the woman and man on divorce. Unpaid care work can also be considered when determining how much the non-custodial parent should pay when the child lives, and is cared for, by only one of them (usually the mother).

Research on divorce cases in South Africa (Budlender, 1996) suggests that the courts are prepared to consider unpaid care work in some cases where wealthy women are involved, but are less prepared to do so when it is poorer women. For example, courts sometimes award 'spousal maintenance' to wealthier women who have not worked at any time in the marriage. The maintenance is awarded both in recognition of her contribution (in unpaid care work) to the marriage, and on the assumption that she is unable to provide for herself.

Poorer women do not have the option of staying at home – they are forced to go out and find money in some way. The court assumes she is better able to provide for herself than a wealthier woman, and/or that she has less needs. For example, in one case of a woman with a two-month old baby, the husband asserted that she 'is a healthy young woman and has made absolutely no attempt to find gainful employment'. However, because women have often taken some time off to have babies and look after the family, and because they generally earn less than men, when the woman and man each have to rely on their separate incomes after divorce, the woman is likely to be hit harder. The bias in favour of wealthy women is ironic, in that most will have passed much of their unpaid care work on to domestic workers.

In respect of child support (maintenance), where the child lives with only one parent, laws generally provide that both parents should contribute to the (money) costs of bringing up the child in proportion to their ability. In practice, even this is often not achieved, either because the non-custodian parent (usually the man) cannot be found, or because they refuse to pay. Timothy Smeeding suggests that calculations based only on money do not take unpaid care work into account. Instead, he suggests that the calculations should involve both time (hours requirement of support by absent parent) and money (normal child support) (1997: 21).

There are also some issues which are relevant in sub-Saharan Africa but would not be relevant in most developed countries. Provision of water and electricity to avoid women and children walking long distances and spend long hours to collect them would be one of these.

Overall, the burden of unpaid care work has always probably been greater in sub-Saharan Africa than in most developed countries. This is so because there are fewer opportunities for buying household-type services on the market. People also generally have less money to buy the services even where they are available.

In recent years the relative burden of unpaid care work has increased because of the HIV and AIDS pandemic and the way it has hit our region.

Governments do not have the resources to provide all the services that are needed to care for those who are ill. Instead, most governments are promoting 'home-based care', where household members are encouraged to care for those who are ill rather than relying on clinics and hospitals.

The responsibility of care for those with HIV and AIDS affects the amount of unpaid care work in other areas. Thus Noeleen Heyzer notes that it takes 24 buckets of water a day to care for a person living with HIV and AIDS. This water is necessary to clean soiled sheets, to bathe the ill person several times a day, to wash dishes and prepare food (Christian Science Monitor, July 18, 2002). This amount of water is roughly equivalent to the amount that goes into a swimming pool every month in wealthy areas of Johannesburg. However, the month's worth of water for the swimming pool is obtained with minimal effort by the owner, while the 24 buckets are often collected from a long distance and by women.


Groups in several countries have been quick to point out that home-based care is yet another form of unpaid care work. The Tanzanian Gender Network Programme includes in its campaign to 'return resources back to the people' the call for recognition that women at the household level need resources to compensate their unpaid labour especially in looking after those who are ill with an AIDS related disease. The Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre Network has a research-cum-advocacy project on HIV and AIDS which includes a focus on home-based care.

7.4 In conclusion

Those who oppose advocacy around unpaid care work sometimes do so because they think that advocates are asking for 'wages for housework'. There are a few groups who are asking for wages for housework. However, most groups are not asking for this.

The UNDP's Human Development Report of 1995 has a special focus on unpaid care work. The conclusion to the chapter argues that giving a value to unpaid care work is a question of justice. Proper valuation of unpaid care work would show that in many countries women are the main breadwinners if we look at the number of hours worked rather than money earned.

If society, families and individuals accepted this, it could bring big changes in society. It would mean that each working person in a household – whether doing paid or unpaid work – is entitled to a share of income generated by the paid work. It would mean that husbands must share income with their wives



as 'an act of entitlement rather than benevolence' (UNPD, 1995: 98). This, in turn, would bring about changes in rights to property and inheritance, access to credit, entitlement to social security benefits, and so on. Some of the ways in which this could happen are illustrated in the case studies above. The task ahead is to find new ways of recognising unpaid care work in the specific ways it happens in the countries of Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean States covered by UNIFEM's office.

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Acknowledgements:

Special thanks to Ted Baumann, Mark Blackden, Joe de Beer, Marge Guerrero, Indira Hirway, Zaid Kimmie, Isabella Matambanadzo, Penny Parenzee, Mary Rusimbi, Barbara Swirski, Cecilia Ncube and Nomcebo Manzini.

