



Developing care

Recent research on the care economy
and economic development

Nancy Folbre





Photo: Tommy Trenchard

DEVELOPING CARE: RECENT RESEARCH ON THE CARE ECONOMY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Nancy Folbre

© 2018 International Development Research Centre

This paper was commissioned by IDRC through the GrOW program to review and put in context recently-supported research on the social organization of care and its implications for women's economic empowerment in the Global South. Opinions stated in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of IDRC or the GrOW funders.

AUTHOR'S ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the organizations who funded the projects reviewed here for their commitment to innovation in both research and policy. I deeply appreciate the support and feedback of Martha Melesse, other IDRC staff members, and grantees. My student, Leila Gautham, provided invaluable research assistance.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Nancy Folbre is Director of the Program on Gender and Care Work at the Political Economy Research Institute and Professor Emerita of Economics at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. She has published widely—for academic and popular audiences—on issues at the interface between political economy and feminist theory, with a particular emphasis on the value of unpaid care work.

ABOUT THE GROW PROGRAM

The Growth and Economic Opportunities for Women (GrOW) program is a multi-funder partnership between the United Kingdom's Department for International Development, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC).

www.idrc.ca/grow

ABOUT IDRC

Part of Canada's foreign affairs and development efforts, IDRC invests in knowledge, innovation, and solutions to improve lives and livelihoods in the developing world.

CONTACT

International Development Research Centre

PO Box 8500, Ottawa, ON

Canada K1G 3H9

Tel: (+1) 613-236-6163; Email: info@idrc.ca

www.idrc.ca



CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
INTRODUCTION	4
BACKGROUND: CURRENT UNDERSTANDINGS ON CARE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	6
What constitutes “care”?	6
What shapes the provision of care?	9
How is the distribution of unpaid care time measured?	10
How is care valued?	11
What attention does care work get in public policies?	12
EMERGING EVIDENCE FROM IDRC AND GROW RESEARCH	14
Cross-national findings	16
Country-specific insights	18
Policies and programs to support child care and women’s employment	19
Women’s well-being and empowerment	24
IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND FUTURE RESEARCH	28
BIBLIOGRAPHY	32



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Policy makers are beginning to appreciate the constraints that unpaid care work imposes on both economic development and the empowerment of women in low-income countries. Empirical research on these topics is in its infancy but is already yielding significant results. This paper contextualizes and reviews recent research on unpaid care work in the Global South, with a particular focus on projects funded through the multi-donor Growth and Economic Opportunities for Women (GrOW) program and other care-related research supported by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). These projects use national time-use survey data, mixed-methods field research including qualitative interviews, and experimental and quasi-experimental methods to compare women's unpaid care burdens in a variety of developing country contexts, including China, India, Kenya, Nepal, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Vietnam.

This paper begins with background on the current state of research on the care economy with an emphasis on improving conceptual clarity of definition and measurement. This is followed by a discussion of the most important findings from IDRC- and GrOW-supported research and some complementary research sponsored by other agencies. A final section outlines possible next steps for advancing the care policy agenda.

CURRENT UNDERSTANDINGS ON CARE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The term “care” is used in a variety of ways, sometimes blurring important distinctions. Most research on developing countries focuses on *unpaid* care work which accounts for the bulk of women's labor time. This

is one, albeit important, part of a broader care economy that also encompasses non-market transfers and paid care work. Differences in the types of unpaid care work women and men engage in are also important, as they demand different policy responses. These differences have important implications for measuring the contribution of care work, which in itself is complicated by definitional inconsistencies and limited sources of data. This paper offers a typology of paid and unpaid, market and non-market work activities and how they are counted—or overlooked—in the current System of National Accounts, and the implications of these gaps.

A number of factors shape the provision of care. These include demographic changes, including fertility rates, household composition, and the prevalence of women-headed households; and economic development, including women's labor force participation and control over income and resources.

Measurement and valuation of unpaid care time, and the collection of related data, have slowly evolved in response to pressure from women's groups. While data available on time devoted to unpaid care has increased over the last ten years, a number of methodological problems remain. Despite some limitations, time-use data from a wide cross-section of countries provide strong evidence for three important generalizations regarding gender differences in paid and unpaid work:

- women, especially mothers, devote significantly more time to care work than men do;
- women work longer hours overall than men do; and
- when mothers enter paid employment, they do not reduce their hours of unpaid work commensurately.

While there is growing recognition of the extent and importance of unpaid care, there have been few efforts to assign an economic value to such work. “Satellite accounts” have been used to develop macroeconomic estimates compatible with national income accounting principles, but there has been less attention focused on valuation at the household level.

The undervaluation and poor measurement of unpaid care has contributed to significant gender bias in public policies and a failure to invest in publicly-provided services that can address families’ basic needs. In most developing regions, where government budgets are constrained and informal employment looms large, family members provide the bulk of care services. This lack of public investment in care work ignores the economic opportunity cost of what women might otherwise be contributing to household incomes and macroeconomic growth.

EMERGING EVIDENCE FROM IDRC AND GROW RESEARCH

Research supported through IDRC and the GrOW partnership contributes to filling this gap by shedding light on how the provision of unpaid care affects women’s economic empowerment and overall economic development. Going beyond existing data sources, multidisciplinary teams of researchers from across the global North and South teamed up to carry out innovative field research in specific communities, combining quantitative and qualitative methods. Comparative, experimental, and quasi-experimental analysis of specific policy and program innovations yielded important substantive results and methodological insights. The findings broadly address three central issues: how the level, distribution, and value of unpaid care work can be assessed; whether public policies and community-sponsored services—especially childcare provision—can unleash women’s full economic



potential by reducing their unpaid care burden; and the relationship between the social organization of care provision and women's empowerment.

Cumulative results show that programs designed to increase women's opportunities to earn income are typically hampered by inadequate provision for child care, leading to increased economic stress and longer work days. Public provision of childcare services can alleviate this problem, although the combined effect of social norms and unfamiliar social arrangements can blunt their immediate impact.

This research lends new specificity and immediacy to arguments that developing countries should invest more heavily in social and physical infrastructure to improve the productivity of unpaid work and reduce the burden placed on women as family caregivers.

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Much of the research reviewed here makes the case for changes in public policy to better reflect the demands of unpaid care, and the difficulty of modifying entrenched gender norms. It shows how efforts to economically empower women have limited effect unless accompanied by initiatives that simultaneously reduce their burdens, such as through public care provision.

It also strengthens the case for investment in social infrastructure as a means of improving the productivity of both paid and unpaid work. Broader investments in human capabilities offer a high rate of return in the form of improved physical and mental health, educational outcomes, and a shift toward a higher quality—accompanied by lower quantity—of unpaid work.

Future research can build on the conceptual and methodological innovations offered by this body of IDRC and GrOW-sponsored research in a number of ways. While many of the analyses rely heavily on time-use data as the only metric by which unpaid work can be easily measured, they go beyond national-level surveys to provide granular context on families and communities

through more localized surveys. Such methods are well-suited to assess the effects of local policy initiatives, especially if maintained over a significant period.

This body of research also validates the use of mixed-method approaches, with qualitative results highlighting social norms and subjective experiences. Even where findings are not conclusive, they point to the need to improve survey design to include more attention to supervisory responsibilities, household economies of scale, intra-family income flows, and community-level infrastructure.

Some specific areas for expansion or greater precision include:

- more explicit consideration of demographic factors such as age at marriage, average family size, reproductive rights, separation and desertion, and the percentage of families maintained by women alone to paint a broader picture of family life;
- more attention to intra-family and intergenerational transfers over the life cycle to help put public spending in context;
- closer examination of the demand side of the labor market in analyzing women's employment, given the large role of the informal sector in most developing countries; and
- a more explicitly intersectional approach that addresses multiple non-gender-specific aspects of women's economic well-being, such as average wages, family income, and vulnerability to poverty.

1. INTRODUCTION

Recent research on the care economy and economic development

Women's unpaid care for their families and communities shapes both gender inequality and the larger process of economic development. The recent proliferation of nationally-representative time-use surveys in low-income countries clearly demonstrates the empirical magnitude of unpaid work, its impact on the length of women's workday, and the potential impact of policies to recognize, reduce, and redistribute unpaid care (Benería et al. 2015). Yet policy-relevant research on this topic remains, to date, far less extensive than research on trends in women's educational attainment, labor force participation, and political representation, despite the likelihood that the less visible "care economy" is probably an important driver of these trends.

A large portfolio of projects sponsored by IDRC and the GrOW Initiative in the past five years brings unpaid care provision to the front and center of research on gender and development, and raises important questions about the definition of economic development itself. The results validate concerns regarding the impact of unpaid care demands and provide specific evidence of constraints on women's ability to earn market income. New estimates of the value of women's unpaid work provide additional evidence that strategic investments in physical and social infrastructure could improve household living standards.

This paper puts these results in context and highlights their contributions. It begins with a broad overview of research on the care economy, with attention to key concepts such as the distinction between direct and indirect care and correct measurement of supervisory or "on-call" responsibilities. The next section summarizes the most important new findings of the GrOW and IDRC research and includes a brief discussion of some complementary contemporaneous studies sponsored by other agencies. The final section outlines some possible next steps for advancing the care policy agenda.





Photo: United Nations Photo

2. BACKGROUND

Current understandings on care and economic development

While “care,” has recently become a catch-word in analysis of causes and consequences of the gender division of labor, the term is often used in a variety of ways. Most research on developing countries, including the reports under consideration here, focus on unpaid care work because this absorbs the bulk of women’s labor time—their participation in formal employment remains relatively low. Still, it is important to locate unpaid care work in a broader context of a care economy that encompasses expenditures on children and other dependents; paid care work; and unpaid care of family, friends, and neighbors. A rough map of this conceptual territory helps demonstrate how specific research projects are expanding the larger frontier.

WHAT CONSTITUTES “CARE”?

The word “care” denotes a sense of concern for the well-being of those being “taken care of” that can find expression in a number of different ways. In many societies, women specialize in family care work and men take more responsibility for providing food and market income—a complementary division of labor, but one which leaves women in a weak bargaining position both in the family and the larger society (Folbre 2018). Economic development reconfigures this traditional

division of labor in several ways, increasing overall productivity, but creating new tensions. Women’s increased contributions to market income help boost family living standards, but often make it difficult for them to provide family care without sacrificing their own leisure time. Many men are reluctant to help out and some become less reliable sources of family income support.

Women carry a disproportionate burden of unpaid work, including unpaid care. Most of this work has traditionally been excluded from economic analysis because it lies outside the formal and informal market economy. Figure 1 below identifies various kinds of paid and unpaid care work and how they are counted. The current System of National Accounts (SNA) includes, in principle, measurement and valuation of unpaid work that obtains or produces goods for household consumption, such as produce from a family garden, milk from family-owned cows, or firewood or water collected for family consumption. Yet time devoted to these activities has seldom been accurately measured, and estimates of its value have received little attention.

Figure 1. A typology of work activities and responsibilities and how they are “counted”

SITE	ACCOUNTING STATUS	TYPE OF WORK
<i>Formal market</i>	Typically measured in labor force statistics	Paid employment or self-employment in a legal establishment
<i>Informal market economy</i>	Not always fully captured in labor force statistics	Paid employment or self-employment in a legal, but unofficial or informal enterprise
	Not always fully captured in labor force statistics	Unpaid family worker, contributing to the marketable output of a family farm or enterprise
	Seldom captured in labor force statistics	Paid employment or self-employment in an illegal or underground enterprise
<i>Non-market work</i>	Considered <i>within the production boundary</i> of System of National Accounts but seldom accurately measured or valued except in time-use surveys	Unpaid work producing goods for household consumption (such as food from garden, or gathering firewood or water)
	<i>Outside the production boundary</i> of System of National Accounts but often captured in time-use surveys	Unpaid work providing domestic services such as cooking, cleaning, and laundry (sometimes referred to as “indirect care”) Unpaid work providing face-to-face or hands-on personal care where concern for the wellbeing of the care recipient is likely to affect the quality of services provided (such as directly tending to children or to adults who are sick, disabled, or frail)
	<i>Outside the production boundary</i> and typically ignored or underestimated by time-use surveys	Unpaid work supervising or serving “on-call” for dependent care (This may be considered a “responsibility” rather than an “activity” and can often be provided in conjunction with other forms of unpaid work.)

The System of National Accounts excludes domestic activities such as cooking, cleaning, and more personal care of dependent family members. These services can be disaggregated into three different subcategories as depicted in Figure 2 below (See also non-market work *outside the production boundary* in Figure 1).

Figure 2: Typology of unpaid care work



All these forms of unpaid care work contribute to the maintenance and development of human capabilities, generating important benefits for recipients and society as a whole. While investment in “human capital” is often defined entirely in terms of future market income, investments in human capabilities point to a broader set of benefits that are difficult to measure and not necessarily captured in market transactions: they represent “public goods.”

As mentioned, time spent collecting wood or water or producing goods for household consumption (which should, in principle, include breast milk) falls within the production boundary. As a result, it is not always included in definitions of unpaid care work. However, such work clearly contributes to family provisioning, and is often done while supervising children or others who cannot safely be left alone for long periods of time. It is sometimes included in measures of unpaid work, including some of the specific studies reviewed below (e.g. Chopra and Zambelli 2017).

The distinctions between direct and indirect care work, and between active and supervisory care, are economically significant. Indirect care work is less person-specific and can often be reduced through investments in physical infrastructure (such as centralized water and electricity) and consumer durables (such as improved stoves). In the course of development, market substitutes (such as food prepared by street vendors)

often become available. In contrast, direct care work has person-specific characteristics, and continues to be quite important even with increased reliance on social infrastructure such as child care, education, and health services.

Supervisory care can often be combined with domestic work such as cooking and cleaning, but is typically difficult to combine with paid employment or other income-earning activities. While it is less intense than other forms of care, and may be enjoyable, it imposes significant time constraints. Young children and others unable to care for themselves cannot be left alone for long periods, even when they are sleeping. Paid child- or eldercare services primarily relieve family members of supervisory responsibilities, with less impact on their direct care activities. For instance, when mothers drop children off at a childcare center to engage in paid employment, they still devote significant time to feeding, clothing, bathing, and other activities at the beginning and end of the day.

“ **UNPAID CARE WORK CONTRIBUTES TO THE MAINTENANCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN CAPABILITIES, GENERATING IMPORTANT BENEFITS FOR RECIPIENTS AND SOCIETY AS A WHOLE.** ”

WHAT SHAPES THE PROVISION OF CARE?

Demographic change has somewhat mixed effects on unpaid care needs: fertility decline reduces the demand for direct care of children but can increase supervisory care needs per child. A single young child often requires as much supervision as several young children. As well, older children often provide supervisory care for their younger siblings, a benefit not seen in single-child households. In economic terms, supervisory care is characterized by significant economies of scale.

Elderly family members tend to require far less direct care than children, and they often contribute significantly to the care of grandchildren. However, their needs are highly variable and often unpredictable, sometimes demanding considerable attention. The care of sick or disabled family members can be especially time-consuming in communities with a high incidence of chronic illness such as HIV infection. The promise of care within families represents a form of insurance, providing benefits that are not necessarily revealed by direct expenditures of time and money.

Economic development often leads to higher standards for household consumption, including demand for more complex meals, laundry, and cleaning services. However, both the expansion of paid services and the increased availability of labor-saving devices and access to electricity gradually reduce the time devoted to indirect care.

Time devoted to the direct care of children and other dependents declines more slowly for a number of reasons. Changes in household structure often reduce the number of resident adults (such as daughters-in-law or grandparents) available to provide care. They also reduce economies of scale in supervisory care. Publicly or privately provided childcare and education services are not always well-coordinated with hours of paid employment. As well, economic development often entails a shift toward more intensive parenting—with more time spent talking to, interacting with, and teaching children.

Economic development depends on and encourages investment in human capabilities. Cross-sectional

analysis of the time allocation of parents in the U.S. shows that parental time devoted to child care increases with education and family income, despite increases in the opportunity cost of parental time (Kimmel and Connelly 2007). Time devoted to housework, by contrast, goes down with education and family income. In affluent countries, direct care responsibilities impose far more significant constraints on maternal labor force participation than other forms of care work. Cross-sectional analysis of time-use data from fifteen European countries (including several low-income countries such as Bulgaria) shows that the time that parents with co-resident children devote to child care increases slightly with levels of per capita income (Folbre and Yoon 2008).

Growth in the percentage of families maintained by women alone in many countries suggests that economic development can lead to a decline in male contributions to family care. Few internationally consistent surveys accurately measure parental co-residence, even in affluent countries with extensive statistical infrastructure (Strohschein 2017). Even fewer surveys attempt to measure contributions of fathers who are not living with their children (Greene and Biddlecom 2000). The United States is one of the few countries that estimates parents' (mostly fathers') compliance with legal child support responsibilities: only about 50% pay any child support at all (Stykes et al. 2014).



THE PROMISE OF CARE WITHIN FAMILIES REPRESENTS A FORM OF INSURANCE, PROVIDING BENEFITS THAT ARE NOT NECESSARILY REVEALED BY DIRECT EXPENDITURES OF TIME AND MONEY.

In many developing countries, extreme poverty and forced migration often disrupt families. On the aggregate level, remittances from long-distance migrants are clearly significant. However, the contribution they make to total household income is difficult to measure. In her comparative ethnographic research on the Gambia, the Philippines, and Costa Rica, Sylvia Chant points to a feminization of responsibility and/or obligation, noting that the end result is often “an intensification of the difficulties faced by women in reconciling unpaid reproductive work with economic contributions to household livelihoods” (2014:3).

HOW IS THE DISTRIBUTION OF UNPAID CARE TIME MEASURED?

Efforts to measure and examine the distribution of unpaid care time have a long history, often colored by resistance from economists and statisticians (Folbre 2009; Waring 1988). Partly due to pressure from women's groups, data collection has gradually expanded. In 1985, the Third U.N. World Conference on Women in Nairobi passed a resolution calling for more attention to the nexus between unpaid work and gender inequality. The World Conference of 1995 amplified this point, noting that “[t]he care of children, the sick and the elderly is a responsibility that falls disproportionately on women, owing to lack of equality and the unbalanced distribution of remunerated and unremunerated work between women and men.”¹ Reducing the burden of unpaid work on women is considered an indicator in UN Sustainable Development Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.²



The data available to examine time devoted to unpaid care has increased significantly over the last ten years, along with the proliferation of nationally-representative time-use surveys. A recent review by Jacques Charmes (2018) consolidates descriptive results from 126

national-level surveys carried out in 75 countries (Charmes 2018:13). Unfortunately, many of them do not disaggregate by gender, some sample only one person per household, and many fail to collect household-specific economic information. Furthermore, lack of harmonization limits their comparability. For instance, many surveys use slightly different definitions of specific activities and aggregate them differently.

A number of other methodological problems remain unresolved. Surveys based on stylized questions such as, “How much time did you spend on unpaid work during the previous week?” yield much higher estimates than time diaries that ask respondents to describe their activities in specific time segments during the previous day. Stylized questions often evoke responses that describe overlapping activities, so that reports of activities during a day often add up to far more than 24 hours. They are also susceptible to social desirability bias—respondents may report what they believe interviewers would like to hear.

While time-diary results are generally considered more reliable, they often focus on activities, excluding supervisory or “on-call” responsibilities, leading to significant under-estimates of the temporal constraints of care (Folbre et al. 2005). Because both active and supervisory child care are often conducted in tandem with other activities, small differences in the wording of survey questions can lead to dramatic differences in responses, confounding cross-country comparisons (Folbre and Yoon 2007). These issues highlight the potential contribution of mixed-methods approaches that include qualitative research (one of the significant contributions of the GrOW research portfolio reviewed below).

Despite their limitations, time-use data from a wide cross-section of countries provide strong evidence for three important generalizations regarding gender differences (Budlender 2008; UNRISD 2010; Charmes 2018): 1) women, especially mothers, devote significantly more

¹ See United Nations World Conference Beijing Declaration and Plan of Action, p. 13, available at <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/pdf/BDPfA%20E.pdf>, accessed January 18, 2018.

² United Nations, High Level Thematic Review of SDG #5, available at <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/14383SDG5format-revOD.pdf>, accessed January 18, 2018.

time to care work than men do; 2) women, especially mothers, work longer hours overall than men do; and 3) when mothers enter paid employment they do not reduce their hours of unpaid work commensurately.

“ **WHILE TIME-DIARY RESULTS ARE GENERALLY CONSIDERED MORE RELIABLE, THEY OFTEN FOCUS ON ACTIVITIES, EXCLUDING SUPERVISORY OR “ON-CALL” RESPONSIBILITIES, LEADING TO SIGNIFICANT UNDER-ESTIMATES OF THE TEMPORAL CONSTRAINTS OF CARE.**

Inferences regarding the effect of economic development and fertility decline over time are far less robust. Cross-national comparisons suggest that women’s hours of care work are slightly lower in richer countries, and men’s hours are slightly higher. Partly as a result, differences in the total length of men’s and women’s workdays are lower in rich countries (Burda et al. 2013). These comparisons, however, do not imply longitudinal trends. The widespread assumption that women’s formal labor force participation typically follows a “u-shaped” pattern in the course of economic development—first declining, then increasing—is now viewed with considerable skepticism (Bec 2017). Cultural tradition, sectoral composition, and public policy lead to significant variation in women’s labor force participation trends, highlighting the need for more nuanced case-study approaches.

HOW IS CARE VALUED?

While there is growing recognition of the extent and importance of unpaid care, there is yet little recognition of how it contributes to household consumption and living standards. Economists have been hesitant to assign an economic value to such work, even where market substitutes or wage rates provide a benchmark

estimate of its lower-bound value. Concerns about the possible imprecision of such estimates often overshadow the reality that unpaid care is currently valued at zero—which is clearly a gross undervaluation.

Some efforts have been made to develop macroeconomic estimates compatible with national income accounting principles—so-called “satellite accounts”. However, less attention has been paid to valuation at the household level. For instance, the value of unpaid care is seldom factored into estimates of household income or consumption, or taken into account in poverty measurement (Folbre et al. 2017). Almost all discussions of women’s labor supply define labor entirely in terms of market work, ignoring the opportunity cost of reduced time for family care. This definition underlies many widely publicized estimates of the potential contribution of increased female employment to economic growth, including those publicized by the International Monetary Fund.³

“ **ALMOST ALL DISCUSSIONS OF WOMEN’S LABOR SUPPLY DEFINE LABOR ENTIRELY IN TERMS OF MARKET WORK, IGNORING THE OPPORTUNITY COST OF REDUCED TIME FOR FAMILY CARE.**

Market-centric assumptions treat unpaid care as an activity that both women and men perform only when paid work is unavailable, rather than an essential complement to market income. Market-based measures of household income also ignore the potential impact of improvements in the productivity of unpaid work that could enhance household living standards, improve health and human capabilities, and afford more time for rest and recreation.

In countries with high levels of female employment, policies such as paid family leave, subsidized childcare services, and reduced penalties for part-time work

³ Ian Talley, “Insidious Conspiracy Against Women Costs Economies Up to 30% of GDP, says IMF Chief,” *Wall Street Journal*, February 23, 2015, available at <http://blogs.wsj.com/economics/2015/02/23/insidious-conspiracy-against-women-costs-economies-up-to-30-of-gdp-says-imf-chief/>, accessed March 21, 2013.

can help both women and men balance competing demands. Such policies clearly offer social, demographic, and economic benefits (OECD 2011). In developing countries where women spend a large portion of their time tending to family needs, investments in basic infrastructure such as electricity, gas, and plumbing could significantly improve their overall productivity while increasing their ability to engage in paid employment. The payoff to public investments in such infrastructure is understated when the value of non-market work, including family care of young children, is not explicitly factored in (Agénor and Agénor 2014; Fontana and Elson 2014). Many of the case studies in the GrOW research portfolio reviewed here make such payoffs visible at the local level.

WHAT ATTENTION DOES CARE WORK GET IN PUBLIC POLICIES?

Poor measurement and undervaluation of unpaid care contribute to significant gender bias in public policies. Social spending shows up in government budgets; women's unpaid work does not. As a result, policy makers are tempted to offload social costs or resist their redistribution, just as they are tempted to ignore environmental costs that do not directly enter national income ledgers. Investments in publicly-provided social services are often described as luxuries that poor countries cannot afford, even when they address basic needs that families struggle to meet on their own.

Empirical research shows that subsidized child care has significant positive effects on mothers' employment in Europe—particularly among those with lower family income and less education (Del Boca 2015). Uneven provision of childcare and parental leave in the United States helps explain the relatively slow growth of female labor force participation there in recent years (Blau and Kahn 2015). Investments in childcare provision can also promote local economic development from the demand side through employment of childcare workers (Warner 2006; Warner and Liu 2006). While less evidence is available from developing countries, the level of subsidized child care has been shown to have a positive impact on women's hours of paid employment in Guatemala, Brazil, Mexico, and China (Hallman et

al. 2005; Paes de Barros et al. 2011; Staab and Gerhard 2011; Calderon 2014; Song and Dong 2018).

“ INVESTMENTS IN PUBLICLY-PROVIDED SOCIAL SERVICES ARE OFTEN DESCRIBED AS LUXURIES THAT POOR COUNTRIES CANNOT AFFORD, EVEN WHEN THEY ADDRESS BASIC NEEDS THAT FAMILIES STRUGGLE TO MEET ON THEIR OWN.

Low-income countries typically face tight budget constraints and often face pressure from creditors to adopt austerity measures. Formal labor force participation rates are growing more slowly than expected and the informal sector, where workers generally lack both regulatory protection and social benefits, looms large. In most regions of the world, informal employment comprises more than half of non-agricultural employment, and in South Asia, sub-Saharan Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean, the percentage of women income earners in informal employment exceeds that of men (Vanek et al. 2014).



A recent analysis of time-use data in the Republic of Korea shows that the value of family care provision for children and elderly far exceeds state spending on these age groups (Yoon 2014). Likewise, studies of home-based care for HIV/AIDS in Botswana estimated the value of services per caregiver at about \$5,000 per year, a number that would substantially increase

estimates of total spending on health care if it were included (Mmopelwa et al. 2012). Public spending on social services represents both a complement to and a substitute for family care. As Diane Elson has long emphasized, cuts in public spending often increase burdens on women, redistributing care costs to those who can least afford to pay (Elson 2012).

““ FAMILY CARE SERVICES REPRESENT, IN SOME RESPECTS, AN INFORMAL WELFARE STATE.

Economists sometimes argue that it is inefficient to finance services that women are willing to provide at little or no cost to taxpayers (Rosen 1997). This argument ignores the opportunity cost of women’s time and the potential to increase their productivity as well as the stress and strain unfairly imposed upon them. Public investments in physical and social infrastructure (including health and education) should be conceptualized as inputs into family care provision and the development of human capabilities. Public provision of childcare services, for instance, can reduce the constraints of supervisory care that otherwise keep mothers close to home, while also allowing them to devote more time to active, developmental care when they are at home.

While public child care represents an implicit subsidy for childrearing, it also encourages a shift toward greater expenditures of time and money per child. Paradoxically, fertility decline can increase the demand for paid childcare services because it increases the cost of care per child at home. Mothers lose the benefits of economies of scale in supervisory care and the contributions that older daughters make to such care. A family with six or more children is, effectively, a small-scale childcare center; a family with two children is not.

Childcare services in urban areas can make it easier for mothers and fathers to take their children with them when migrating to areas with greater employment prospects. Current patterns of gender- and age-tilted migration often lead to prolonged geographical separation, undermining paternal engagement with children and leaving mothers, as well as children and the elderly, more vulnerable to desertion.

In some affluent countries like the U.S. and Canada, a growing demand for labor has generated growth in childcare provision by the private sector. High-earning families are willing and able to pay a high market price for such services; unfortunately, low- and middle-income families can be left behind in ways that intensify income inequality. A similar trend could emerge in China, where the developmental state has successfully promoted export-driven economic growth, and a new class of relatively high-earning urban employees has emerged. The cost of purchasing childcare services from the private sector is likely to grow. The rapid fertility decline orchestrated by state policies has constricted future labor supply, and the supply of rural migrants is not inexhaustible.

In most other developing countries, however, the slow growth of wage employment reduces market demand for childcare services. Most owners and managers are men who, for a variety of reasons, often prefer to hire other men; efforts to incentivize them to provide on-site child care can backfire by making female workers more costly. Slow employment growth can intensify competition between women and men for jobs. As a result, men may perceive some economic benefits from keeping women at home. On the other hand, families are even more in need of women’s potential income. Public policies that increase women’s productivity in both unpaid care and paid work can improve living standards and boost economic development. Policy design should therefore be informed by a better understanding of the care economy.



3. EMERGING EVIDENCE FROM IDRC AND GROW RESEARCH

A new wave of research sponsored by IDRC and the GrOW partnership illuminates the impact of unpaid care provision on economic development in general and women's economic empowerment in particular. This wave goes beyond using existing data sources to include innovative field research in specific communities, combining quantitative and qualitative methods. It often includes comparative, experimental, and quasi-experimental analysis of specific policy innovations, yielding both important substantive results and methodological insights.

Despite many overlapping themes, the research findings address three central questions: How can the level, distribution, and value of unpaid care work be assessed? How do public policies and community-sponsored services—especially childcare provision—affect women's unpaid care work? What is the relationship between the social organization of care provision and women's empowerment? The studies offer some specific answers and provide models for more extensive future research.

Research on unpaid care represents a significant shift from a mainstream economic paradigm preoccupied with market income. As a result, it requires new conceptual vocabularies and empirical methodologies. Time-use surveys offer valuable quantitative data, but seldom allow assessment of the causes or the consequences of the patterns that emerge. The studies reviewed here directly address this issue, with cross-national comparisons that highlight the impact of differences in institutional and cultural context. Detailed community studies, meanwhile, zoom in on aspects of the local environment—such as economic infrastructure, household composition, and policy experiments.



CROSS-NATIONAL FINDINGS

International comparisons require both methodological consistency and attention to country- and community-specific social norms.

GrOW-supported research led by the Institute for Development Studies (IDS) examined the effect of gendered social norms to help explain why unpaid care work constrains women's economic activities in a variety of policy environments (Chopra and Zambelli 2017). The study assesses the effect of eight programs and policies with potential impacts on women's economic empowerment in India, Nepal, Rwanda, and Tanzania, relying on mixed-methods approach that includes semi-structured interviews and participatory exercises. The title of its report, "No Time to Rest," conveys its most important message: the effort to simultaneously provide care and contribute to family income in difficult economic circumstances disempowers women and threatens their physical and emotional well-being. The report also explicitly challenges market-centric approaches and emphasizes the positive contribution that unpaid care work makes to economic development.

The empirical strategy (results of which are discussed in more detail in the next section on a country-by-country basis) stipulates consistent methodologies across sixteen different sites, based on snowball samples of female respondents engaged in paid employment in the previous year with at least one child under six, identified through participation in local exercises and suggestions from local partners. Several important descriptive results emerge from the pooled data: childcare tasks are more often shared by men than other household tasks, even though men seldom take sole responsibility for children. The burden of household work per woman is lower, on average, in extended households (though it is unclear how equally it is distributed among women).⁴ Some tasks—notably animal care—are allocated in relatively gender-neutral ways.

This research clearly documents the normative enforcement of the gender division of labor. Almost all women who participated in the study (over 94%) express the opinion that women are better at household tasks than men are, while a smaller percentage (about 68%) express the opinion that women are better at direct care work. About 61% believe that men are better at paid work. The powerful and self-reinforcing effects of such perceptions help explain the lack of any observable difference in sharing of care tasks between women participating in women's economic empowerment projects and other women.⁵

The gender division of labor is also evident—though less pronounced—among girls and boys: some tensions between unpaid work responsibilities and educational attainment are apparent for both. Across the entire sample, men are significantly more likely than women to be engaged in formal or informal wage employment, and women's income earning activities are more likely to take the form of home-based work or informal self-employment. Women typically engage in a patchwork of part-time or seasonal activities, including economic empowerment programs, which are seldom sufficient to offer income security. The high travel time, transactions costs, poor working conditions, and tenuous nature of these arrangements contribute to economic stress.



⁴ Recent research using the Indian Time Use Survey for 1998-99 suggests that the presence of a daughter or daughter-in-law reduces the time that older women devote to care activities, and that these burdens are shared rather unequally by age (Mukherjee 2017).

⁵ Women's economic empowerment (WEE) programs are defined as "programmes aiming for women's economic empowerment, through either provision of jobs—mainly public works—or in cooperatives" [Chopra and Zambelli 2017: 50, n. 25].

The time-use surveys employed in this study define direct care rather narrowly, making household work (defined above as indirect care) loom much larger as a percentage of the work day. In practice, both household work and household-based employment are often combined with supervisory or on-call child care. Survey results show that multi-tasking is extensive, taking place almost 15 hours per day, on average. Such multi-tasking becomes more difficult when women are forced to leave their children at home to garner market income.

The study underscores the constraints that unpaid care responsibilities place on women's income-earning efforts. At the same time, the need to earn income often has adverse effects on family care. More than a third of all women in this study report that they are forced to leave some household tasks undone and sacrifice childcare time. Children often suffer as a result, and women experience physical and emotional exhaustion.

Policy makers may well ask which is more important: expanding opportunities for women to earn income or reducing their care burdens. IDS findings and Oxfam research discussed below suggest that this question is misplaced, because these two goals are inextricably linked. Achieving both requires investment in physical and social infrastructure, and attention to the cultural construction of care obligations.

A recent quantitative study conducted by Oxfam amplifies the insights from the GROW research and helps contextualize them. A cross-national survey collected data in five rural communities in Colombia, Ethiopia, The Philippines, Uganda and Zimbabwe as part of the Women's Economic Empowerment and Care (WE-Care) initiative, funded by the Hewlett Foundation (Karimli et al. 2016). A baseline Household Care Survey launched in 2014 interviewed female and male respondents from 1123 households, using stratified random sampling to select respondents in study districts in each of the five countries.

In 2015, Oxfam assisted local organizations in implementing various interventions that broadly tried to "recognize, reduce, and redistribute" unpaid care work. In November and December of 2015, a second and revised survey was carried out with an equal number of households, including some panel data.⁶ The study zealously aimed to: (1) document levels of unpaid care work and its distribution across household members using time-use data; and (2) identify factors contributing to a lower workload for women, controlling for family structure and household characteristics. The six factors considered were: recognition of care work; women's decision-making abilities; access to time-saving equipment and public services; social norms; and participation in Oxfam's interventions. All these factors are difficult to define, measure, and operationalize.

The descriptive results confirm the general patterns described above. Both the 2014 and 2015 surveys found that women performed a large and disproportionate amount of care work relative to men (as did girls relative to boys); and that women devoted less time to leisure and personal care than men. Efforts to demonstrate causal linkages were less successful. The researchers found no significant correlation between households' socioeconomic characteristics (assets, education, income) and time spent on care work. Nor did they find a consistent association between hours of care work and women's reported well-being.⁷ The factors that were found to lower care loads and promote more equal distribution of care work were access to electricity, progressive social norms, and, in some contexts, participation in the WE-Care programs, especially those likely to influence social norms. While results varied across different statistical model specifications, measures of women's decision-making ability had either an insignificant or a negative effect on care work hours. Access to public provision of water, health services and childcare services was not associated with reduced hours of care, nor was time- or labor-saving equipment.

⁶ Efforts to re-interview the initial respondents were thwarted by a high level of migration in certain sites. As a result, the fraction resurveyed varied widely across countries and panel analysis was conducted only for the Ethiopia and Zimbabwe samples.

⁷ They do not report estimates of correlation with total work hours.

The study acknowledges several methodological limitations. The survey instruments offered very approximate measures of time use, and, in particular, omitted measures of supervisory care (ongoing survey efforts aim to remedy this problem). Causal linkages are intrinsically complex. Levels of many explanatory variables may be the result—rather than the cause—of care work burdens (leading to endogeneity bias). For example, time-saving equipment could be adopted because of an especially heavy care burden, in which case it would not have the effect of reducing work time.

The study treated household and family characteristics as control variables, rather than specifically examining their effects on care work, and relied on linear models that overlook the possibility of household economics of scale. A more general problem is the difficulty of measuring economic outcomes that involve changes in the quality of care services provided. For instance, the study offers no way of assessing the possibility that public policies increase the productivity of care work, improving household living standards rather than reducing women’s work day: women might spend more time preparing better meals or interacting more directly with their children. Despite these limitations, the study breaks new ground in its attention to context-specific indicators and its application of quasi-experimental methods.

COUNTRY-SPECIFIC INSIGHTS

A number of country-specific case studies add texture and detail to this larger picture. The Counting Women’s Work (CWW) country studies, funded by IDRC and the Hewlett Foundation, are research efforts within the broader National Transfer Accounts (NTA) project. Using time-use data to measure total production, consumption, and transfers of unpaid time, researchers estimate the size and value of unpaid work in a range of countries including Ghana, India, Mexico, South Africa, and Vietnam (Donehower 2013).

The India study analyzes data from the time-use survey conducted by the Indian National Sample Survey Organization in 1998-99, which covered 18,000 households, where all members over age six filled out a time diary (Ladusingh 2017). It helps explain why

female employment in India has declined even as fertility rates have fallen: unpaid work makes significant contributions to household living standards.

“**INCORPORATING TIME SPENT ON HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASES ESTIMATES OF TRANSFERS TO CHILDREN AND REVEALS WOMEN’S FULL CONTRIBUTIONS TO HOUSEHOLD CONSUMPTION.**”

The data show a clear pattern of gender specialization and inequality in time use, consistent with other analyses of the Indian Time Use Survey (Mukherjee 2017). This study adds depth to previous research by imputing the market value of women’s non-market work and redefining the components of income and consumption over the life cycle to include non-market care work. Incorporating time spent on household production significantly increases estimates of transfers to children and reveals women’s full contributions to household consumption.

As in India, valuation of non-market work in Vietnam clarifies women’s contribution to household income over the life cycle. While women in Vietnam work longer total hours than men, and girls devote less time to education than boys, the more equitable distribution of these responsibilities seems to contribute to less gender disparity in workplace and education outcomes.

A more regionally-focused study within the GrOW portfolio confirms the persistence of a “double burden” upon women, finding that the care of young children, in particular, limits mothers’ employment choices and often forces them into the informal sector. Part of the four-country IDS project, this study focuses on low-income households in the Indian states of Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh and is based on more recent surveys than the national survey (Sengupta and Sacheva 2017).

Specific evidence of significant unpaid care constraints also emerges from research in other developing countries in Asia and Africa, albeit with distinctive regional variations. The gender division of labor is far less pronounced in some countries than in others. For instance, a study in the Counting Women’s Work series



analyzes women’s work in Vietnam based on a small-scale time-use survey carried out in 2014-15 (Huong et al. 2017). A total of 585 respondents above age 10 were asked to account for 24 hours of activity in 15-minute intervals. Analysis shows that women devoted about 34% of their total work time to market production, compared to 49% for men—a much lower difference than in India and many other countries.

The GrOW program sponsored a parallel study of four sites in Nepal, including analysis of two WEE programs: Oxfam’s Enterprise Development Programme and the state-sponsored Karnali Employment Programme (Ghosh et al. 2017). The findings from Nepal, which are part of the multi-country study led by IDS in partnership with the Institute of Social Studies Trust (ISST), testify to the physical and mental stress of unpaid care burdens and the constraints imposed on women’s income-earning capabilities. They also highlight how very high rates of male out-migration may contribute to marital mistrust, leading, in turn, to very strong gendered sanctions against wives’ mobility. Around 200 women who both participated in paid employment and had at least one child under six were randomly selected. The majority (120 of 200) were participants in a WEE program, and a subset was selected for more in-depth semi-structured interviews.

The extension of this study in Tanzania demonstrates the impact of gendered norms that hold women responsible for tasks that are particularly arduous and place them at risk of sexual violence. It also emphasizes the knock-on effects of inadequate public infrastructure, and the

scarcity of decent opportunities for earning income. Women report that they engage in paid work because of inadequate family income, and interviews with all members of the community highlight a huge unmet demand for better-paying jobs.

“ [RESEARCH IN TANZANIA] EMPHASIZES THE KNOCK-ON EFFECTS OF INADEQUATE PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE, AND THE SCARCITY OF DECENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR EARNING INCOME.

The study uses a mixed-methods approach based on a survey of 200 women in the districts of Lushoto and Korogwe, supplemented by detailed case studies of 32 households (Zambelli et al. 2017). The results show that women’s unpaid care work burden is mediated by family structure and support. Women stretch their day as much as possible to accomplish both paid and unpaid care tasks.

Across all four countries included in the IDS-led research, the average number of hours that women devote to leisure and personal care is significantly low, particularly when compared to men. Here again, family size and composition mediate care burdens, as do secure rights to land and housing and the quality of paid jobs. Overall, women report feeling overworked, tired, and worried about their children. Results vary little across the different sites.

POLICIES AND PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT CHILD CARE AND WOMEN’S EMPLOYMENT

Policy precedents set by now-affluent countries are not well suited to current trajectories of development in the Global South. The slow growth of formal employment and the large size of the informal sector pose specific challenges. A recent report sponsored by Women in Informal Employment Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO) titled “Our children do not get the attention they deserve” asks how women working in the informal economy negotiate child care (Alfers 2016). Its findings draw from interviews and focus groups with 159 female informal workers (90% with a child under six) in six WIEGO-associated member-based organizations across five different countries. The study was conducted

between October and December 2015 in predominantly urban settings.

Like the GrOW-supported IDS research summarized above, this study emphasizes feedback loops that reinforce low earnings and long total work days: Women need flexible jobs in order to provide family care, but these jobs tend to be insecure and poorly paid. Mothers constantly worry about possible tradeoffs between additional income and quality child care. They explain the difficulties of paying for organized child care (particularly in South Africa, where private paid services predominate), synchronizing schedules (center-based hours seldom completely coincide with their working hours), and transporting children to and from centers. They also worry about the quality of care provided.

Women make use of a wide range of childcare centers (public, non-profit, private/informal, early education centers attached to schools) and their responses clearly indicate that the type and quality of care matter as much as the quantity. The preponderance of informal sector employment highlights the limitations of employer-provided childcare policies. The WIEGO report recommends establishing good quality, affordable public childcare centers that meet the needs of informal and formal sector workers. Quality care should include nutritional, educational, and health components, convenient locations, opportunities for parental and community-based participation, and decent working conditions for the care workers that it employs.

While this might seem like an unrealistic wish list, additional research by WIEGO singles out several promising public childcare models (Moussié 2016). In India, with financial support from the state, the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) has established childcare cooperatives that enroll children under six at a nominal cost, providing both nutritious meals and educational activities. In Belo Horizonte, Brazil, the municipality set up a daycare center in response to the demands of the local waste-pickers cooperative.

Several national childcare systems in Latin America also stand out. In Chile, for example, the government-

supported Crece Contigo program offers daycare centers for children between one and three years of age, and home-based services for those under one. In Mexico, the federal government subsidizes up to 90% of the cost of day care for children eligible through the Estancias program. Among women benefiting from the program, 18% more are now employed, working on average six additional hours each week. Estancias also provided training and employment in child care for more than 40,000 women.⁸ Separate research offers evidence that the Mexican program has improved child outcomes, while increasing women's participation in paid employment (Calderon 2014, Pérez-Escamilla 2017).

“ CHILD CARE PROVISION NEED NOT BE BASED ON A SINGLE MODEL: EMPLOYER-LED INITIATIVES CAN BOTH SUPPLEMENT AND INSPIRE PUBLIC PROVISION.

Childcare provision need not be based on a single model: employer-led initiatives can both supplement and inspire public provision. A recent report published by the World Bank builds the business case for firm-level provision (Niethammer et al. 2017). In-depth case studies of ten companies operating in both developed and developing economies, and supplemental case studies of fourteen other companies, demonstrate benefits such as improved recruitment and retention and greater employee productivity through reduced absences and greater work commitment. They also reveal more diffuse benefits, such as signaling a commitment to responsible business practices, higher workforce diversity, enhanced community and employee relations, and better compliance with any existing legal regulations.

Possible employer-led supports range from the most resource-intensive (like workplace creches) to the least (information and referral services), allowing businesses to tailor their strategies to their own needs and their employees' preferences. One major benefit of such policies—the enhanced productivity of the future workforce—represents a public good, providing a

⁸ For a more detailed comparison of the Chilean and Mexican programs, see Staab and Gerhard 2011.

rationale for fiscal incentives, and public regulation and enforcement of care standards. On the other hand, the characteristics of the relatively large and successful firms studied suggest that their employees are not very representative of the larger female workforce. Inequality in the provision of firm-based childcare services can reduce the strength of political coalitions aiming to provide more universal public provision.

The distinction between public and employer-based provision of child care, however, is somewhat blurred by the growing importance of public-private partnerships and aid-supported social enterprise. For instance, Oxfam's Enterprise Development Programme (EDP), launched in 2011, is a livelihoods program aiming to improve opportunities for small rural enterprises, focusing particularly on women. A recent GrOW-sponsored study of one specific initiative in the Surkhet district of Nepal collected quantitative and qualitative data from a sample of 100 women engaged in paid work with at least one child under six years of age (Ghosh et al. 2017b). While the EDP does not explicitly focus on care, staff are acutely aware of care burdens and time poverty, partly as a result of their participatory learning programs. This awareness has prompted investments in time-saving technology such as seed-sorting machines, a biogas facility, and seed collection centers (to reduce the time spent in manually carrying seeds to the market).

The study commends these initiatives and urges the EDP to conduct "rapid care analyses" for all their enterprises. The study also recognizes that improving public infrastructure (roads, irrigation, childcare centers, and health services) is necessary to address care burdens in this context; while this is beyond Oxfam-EDP's scope, it must engage with the government and other NGOs to improve public provisioning of such services.

GrOW- and IDRC-funded research in Nepal, India, Kenya, Rwanda, and China provides additional evidence of the need for employers, non-governmental organizations, and government initiatives to address care constraints. The following studies assess specific policies and programs aimed at increasing women's employment, some with child care and others not. They suggest that many efforts to provide child care in public employment

programs look far better on paper than in practice, and small-scale, temporary or "experimental" programs often have limited impact.

Nepal

The Karnali Employment Programme (KEP) is a 35-day work guarantee aimed at low-income and female-headed households that mandates equal wages for men and women. GrOW research jointly carried out by IDS and ISST examines the ability of female participants to balance paid and unpaid care work. It analyzes quantitative and qualitative data from a sample of 100 women engaged in paid work with at least one child under six years of age in Nepal's Chadannath municipality and Depalgaon in Jumla district (Ghosh, et al. 2017a). The constraints working mothers face are immediately apparent. Women with children under one year of age are excluded from the program, and those with small children over this age are either discouraged from participating or forced to bring children with them to work. On the other hand, a pilot that incorporated creche facilities was unsuccessful because this arrangement was simply too unfamiliar: most of the small children refused to part with their mothers. Children, as well as adults, need time to adapt to new circumstances and, perhaps, the reassurance that comes from wider participation.

Women participants report that many work sites are more than a one-hour walk from their homes, despite a rule to the contrary. The manual labor required is often physically exhausting. Researchers recommend



a number of changes: provision of onsite childcare facilities, along with safety gear and basic amenities such as drinking water and toilets, and sufficient monitoring to ensure strict adherence to the one-hour distance limit. The program could better achieve such goals if it employed staff to focus on the care-responsiveness of working conditions, required a minimum percentage of female participation, and encouraged women to play a larger role in its decision-making bodies, such as Ward Citizens' Forums.

India

Another component of IDS and ISST research on paid and unpaid care work focuses on one of the most important components of India's social protection policy, the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) (Zaidi and Chigateri 2017). It offers a far less favorable assessment than previous research which focused primarily on the program's positive impact on female labor force participation rates.⁹

The public works program entitles rural households to 100 days of waged employment, with 33% reserved for women, equal wages for men and women, and the provision of creches at worksites. Such provisions are usually seen as a means of empowering women, but a survey of 100 women and in-depth interviews with a subsample of 16 in two districts of Rajasthan concludes that MGNREGA has had a detrimental impact on the physical and mental well-being of women participants (Zaidi and Chigateri 2017). The unskilled hard labor leads to reports of pain and fatigue. Childcare facilities at work sites are either poor quality or non-existent, discouraging the participation of mothers of young children. Those who participate tend to earn lower wages because they are forced to come late or leave early to attend to care tasks. No allowances such as lighter work assignments are made for pregnant or breastfeeding women.

Despite these limitations, most women surveyed consider MGNREGA employment vital, especially as an alternative to private employment in the agricultural lean season. Inequalities in daily wages between

men and women laborers in private agricultural work are widespread and MGNREGA's equal pay provision has improved paid work opportunities for women (Dasgupta and Sudershan 2011). But the program could and should be more responsive to their care burdens. Public investment in infrastructure is also needed to reduce such burdens, such as by improving rural access to water and fuel.



Kenya

GrOW-sponsored research in an informal settlement of Nairobi shows that childcare centers could improve women's income-earning opportunities, with broader implications for other areas of sub-Saharan Africa (Clark et al. 2017a; Clark et al. 2017b). The project—jointly carried out by the University of McGill and the African Population Health Research Centre (APHRC)—used a randomized study design to assess the impact of a daycare voucher program on women's economic empowerment in the Korogocho informal settlement of Nairobi. Women aged 15-49 with children between one and three years of age were identified using census data from the most recent enumeration of the Nairobi Urban Health and Demographic Surveillance System. Of the 1,928 women so identified, 1,222 were interviewed during the baseline survey in 2015 (the remainder had either moved out of the area or were found to have no children in the relevant range). Most were

⁹ See Dreze and Oldiges (2009), Khera and Nayak (2009), and Dasgupta and Sudershan (2011).

engaged in poorly-paid work of low quality (vending, cleaning, washing clothes, or doing domestic work) and a substantial number were unemployed. Relatively few women were able to rely on kin networks for child care, due to geographical separation (Clark et al. 2017a). Fathers played a very limited role in caregiving, and sibling care was perceived to be detrimental both in terms of the quality of care provided, and the impact on the education of the older sibling.

Many mothers engaged in income-earning activities that precluded bringing their children along. As a result, about a third paid for daycare center services, despite the high price, which averaged about 17% of the women's monthly wages. Many of them saw center services as advantageous to their children's development: this perception was validated by research findings that children attending day care were less likely than others to suffer from cognitive delay, and their siblings were more likely to be enrolled in school. Though these findings do not establish an unambiguous causal relationship, they support the study's conclusion that "formal center-based child care plays a central role in allowing mothers to balance work and child care obligations" (2017a: 16).

MOTHERS ALREADY EARNING INCOME ENJOYED AN INCREASE IN THEIR NET LABOR EARNINGS THAT ALLOWED THEM TO REDUCE THEIR HOURS OF EMPLOYMENT.

The findings from the randomized study document increases in mothers' opportunities to earn income (Clark et al. 2017b). Women who received 12 monthly vouchers for the period from January to December 2016 were 17% more likely to be employed than those who were not given the vouchers. The effect was even higher among women who actually used the childcare services. In addition to being more likely to be employed, mothers who worked for pay were able to earn the same amount of income despite working about five fewer hours per week. These findings suggest that access to affordable child care allows mothers to work more efficiently with fewer distractions. Combined with the descriptive

results on child outcomes outlined in the first paper, these findings clearly show that affordable day care could be the "key to unlocking women's earning power in Africa."¹⁰



Rwanda

GrOW-supported research conducted by IDS in partnership with BRAC REU in Rwanda demonstrates that improvements in women's income and position in the household do not necessarily help them reduce the demands of unpaid care, and therefore lead to increased stress and time pressure. ActionAid Rwanda (AAR)'s Food Security and Economic Empowerment project in Muko targets vulnerable smallholder farmers, including 1200 women and 300 men: it aims to improve their food and economic security through increased agricultural profitability (Kennedy and Roelen 2017). Initiatives include farmer cooperatives, community seed banks, a maize processing plant and store rooms, and agricultural training sessions.

Gender norms inhibit a more equal distribution of care work between women and men, and children are disadvantaged by the resulting lack of parenting time and pressure to take on unpaid work themselves. Researchers recommend that AAR could: (1) build infrastructure directly or in concert with the state to reduce care loads, (2) expand the project's literacy

¹⁰ Blog post at <https://www.idrc.ca/en/stories/could-affordable-daycare-be-key-unlocking-womens-earning-power-africa>

development centers, where women leave their children while they work; and (3) include care-sensitive and gender-disaggregated indicators in monitoring and evaluation, and train staff to use them.

The research also finds that Rwanda's Vision 2020 Umurenge Programme (VUP), a national social protection scheme that aims to eradicate extreme poverty, appears to intensify rather than mitigate women's total work burdens. The program combines public works, credit provisioning, and unconditional cash transfers for households not eligible for public works (Murphy-McGreevey et al. 2017). The IDS-BRAC REU study focuses on the public works aspect, asking whether it provides a "double boon" to women participants. Sixty-two women in Simbi and Gishamvu regions were interviewed, with eighteen women in Mbazi (where VUP was not implemented) acting as the control group.

FEMALE-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS COULD BE PRIORITIZED FOR DIRECT CASH TRANSFERS INSTEAD OF PUBLIC WORKS.

Women greatly value the income provided by the project, and describe increased expenditures on food, education, and health that improved their families' well-being. However, they also describe longer work days that undermine their health and general wellbeing. As with the AAR project in Muko, research finds that gender norms limit the redistribution of care work. Women are therefore exhausted by the arduous nature of the VUP work, in combination with their relentless burden of care. The report suggests several possible remedies: female-headed households could be prioritized for direct cash transfers instead of public works; childcare facilities could be added to worksites; improving access to water and fuel should be prioritized; pay could be regularized and increased; and data for monitoring and evaluation should be gender- and care-disaggregated.

China

The Chinese government's distinctive development strategies have yielded relatively high rates of economic growth since 1978. Systems of collective and state-provided care provisioning that existed in the Mao era were dismantled, while rural-to-urban migration increased dramatically as employment shifted from agriculture to industry. Fertility rates declined rapidly, tilting the age structure of the population toward the elderly. Both educational attainment and health outcomes improved (Li et al. 2017). Data available from several national surveys make it possible to trace some impacts of these changes at the household level.

IDRC-supported analysis of this data, by the University of Winnipeg and Peking University, argues persuasively that measured growth in Chinese market output has imposed new stresses on the family care economy and has disadvantaged women. It observes that the migration of working-age women to urban areas has intensified demands on grandparents (especially grandmothers) to provide care for children left behind (Tran et al. 2017). According to the 2010 census, 61 million children—40% of all rural children—were left behind as a result of massive labor migration to be cared for either by grandparents or the remaining parent. The proportion of rural preschool-age children in grandparents' full custody rose sharply from 3% to 27% between 1991 and 2011. Both family income and child outcomes tend to be significantly lower in rural than in urban areas.¹¹

IDRC-SUPPORTED ANALYSIS OF THIS DATA, BY THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG AND PEKING UNIVERSITY, ARGUES PERSUASIVELY THAT MEASURED GROWTH IN CHINESE MARKET OUTPUT HAS IMPOSED NEW STRESSES ON THE FAMILY CARE ECONOMY AND HAS DISADVANTAGED WOMEN.

¹¹ Adverse effects of migration on children left behind in rural areas have also been observed in Vietnam (Nguyen 2016).

Public service provision has proved inadequate. While enrollment in daycare programs has increased somewhat in urban areas, these services remain unaffordable for low-income families. Private and informal sector employees seldom have access to maternity leave. The newly-mandated “two-child policy” may exacerbate the resulting difficulties. Stresses are also apparent at the other end of the life cycle. Women are less likely to be employed in public-sector or urban firms that provide pensions. Their responsibility for care work reduces their lifetime employment and earnings and limits their occupational choices. Many of the elderly remain in rural areas, geographically separated from their adult children. Elderly women in particular face an increased risk of poverty and neglect.

Other findings from the same research highlight how specific policy changes have reinforced women’s responsibility for unpaid care (Dong and Zhao 2017). The economic reforms of the post-Mao period dismantled the system of employer- or state-provided child care, shifting responsibility back onto families and invoking Confucian cultural traditions. Reduced revenue flows to local governments led to steep declines in child care and pre-school programs. Growth in personal income, combined with fertility decline, eased these pressures for some families more than others. Newly instituted maternity leaves and maternity benefits were not offered to state employees on short-term contracts or to informal workers or private employees. As of 2012, only a third of urban women were estimated to be eligible for paid leaves, with an obvious negative impact on both their career opportunities and their ability to breastfeed infants. Families have limited ability to compensate for the lack of public care provision for children and the elderly. Research found that women constitute 68% of the elderly infirm who do not receive appropriate care.

Public policies have contributed to increased gender gaps in both employment and earnings. Care responsibilities hinder the ability of rural women, in particular, to access better-paid off-farm employment. Between 1990 and 2010, the gender employment gap rose from about 14% to about 20% while the earnings gap widened in both rural and urban areas despite an upward trend in average wages of both men and women.

This change occurred despite a significant improvement in female educational attainment over the period.

“ IN CHINA, BETWEEN 1990 AND 2010, THE GENDER EMPLOYMENT GAP ROSE FROM ABOUT 14% TO ABOUT 20% WHILE THE EARNINGS GAP WIDENED IN BOTH RURAL AND URBAN AREAS.

Time-use data indicate that women work longer hours than men (the total work of urban women exceeds that of their male counterparts by as much as 8.7 hours per week). As a consequence, they are more likely to suffer from time poverty and have poorer mental health. Elderly women have become more economically vulnerable. The



post-reform pension system is contributory, so pensions depend on labor market status: women typically have fewer years of employment and lower pre-retirement salaries than men. As a result, women over 60 receive only half the average pension that men do.

In sum, the research finds that economic policy reforms in China have both increased care deficits for disadvantaged families and constricted women's economic opportunities. Researchers call for explicit integration of care needs and gender equality into a new Chinese development agenda that would increase public, private, and community-level care provision; improve workplace regulation; and promote more equitable sharing of care duties within families.

WOMEN'S WELL-BEING AND EMPOWERMENT

Economic development is not an end in itself but a means to empowerment and wellbeing. It is easier to endorse this general principle, however, than to agree on how it should be operationalized. The UN Development Program first offered its Human Development Index as a policy compass superior to Gross Domestic Product in 1990 (Stanton 2007). Since then, many other indices have been proposed. Their very proliferation suggests the need for a dashboard approach, utilizing different indices for different purposes.

Self-reported measures of subjective happiness have long been recognized as useful but limited by the impact of both cultural norms and personal adaptation to difficult circumstances (Nussbaum 2001). Individuals who experience extreme deprivation and exploitation, but perceive no possible alternative to their circumstances, may report themselves as relatively happy. At the other extreme, those in extremely comfortable economic circumstances who feel unfairly excluded from even greater levels of comfort may express serious dissatisfaction with their lives. More specific psychological constructs may be useful, especially when linked to specific sources of stress.

Measures of human capabilities offer an alternative to purely subjective measures, but it is easier to quantify individual attainments of education and health than

to categorize the social environments in which such attainments may or may not deliver expanded choices (Cornwall and Rivas 2015). Measures that assess only women's participation in traditionally male activities should always be accompanied by measures that assess men's participation in and support for family care (Folbre 2006).

“ MEASURES THAT ASSESS ONLY WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN TRADITIONALLY MALE ACTIVITIES SHOULD ALWAYS BE ACCOMPANIED BY MEASURES THAT ASSESS MEN'S PARTICIPATION IN AND SUPPORT FOR FAMILY.

The GrOW research program has emphasized the importance of women's empowerment from the outset (Khan 2016; De Haan 2017). The research embeds measures of women's economic empowerment and how these are shaped by women's double roles as economic providers and care givers. The study in Nairobi assesses women's empowerment as it relates to increased participation in the labour market, changes in the number of hours worked, and changes in their earning potential. Research in India carried out by researchers from McGill University and the Chennai-based Institute for Financial Management and Research links a range of indicators of empowerment to care work. Focusing on the measurement of women's agency in rural areas, Richardson (2017) brings household decision-making into the picture and notes that it may be more important than control over income in communities where relatively few women engage in paid employment. Richardson et al. (2017) persuasively show how long work hours—including unpaid work—also contribute to mental distress in rural India. Increased bargaining power of women in the family contributes to their larger political and cultural empowerment, and vice versa. However empowerment is defined, women's commitment to unpaid care must be considered in terms of choices available, resources provided, and responsibilities shared.



Photo: IDRC/Tom Pilston

4. IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Much of the research reviewed here makes its own case for changes in public policy, which must be more attentive to the demands of unpaid care, and the difficulty of modifying entrenched gender norms. New income-earning opportunities will have little empowering effect on women unless accompanied by explicit, large-scale, and long-lasting efforts to reduce their burdens through public care provision. This problem is rendered particularly urgent by the specific character of economic development in many areas of the Global South—continued reliance on subsistence production in rural areas and the prominent role of the informal sector in urban employment.

“ **NEW INCOME-EARNING OPPORTUNITIES WILL HAVE LITTLE EMPOWERING EFFECT ON WOMEN UNLESS ACCOMPANIED BY EXPLICIT, LARGE-SCALE, AND LONG-LASTING EFFORTS TO REDUCE THEIR BURDENS THROUGH PUBLIC CARE PROVISION.** ”

This research also strengthens the case for investment in social infrastructure as a means of promoting economic development as it improves the productivity of both paid and unpaid work. Conventional economic analysis focuses on the ways in which investments in human capital can increase future wages. Broader investments in human capabilities also offer a high rate of return

in the form of improved physical and mental health, educational outcomes, and a shift toward a higher quality—accompanied by lower quantity—of unpaid work.

The goal of establishing a better balance between paid and unpaid work entails reducing the length of women’s work days and enabling them to shift time away from physically demanding drudgery toward more varied and rewarding activities—both paid and unpaid. Such changes would benefit children, by allowing mothers to devote more time and effort to developmental care. They also represent a precondition for women’s increased participation in the public sphere (Ferant et al. 2014).

IDRC and GrOW-sponsored research offers important conceptual and methodological innovations that should be widened and deepened in future research. It is hardly surprising that many of the analyses rely heavily on time-use data, since time is the only metric by which unpaid work can be easily measured. But unlike many national-level surveys, the more localized surveys described here are explicitly contextualized by attention to family and community-level characteristics. As a result, they are much better designed to assess the effects of local policy initiatives, especially if these are maintained for a significant period of time.



Photo: Georgie Paruwels

This body of research also vindicates an emphasis on mixed-method approaches. The qualitative results, analyzed by field-based researchers who immersed themselves in local communities, call attention to the importance of social norms and subjective experiences. Even where findings are not conclusive, they point to the need to improve survey design to include more attention to supervisory responsibilities, household economies of scale, intra-family income flows, and community-level infrastructure. National statistical agencies should take heed: most conventional household and time-use surveys (including those conducted by affluent countries) fail to provide the information necessary to assess true living standards.

Attention to the value of unpaid care and intra-family transfers over the life cycle calls into question the very principles of the System of National Accounts. Increased participation in paid employment provides few genuine gains if it is invisibly subsidized and effectively financed by reductions in unpaid care or increases in overall levels of work. Unpaid care is a particularly important input into the development and maintenance of human capabilities, and can also affect the fiscal sustainability of public pensions and health care for the elderly.

Precisely because the research reviewed here offers such new insights into the level and distribution of unpaid work, its limitations also deserve attention.

A broader picture of the family economy would include more explicit consideration of demographic factors such as age at marriage, average family size, reproductive rights, separation and desertion, and the percentage of families maintained by women alone. Both the temporal constraints and the nutritional benefits of breastfeeding infants should be taken into consideration. We also need to better understand how financial resources are shared within families, and the effects this has on care provision. While both direct and indirect care of family members are unpaid, most women caregivers enjoy at least some financial assistance or support from men in their families—especially the fathers of their children. Specific patterns of income pooling and expenditure allocation remains unclear, though they clearly vary

across countries and cultural contexts. As the National Transfer Accounts project points out, more attention to intra-family and intergenerational transfers over the life cycle could help put public spending in context.

With the exception of the research in China, most analysis of women's employment in the studies reviewed here emphasizes the supply side of the labor market. This makes sense for public employment schemes, such as in the case studies in India and Nepal. Yet the very large role of the informal sector in most developing countries, as emphasized above, points to significant shortfalls on the demand side of the labor market. These shortfalls could increase the relative importance of technological change and increased labor productivity in the production of both goods and services for own consumption. Technological change could also increase the potential for more decentralized development strategies. The very meaning of "employment" may need to be redefined.

While it is important to consider women's position relative to men, empowerment is also shaped or limited by class, caste, race, and citizenship. An explicitly intersectional approach could address aspects of women's economic well-being that are not gender-specific, such as average wages, family income, and vulnerability to poverty. Closer attention to inequalities among women could help explain the difficulties of forging purely gender-based political coalitions. A broader conceptualization of empowerment could help allay fears that women's gains come entirely at men's expense.

“ **WHILE IT IS IMPORTANT TO CONSIDER WOMEN'S POSITION RELATIVE TO MEN, EMPOWERMENT IS ALSO SHAPED OR LIMITED BY CLASS, CASTE, RACE, AND CITIZENSHIP.** ”

Bringing care to the front and center of the development discourse belies the notion that economies are driven entirely by the pursuit of individual self-interest. Ideals of shared family responsibility can strengthen solidarity on the national and international level. The historical record reveals the potential for a virtuous

circle in which economic, demographic, political, and cultural change combine to expand human rights and improve human capabilities. Women and men need to work together to set this circle into motion.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Agénor, Pierre-Richard, and Madina Agénor. 2014. "Infrastructure, Women's Time Allocation, and Economic Development." *Journal of Economics* 113, 1-30.
- Alfers, Laura. 2016. "Our Children Do Not Get the Attention They Deserve': A Synthesis of Research Findings on Women Informal Workers and Child Care from Six Membership-based Organizations." Research report, Cambridge MA: WIEGO.
- Benería, Lourdes, Günseli Berik and Maria Floro. 2015. *Gender, Development and Globalization*, 2nd Edition. New York: Routledge.
- Blau, Francine D. and Lawrence M. Kahn. 2017. "The Gender Wage Gap: Extent, Trends, and Sources." *Journal of Economic Literature* 55:3, 789-865.
- Budlender, Debbie, ed. 2010. *Time Use Studies and Unpaid Care Work*. New York: Routledge.
- Burda, Michael, Daniel S. Hamermesh, and Philippe Weil. 2013. "Total Work and Gender: Facts and Possible Explanations." *Journal of Population Economics* 26, 239-261.
- Calderón, Gabriela. 2014. "The Effects of Child Care Provision in Mexico." Working Paper, Banco de México, No. 2014-07. Available at <https://www.econstor.eu/handle/10419/100113>, accessed June 6, 2018
- Chant, Sylvia. 2014. "Exploring the 'Feminisation of Poverty' in Relation to Women's Work and Home-Based Enterprise in Slums of the Global South." *International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship* 6:3, 296-316.
- Charmes, Jacques. Forthcoming. "Unpaid Care Work and the Labour Market. An Analysis of Time Use Data Based on the Latest World Compilation of Time-use Surveys." Report prepared for the International Labour Organization, Gender, Equality and Diversity Branch.
- Clark, Shelley, Midanna De Almada, Caroline Kabiru, Stella Muthuri, and Milka Wanjohi. 2017a. "Balancing Paid Work and Child Care in a Slum of Nairobi, Kenya: The Case for Center-based Child Care." Unpublished manuscript.
- Clark, Shelley, Sonia Laszlo, Caroline Kabiru, and Stella Muthuri. 2017b. "Can Subsidized Early Child Care Promote Women's Employment? Evidence from a Slum Settlement in Africa." Research contribution paper, GrOW Working Paper Series, GWP-2017-05. Available at <http://grow.research.mcgill.ca/pubs/gwp-05-2017.pdf>, accessed February 7, 2017.
- Chopra, Deepta and Alejandra Vargas. 2017. "Unpaid Care and Women's Empowerment: Lessons from Research and Practice." GrOW policy brief. Ottawa: International Development Research Centre. Available at <https://idl-bnc-idrc.dspacedirect.org/bitstream/handle/10625/56369/IDL-56369.pdf?sequence=2>
- Chopra, Deepta and Elena Zambelli. 2017. "No Time to Rest: Women's Lived Experiences of Balancing Paid Work and Unpaid Care Work." Global synthesis report for women's economic empowerment policy and programming. Brighton: Institute of Development Studies.
- Cornwall, Andrea and Althea-Maria Rivas. 2015. "From 'Gender Equality' and 'Women's Empowerment' to Global Justice: Reclaiming a Transformative Agenda for Gender and Development." *Third World Quarterly* 2:36, 396-415.
- Dasgupta, Sukti and Ratna M. Sudershan. 2011. "Issues in Labour Market Inequality and Women's Participation in India's National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme." ILO working paper. Geneva: International Labor Office. Available at http://www.ilo.org/integration/resources/papers/WCMS_153042/lang--en/index.htm, accessed February 7, 2018.
- De Haan, Arjan. 2017 "The Win-Win Case for Women's Empowerment and Growth: A Review of the Literature." Concept paper, GrOW Working Paper Series GWP-2017-03. Available at <http://grow.research.mcgill.ca/publications/working-papers/gwp-2017-03.pdf>, accessed February 7, 2018.
- Del Boca, Daniela. 2015. "The Impact of Child Care Costs and Availability on Mother's Labor Supply." Discussion paper No. 15, University of Turin and Collegio Carlo Alberto. Available at <http://improve-research.eu/?wpdmact=process&did=NzEuaG90bGluaw>, accessed February 7, 2018.

- Donehower, Gretchen. 2013. "Incorporating Time and Gender into NTA: National Time Transfer Accounts Methodology." Available at <https://www.ntaccounts.org/doc/repository/Incorporating%20Gender%20and%20Time%20Use%20into%20NTA,%20Version%203.docx>, accessed February 7, 2018.
- Dong, Xiao-yuan and Yaohui Zhao. 2017. "Care Economy, Gender and Inclusive Growth in Post-Reform China: How Does Unpaid Care Work Affect Women's Economic Opportunities and Gender Equality?" Research contribution paper, GrOW Working Paper Series GWP-2017-06. Montreal: Institute for the Study of International Development, McGill University. Available at <http://grow.research.mcgill.ca/publications/working-papers/gwp-2017-06.pdf>, accessed February 7, 2018.
- Dreze, Jean and Christian Oldiges. 2009. "Work in Progress." *Frontline* 26: 4. Available at <http://www.frontline.in/static/html/fl2604/stories/20090227260410100.htm>, accessed February 7, 2018.
- Elson, Diane. 1999. "Gender Budget Initiatives." Background paper. London: Commonwealth Secretariat.
- Elson, Diane. 2012. "Social Reproduction in the Global Crisis" in P. Utting, S. Razavi and R. Varghese Buchholz, eds., *The Global Crisis and Transformative Social Change*. London: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Eswaran, Mukesh. 2014. *Why Gender Matters in Economics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Ferrant, Gaëlle, Luca Maria Pesando, and Keiko Nowacka. 2014. "Unpaid Care Work: The Missing Link in the Analysis of Gender Gaps in Labour Outcomes." Paris: OECD Development Centre. Available at https://www.oecd.org/dev/development-gender/Unpaid_care_work.pdf, accessed February 7, 2018.
- Folbre, Nancy. 2006. "Measuring Care: Gender, Empowerment, and the Care Economy." *Journal of Human Development* 7: 2,183-200.
- Folbre, Nancy. 2009. *Greed, Lust, and Gender*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Folbre, Nancy, "Valuing Non-Market Work," Human Development Report Office think piece. New York: United Nations Development Program. Available at http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/folbre_hdr_2015_final_0.pdf, accessed February 7, 2018.
- Folbre, Nancy. 2018. "Gender and the Care Penalty." Forthcoming in *Oxford Handbook of Women in the Economy*, ed. Laura Argys, Susan Averett, and Saul Hoffman. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Folbre, Nancy and Jayoung Yoon. 2007. "What is Child Care? Lessons from Time Use Surveys of Major English-Speaking Countries." *Review of Economics of the Household* 5: 3, 223-248.
- Folbre, Nancy, Jayoung Yoon, Kade Finnoff, and Allison Sidle Fuligni. 2005. "By What Measure? Family Time Devoted to Children in the U.S." *Demography* 42:2 373-390.
- Folbre, Nancy, Marta Murray-Close, and Jooyeoun Suh. 2017. "Equivalence Scales for Extended Income in the U.S." *Review of the Economics of the Household*, forthcoming in print. Available online at <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11150-017-9387-8>, accessed February 7, 2018.
- Folbre, Nancy and Jayoung Yoon. 2008. "Economic Development and Time Devoted to Care." Background paper for UNRISD Flagship Report on Combatting Poverty and Inequality. Geneva: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development. Available at <https://goo.gl/BPdSWk>, accessed February 7, 2018.
- Fontana, Marzia and Diane Elson. 2014. "Public Policies on Water Provision and Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC): Do They Reduce and Redistribute Unpaid Work?" *Gender and Development* 22(3): 459-474.
- Ghosh, Anweshaa, Anjam Singh, and Shraddha Chigateri. 2017a. "Making Karnali Employment Programme More Care-Responsive." Programmatic notes for women's economic empowerment policy and programming. Brighton: Institute of Development Studies. Available at <https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/13147>, accessed February 7, 2018.
- Ghosh, Anweshaa, Anjam Singh, and Shraddha Chigateri. 2017b. "Care Responsiveness of Livelihood Programming: The Enterprise Development Programme, Oxfam Nepal." Programmatic notes for women's economic empowerment policy and programming. Brighton: Institute of Development Studies. Available at <https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/13148>, accessed February 7, 2018.
- Ghosh, Anweshaa, Anjam Singh, and Shraddha Chigateri. 2017. "A Trapeze Act: Balancing Unpaid Care Work and Paid Care Work by Women in Nepal." National report. Brighton: Institute of Development Studies. Available at <https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/13338>, accessed February 7, 2018.

Greene, Margaret E. and Ann E. Biddlecom. 2000. "Absent and Problematic Men: Demographic Accounts of Male Reproductive Roles." *Population and Development Review*, 26: 1, 181-115.

Hallman, Kelly, Agnes Quisumbing, Marie Ruel, and Benedicte de la Briere. 2005. "Mother's Work and Childcare: Findings from the Urban Slums of Guatemala City." *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 53:4, 855-85.

Hirway, Indira, ed. 2017. *Mainstreaming Unpaid Work*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Huong, Nguyen Thi Lan, Pham Minh Thu, and Pham Ngoc Toan. 2017. "Counting Women's Work in Vietnam." *Counting Women's Work country report No. 3*. Available at http://www.cww-dpru.uct.ac.za/sites/default/files/image_tool/images/74/Country%20Report%2003%20-%20Vietnam.pdf, accessed February 7, 2018.

IDRC. 2017. "Could Affordable Daycare be the Key to Unlocking Women's Earning Power in Africa?" Available at <https://www.idrc.ca/en/stories/could-affordable-daycare-be-key-unlocking-womens-earning-power-africa>, accessed February 7, 2018.

Khan, Themrise. 2016. "An Evidential Roadmap: Strengthening Linkages Between Women's Economic Empowerment and Growth." Background Paper for the UN High Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment. Ottawa: International Development Research Centre.

Karimli, Leyla, Emma Samman, Lucia Rost and Thalia Kidder. 2016. "Factors and Norms Influencing Unpaid Care Work: Household Survey Evidence from Five Rural Communities in Colombia, Ethiopia, The Philippines, Uganda and Zimbabwe." *Oxfam Women's Economic Empowerment and Care Report*. Available at <https://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/factors-and-norms-influencing-unpaid-care-work-household-survey-evidence-from-f-620145>, accessed February 7, 2018.

Kennedy, Liam and Keetie Roelen. 2017. "ActionAid's Food Security and Economic Empowerment Programme in Muko Sector, Northern Rwanda: Guidelines for Achieving the Double Boon," Programmatic notes for women's economic empowerment policy and programming. Brighton: Institute of Development Studies. Available at <https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/13231>, accessed February 7, 2018.

Khera, Reetika and Nandini Nayak. 2009. "Women Workers and Perceptions of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act." *Economic and Political Weekly* 44(43): 49-57.

Kimmel, Jean and Rachel Connelly. 2007. "Mother's Time Choices: Caregiving, Leisure, Home Production, and Paid Work." *Journal of Human Resources* 42(3): 643-81.

Klasen, Stephan. 2017. "What Explains Uneven Female Labor Force Participation Levels and Trends in Developing Countries?" Draft, University of Göttingen. Available at http://conference.iza.org/conference_files/GLMLICNetwork_2017/klasens146.pdf, accessed February 7, 2018.

Klugman, J. and L. Tyson. 2016. *Leave No One Behind: A Call to Action for Gender Equality and Women's Economic Empowerment*. Report of the UN Secretary-General's High Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment. Available at <http://hlp-wee.unwomen.org/-/media/hlp%20wee/attachments/reports-toolkits/hlp-wee-report-2016-09-call-to-action-en.pdf?la=en>, accessed February 7, 2018.

Ladusingh, Laishram. 2017. "Counting Women's Work in India," *Counting Women's Work country report No. 2*. Available at http://www.cww-dpru.uct.ac.za/sites/default/files/image_tool/images/74/Country%20Report%2002%20-%20India.pdf, accessed February 7, 2018.

Lee, Ronald and Andrew Mason. 2011. *Population Aging and the Generational Economy. A Global Perspective*. Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar.

Li, Hongbun, Prashant Loyalka, Scott Rozelle, and Binzhen Wu. 2017. "Human Capital and China's Future Growth." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 31:1, 25048.

Mmopelwa, Gagoitseope, Barbara Ntombi Ngwenya, Narain Sinha, and J.B.P. Sanders. 2012. "Caregiver Characteristics and Economic Cost of Home-Based Care: A Case Study of Maun and Gumare Villages in North West District, Botswana." *Chronic Illness*, 25 June. Available at <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1742395312449664>, accessed February 7, 2018.

Moussié, Rachel. 2016. "Childcare from the Perspective of Women in the Informal Economy." Policy brief for the UN Secretary General's High-Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment. Available at http://www.wiego.org/sites/wiego.org/files/resources/files/WIEGO_childcare-informal-economy.pdf, accessed February 7, 2018.

Mukherjee, Avanti. 2017. "Three Essays on 'Doing Care', Gender Differences in the Work Day, and Women's Care Work in the Household." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Massachusetts Amherst. Available at http://scholarworks.umass.edu/dissertations_2/1062/, accessed February 7, 2018.

- Murphy-McGreevey, Clare, Keetie Roelen and Birasa Nyamulinda. 2017. "Making Rwanda's Vision 2020 Umurenge Programme Public Works Care-Responsive." Programmatic notes for women's economic empowerment policy and programming. Brighton: Institute of Development Studies. Available at <https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/13230>, accessed February 7, 2018.
- Niethammer, Carmen, Michelle Davis, Nathalie Hoffman, Amanda Devercelli, Benedicte Leroy De La Briere, Gharam Alkastani Dexter, Anna Kalashyan, Tazeen Hasan, and Rudaba Nasir. 2017. "Tackling Childcare: The Business Case for Employer-Supported Childcare." International Finance Corporation, World Bank Group working paper No. 121546. Available at <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/377711511422588789/pdf/121546-WP-Tackling-Childcare-Report-Final-October-2017-PUBLIC.pdf>, accessed February 7, 2018.
- Nussbaum, Martha. 2001. *Women and Human Development*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Nguyen, CuongViet. 2016. "Does Parental Migration Really Benefit Left-behind Children? Comparative Evidence from Ethiopia, India, Peru and Vietnam." *Social Science and Medicine* 153, 230-239.
- OECD. 2011. *Doing Better for Families*. Paris: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. Available at www.oecd.org/social/family/doingbetterforfamilies.htm, accessed February 7, 2018.
- Paes de Barros, Ricardo, Pedro Olinto, Trine Lunde, and Mirela Carvalho. 2011. "The Impact of Access to Free Childcare on Women's Labor Market Outcomes: Evidence from a Randomized Trial in Low-Income Neighborhoods of Rio de Janeiro." Washington, DC: World Bank Group.
- Pérez-Escamilla, R. 2017. "Estancias Infantiles y Desarrollo Infantil en México: Avances y Retos." *Boletín Médico del Hospital Infantil de México* 74, 84-85.
- Richardson, Robin. 2017. "Development of a Tool to Measure Women's Agency in India." Manuscript under review at *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities*.
- Richardson, Robin, Arijit Nandi, Surinder Jaswal, and Sam Harper. 2017. "Are Work Demands Associated with Mental Distress? Evidence from Women in Rural India." *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology* 52, 1501-1511.
- Rohwerder, Brigitte, Catherine Muller, Birasa Nyamulinda, Deepta Chopra, Elena Zambelli, and Naomi Hossain. 2017. "You Cannot Live Without Money': Balancing Women's Unpaid Care Work and Paid Work in Rwanda." IDS working paper 498, Brighton: Institute of Development Studies. Available at <https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/13337>, accessed February 7, 2018.
- Rosen, Sherwin. 1997. "Public Employment, Taxes, and the Welfare State in Sweden" in *The Welfare State in Transition: Reforming the Swedish Model*, ed. Richard B. Freeman, Robert Topel, and Birgitta Swedenbo. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Smith, Julie P. and Lindy H. Ingham. 2005. "Mothers' Milk and Measures of Economic Output." *Feminist Economics* 11:41-62.
- Song, Yueping, and Xiao-yuan Dong. 2018. "Childcare Costs and Migrant and Local Mothers' Labor Force Participation in Urban China." *Feminist Economics* 24:2, 122-146.
- Stanton, Elizabeth. 2007. "The Human Development Index: A History." Working paper #127, Political Economy Research Institute, University of Massachusetts Amherst. Available at https://scholarworks.umass.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1101&context=peri_workingpapers, accessed February 7, 2018.
- Strohschein, Lisa. 2017. "Non-Residential Fatherhood in Canada." *Canadian Studies in Population*. April 2017.
- Sengupta, Sudeshna and Shubika Sachdeva. 2017. "From Double Burden of Women to a 'Double Boon': Balancing Unpaid Care Work and Paid Work." IDS policy brief, Brighton: Institute of Development Studies. Available at <https://idl-bnc-idrc.dspacedirect.org/bitstream/handle/10625/56506/IDL-56506.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y>, accessed February 7, 2018.
- Staab, Silke and Roberto Gerhard. 2011. "Putting Two and Two Together? Early Childhood Education, Mothers' Employment and Care Service Expansion in Chile and Mexico." *Development and Change* 42(4): 1079-1107.
- Stykes, J. Bart, Wendy D. Manning, Susan L. Brown. 2013. "Nonresident Fathers and Formal Child Support: Evidence from the CPS, the NSFG and the SIPP." *Demographic Research* 29:46, 1299-1330.

- Talley, Ian. 2015. "Insidious Conspiracy Against Women Costs Economies Up to 30% of GDP, says IMF Chief." *Wall Street Journal*, 23 February. Available at <http://blogs.wsj.com/economics/2015/02/23/insidious-conspiracy-against-women-costs-economies-up-to-30-of-gdp-says-imf-chief/>, accessed February 7, 2018.
- Tran, Olivia, Edgard Rodriguez, Arjan de Haan, Xiao-Yuan Dong, and Yaohui Zhao. 2017. "Caring Across Generations: Policy Challenges for China." IDRC policy brief. Ottawa: International Development Research Centre. Available at <https://idl-bnc-idrc.dspacedirect.org/bitstream/handle/10625/56397/IDL56397.pdf?sequence=1>, accessed February 7, 2018.
- UNRISD. 2010. *Combatting Poverty and Inequality: Structural Change, Social Policy and Politics*. Geneva: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development. Available at [http://www.unrisd.org/unrisd/website/document.nsf/\(httpPublications\)/BBA20D83E347DBAFC125778200440AA7?OpenDocument](http://www.unrisd.org/unrisd/website/document.nsf/(httpPublications)/BBA20D83E347DBAFC125778200440AA7?OpenDocument), accessed February 7, 2018.
- UN Women. 2011. *Progress of the World's Women 2011-2012: In Pursuit of Gender Justice*. New York: UN Women. Available at <http://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2011/progressoftheworldswomen-2011-en.pdf?la=en&vs=2835>, accessed February 7, 2018.
- UN Women. 2015. *Progress of the World's Women 2015-2016: Transforming Economies, Realizing Rights*. New York: UN Women. Available at http://progress.unwomen.org/en/2015/pdf/UNW_progressreport.pdf, accessed February 7, 2018.
- Vanek, Joann, Martha Alter Chen, Françoise Carré, James Heintz, and Ralf Hussmanns. 2014. "Statistics on the Informal Economy: Definitions, Regional Estimates and Challenges." WIEGO working paper (statistics) No 2. Available at <http://www.wiego.org/sites/wiego.org/files/publications/files/Vanek-Statistics-WIEGO-WP2.pdf>, accessed February 8, 2018.
- Waring, Marilyn. 1988. *If Women Counted*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Warner, Mildred E. 2006. "Putting Child Care in the Regional Economy: Empirical and Conceptual Challenges and Economic Development Prospects." *Community Development* 37(2), 7–22.
- Warner, Mildred and Zhilin Liu. 2006. "The Importance of Child Care in Economic Development: A Comparative Analysis of Regional Economic Linkage." *Economic Development Quarterly* 20(1), 97–103.
- Yoon, Jayoung. 2014. "Counting Care Work in Social Policy: Valuing Unpaid Child- and Eldercare in Korea." *Feminist Economics* 20(2): 65-89.
- Zaidi, Mubashira and Shraddha Chigateri. 2017a. "Making Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) More Care-Responsive." Programmatic notes for women's economic empowerment policy and programming. Brighton: Institute for Development Studies. Available at <https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/13214>, accessed February 7, 2018.
- Zaidi, Mubashira and Shraddha Chigateri. 2017b. "Empowerment Programming and Unpaid Care Work: Learning from 30 Years of the Self-Employed Women's Association in Madhya Pradesh [SEWA MP]." Programmatic notes for women's economic empowerment policy and programming. Brighton: Institute for Development Studies. Available at <https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/13160>, accessed February 7, 2018.
- Zaidi, Mubashira, Shraddha Chigateri, Deepta Chopra, and Keetie Roelen. 2017. "My Work Never Ends': Women's Experiences of Balancing Paid Work and Unpaid Care Work in India," IDS Working paper 494. Brighton: Institute for Development Studies. Available at <https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/13203>, accessed February 7, 2018.
- Zambelli, Elena, Keetie Roelen, Naomi Hossain, Deepta Chopra, and Jeniphe Twebaze. 2017. "My Mother Does a Lot of Work': Women Balancing Paid and Unpaid Care Work in Tanzania." National report, Brighton: Institute for Development Studies. Available at <https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/13283>, accessed February 7, 2018.



Photo: United Nations Photo

 **IDRC | CRDI**

Canada 