

of at least 14 weeks of leave at a rate of at least two-thirds of previous earnings. The regions with the highest proportion of countries in conformity with the Convention are Central Asia and Europe, while conformity is particularly low in Asia and the Pacific and the Middle East.

- 26 A *de facto* female-headed household refers to one whereby the male head is temporarily away.
- 27 In addition, the debate has challenged the notion of poverty as a static problem that is detached from agency and power relations. It has also questioned the persistent assumption of unitary households behaving as consensual or harmonious agents that underlies most macro- and micro-economic models and poverty reduction policies, together with data collection and household survey designs.
- 28 See Berik (2008) for the ethical underpinnings of the arguments in the global labor standards debate.
- 29 More recent work that examines the US FDI outflows at the industry level confirms that strengthening democracy is compatible with attracting FDI. The exception is mining and oil and gas extraction, which raises the specter of a race-to-the-bottom in resource-rich countries, and suggests the need for a two-pronged strategy in strengthening democracy (Kucera and Principi 2014). More disaggregated industry analysis may also indicate a race to the bottom in subsectors of manufacturing such as apparel.
- 30 While the nature of these labor provisions and the forces that shape them are not yet well studied, there is a clear uptick in preferential trade agreements that have such clauses, up from 4 percent in 1995–1999 to 31 percent in the 2005–09 period (ILO 2009).
- 31 There is some evidence to suggest that certain conditions, such as pressure from transnational advocates, are key to ensuring the enforcement of the labor clause (Nolan Garcia 2011).
- 32 The standards that were monitored were important but narrow, covering wages and hours and health and safety standards (Berik and van der Meulen Rodgers 2010). Not surprisingly, in 2006 and 2007, the monitored factories were in near full compliance with the wage standards (such as correct payment of overtime wages), but performed poorly on other standards, and fared worst on excessive overtime (defined as more than two hours per day).
- 33 In the US, the union membership rate among women declined from 14.6 to 10.5 percent between 1983 and 2013, while the rate for men shrunk from 24.7 to 11.9 percent. In the UK the decline between 2000 and 2011 was from 29.4 to 28.5 percent for women and from 30.2 to 23.0 percent for men. During the same period, women in Canada increased their unionization rate from 29.9 to 31.1 percent, while the rate for men declined from 29.5 to 28.2 percent. In Australia where a sharp decline in unionization took place, women's and men's union density gap not only narrowed but women's unionization rate overtook that of men (18.9 percent vs. 17.5 percent in 2012) (ILO 2014c).
- 34 See [www.streetnet.org.za](http://www.streetnet.org.za) and [www.homenetseasia.org](http://www.homenetseasia.org) for more information.

## CHAPTER 5

### *Paid and Unpaid Work: Meanings and Debates*

*Women make a great contribution to the welfare of the family and to the development of society, which is still not recognized or considered in its full importance . . . The upbringing of children requires shared responsibility of parents, women and men and society as a whole . . . Recognition should also be given to the important role played by women in many countries in caring for other members of their family.*

United Nations, Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 1996, p. 27

#### Introduction

Our day-to-day living depends on doing varied forms of work. We meet our daily needs by earning a living as wage or salaried workers, farmers, self-employed, or by depending on others who do. We also carry out a range of daily activities such as cooking, washing clothes, making beds, housecleaning, shopping, washing dishes, throwing out the garbage, caring for children, the sick, disabled, and elderly, and we depend on others who do similar tasks. In many communities, the labor provided by volunteers is vital in meeting basic services such as cultural celebration, immunization, adult literacy, school maintenance, irrigation, canal repairs, and forest conservation. This is also the case in the restoration of homes, businesses, and schools, including those damaged by floods, fires, and earthquakes. Although the performance of these tasks ensures our daily survival and well-being, until the 1990s they did not receive the attention of policymakers. Given that most of this household and volunteer labor is typically not paid, it has been largely invisible in economic

terms and, until very recently, not included in conventional national income accounts, labor statistics, and other economic indicators.

To be sure, middle- and upper-income households tend to source a majority of their care and domestic needs through the market. The ongoing shift of activities from the household to the market has affected many aspects of people's lives especially in urban areas and high-income countries, where tasks ranging from childcare, laundry services, and cooked meals to grocery delivery have increasingly become commodified. However, a large proportion of the population, particularly in the lower income groups, largely depends on the unpaid domestic and care labor that they and others perform for their day-to-day sustenance and well-being. The lack of attention to these forms of labor in economic policy debates and development plans seriously inhibits advancement towards gender equality.

The historical invisibility of unpaid work in economic analysis is not surprising, given that traditionally it focused on the market. Viewed from a male and upper-class perspective and at a time when societies were perceived to have separate public and private spheres, the economists who pioneered the discipline sought to understand the motives, behavior, and decisions of individuals in market activities that took place in the public sphere. The private sphere, that of household work and other non-market activities generally carried out by women, was not of interest.<sup>1</sup> This perspective became institutionalized in economic analysis. As markets developed and livelihoods became increasingly linked with wage labor, individuals were categorized either as "breadwinners" (male household head) or "their dependents" (women and children).

In the dominant neoclassical approach in economics the economy is viewed as a vast terrain of optimizing behaviors by self-interested individuals with exogenous tastes and budget constraints, who interact primarily through markets in their quest to obtain the highest utility or satisfaction and to secure the biggest profit. Within the heterodox economics tradition, the economy has been similarly viewed as the domain for productive activities that center on wage labor-capitalist relations; the preoccupation with wage labor and capitalist production left out the reproductive work of (mostly) women.<sup>2</sup> This perspective is a departure from Friedrich Engels's emphasis on the dual character of production activities (unpaid and paid) that he deemed were essential for the reproduction of society.<sup>3</sup> The labor involved in taking care of people, through a myriad of unpaid tasks undertaken within households and communities, was thus rendered invisible in economic analysis. And the concept of work became synonymous with paid or market work.<sup>4</sup>

The conceptual neglect of unpaid work is reflected in the measurement efforts of the 1930s and 1940s that produced the System of National Accounts (SNA). These accounts compute the annual value of marketed goods and

services in order to estimate a country's national output, for example the gross domestic product (GDP) or the gross national product (GNP). Even though Simon Kuznets, who is credited for his contributions to establishing the US SNA in 1947, cautioned against the use of GDP as a measure of well-being, such interpretation has become commonplace in political and economic discourses as well as in the media.<sup>5</sup> Parallel efforts were made to define the concept of labor as "work for pay or profit," and to measure it with the use of labor force survey statistics. The important 1954 International Conference of Labor Force Statisticians solidified this notion of work. These concepts eventually became the norm for labor market analysts, economists, and policymakers; what mattered was the size of marketed final output and the labor expended in its production.

In this chapter, we shift our attention from the wider issues of development, globalization, and labor markets to examine the cumulative efforts to bring attention to the importance of unpaid work and to bring it out of the statistical shadows. These efforts by feminists, women's groups, development scholars, time-use researchers, and the United Nations culminated in the landmark 2013 resolution for measuring work passed during the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS), which includes unpaid work (International Labour Organization (ILO) 2013e). The resolution delineates work as "any activity performed by persons of any sex and age to produce goods or to provide services for use by others or for own use" (ILO 2013e: 2) and provides a new framework for measuring all forms of work done by persons over 15 years of age, including various unpaid categories of work, such as subsistence work, household work, unpaid training, and volunteer work.<sup>6</sup> Although the framework has yet to be implemented in terms of changes in the way labor statistics, economic models, and policy discourses conceptualize work, the resolution is an important step towards broadening the notion of the economy to include all forms of work. It is also illustrative of the broader relevance of the issues and concerns raised by feminists and of the serious challenges posed by their questions regarding the basic tenets in conventional economic thinking.

First, we review the historical statistical practices and debates around unpaid work. Second, we examine the "Accounting for Women's Work Project" (hereafter the "Accounting Project") construed as a means of making women's work and all forms of unpaid work more visible (Benería 1992; Waring 1988). Underlying the argument for statistical visibility of women's work is the basic question of what is valuable to society. Our review of the Accounting Project addresses three basic questions: Why account? How to account? What do we see when we account? Thus, we start with the argument for accounting and a defense against critics of the effort; move on to evaluate the conceptual, theoretical, and methodological contributions that culminated

in systematic collection and use of time-use data, and then examine the development of new measures of well-being such as time poverty and work intensity. We conclude the chapter by highlighting the ways in which information regarding unpaid work can be used to support policies to balance family life and paid work and equitable distribution of care provisioning between men and women. Although these concerns are not new, globalization processes and feminization of the labor force have exacerbated these tensions, thereby pushing them to the forefront of the development policy agendas and debates.

### Unpaid Work: Statistical Issues and Challenges

Feminists and women's advocacy groups have long decried the undercounting and undervaluation of women's contributions in national output and labor force statistics, particularly since the late 1970s. Until the major revisions recommended by the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians in 2013, the statistical convention of the SNA was that women's (and men's) hours of work would be counted in labor force statistics only when they are looking for or are employed in paid work.<sup>7</sup> Some unpaid work performed in gathering fuel and water, subsistence production and assistance of family members on the family farm or enterprise was officially acknowledged and added to the SNA in 1993. However, when women cook meals, clean the house, bathe the sick, feed the elderly, and care for their children or do volunteer work, these activities are not considered work for the purposes of identifying the economically active population. Thus, unpaid household work (domestic labor and care labor) and volunteer work are considered non-SNA economic activities.<sup>8</sup>

It is no wonder that, for a long time, we discerned a large disconnect between the official statistics on economic activity rates among women and the material processes and realities that we, for example, have observed in our field visits in countries like Bolivia, Ecuador, Mexico, Morocco, the Philippines, and Turkey. Women are constantly moving about the busy streets of Manila, Guayaquil, Marrakesh, and Mexico City or working in the fields in Turkey, as part of their chores done at home or in their communities. Yet the latest statistics (for 2009) on activity rates for the female population were 26 percent (vs. 80 percent for men) in Morocco and 24 percent (vs. 70 percent for men) in Turkey (Population Reference Bureau 2011).<sup>9</sup> In the case of Mexico, the corresponding figure is 43 percent (vs. 81 percent for men), 47 percent (vs. 78 percent for men) in Ecuador, and 49 percent (vs. 79 percent for men) in the Philippines.

The information embedded in the labor force and output data is powerful, for it provides the foundation for measuring the level of economic activity and its changes over time, and for economic policy and development planning. If so, what has determined the conventions regarding what is included and excluded in the statistical information that is collected? The statistical undercounting of women's contributions derives, first and foremost, from the theoretical bias of the economics discipline to focus on the market economy. Since a substantial part of women's work performed within their households and communities has traditionally been unpaid, it was excluded from labor force statistics and national income accounts.

Historically, statistics on the labor force were gathered through population censuses, but the persistent and high unemployment during the Great Depression of the 1930s generated a growing interest in the collection of reliable and more accurate labor force statistics. In 1938, the Committee of Statistical Experts of the League of Nations recommended a definition of the concepts "gainfully occupied" and "unemployed," and drew up proposals to standardize census data with the purpose of facilitating international comparisons (League of Nations, 1938; ILO, 1976). In 1966, the UN Statistical Commission adopted the recommendation of the International Conference of Labour Statisticians to define the "economically active population" as comprising all persons above a specified age who furnish the supply of labor (employed and unemployed) for the production of goods and services during a specified time reference period.<sup>10</sup>

### *Subsistence Production*

While the basic concepts and conventions defining the labor force and national accounting statistics did not change between the 1930s and the 1990s, one important exception were the efforts to include estimates of subsistence production in GNP accounts. As early as 1947, Simon Kuznets, the economist who developed the first comprehensive SNA for the US, called attention to the need to improve the SNA and argued for the inclusion of subsistence production on the grounds that its output is potentially marketable. The methods to estimate and assign value to this type of production activity and the proportion of the population engaged in it were recommended in the UN SNA guidelines during the 1950s, particularly for countries such as Nepal, Papua New Guinea, and Tanzania where the sector was perceived to be relatively important.<sup>11</sup> This recommendation, however, was not followed by efforts to implement it, until the recommendation by the International Conference of Labour Statisticians in 1966, which broadened the labor force to include those who engage in subsistence production, including unpaid family labor.<sup>12</sup> Despite the practical difficulties in estimating the market value of subsistence production and thus the labor engaged in it,

its inclusion in national output and labor force estimates became an accepted practice. In 1993, the SNA boundary was further expanded to include the production of specific types of goods and services within the household for own consumption (ILO 1993).<sup>13</sup>

In practice however, the participation of women in subsistence production remained not fully accounted for. To the extent that women's subsistence activities are woven seamlessly in their domestic chores—milling flour, weaving, food cultivation, care of animals, and many others—the line between the conventional classifications of subsistence production, which is considered part of SNA, and household work which is considered non-SNA, has been difficult to draw. Underreporting problems continued due to the relative irregularity of women's work in subsistence production and the persistence in some cultures of the deeply ingrained view that women's place is in the home. In some cases, the boundary between production for sale and that for own consumption is blurred since what women produce or make is consumed as well as sold in the local market. Thus, even the 1993 revision of some statistical conventions has not prevented the tendency to underestimate women's and men's contribution in subsistence production (Heston 1994; Charmes 1998).

#### *Informal Labor*

A different type of underestimation problem exists for women's work in various types of informal employment. They range from self-employment to working as employers, employees, or contributing family workers in small or unregistered enterprises and family farms, or as members of informal producers' cooperatives—all of them generally difficult to record (UN Statistical Commission 2004). The measurement problem in this case is not necessarily one of conceptualization, since unpaid family workers in these enterprises fall within conventional definitions of work. Rather, the problem has to do with the persistence of gender role perceptions in survey and data collection methods, as well as methodological difficulties in obtaining reliable statistics.

The propensity to underreport both men and women unpaid family workers and casual, temporary, or seasonal (wage) labor in informal enterprises, small businesses, and agriculture is widespread across countries. This underestimation issue became particularly apparent to feminist researchers in cases where censuses classified workers according to their "main occupation," which would often result in women being recorded as housewives and therefore not in the labor force.<sup>14</sup> In these cases, the unpaid labor performed by women in the family farm or enterprise can easily be perceived by both survey interviewers and respondents to be part of their role in assisting their husbands or fathers. Until this practice was gradually remedied, it resulted

in the underestimation and unreliability of national statistics regarding women's agricultural work (less so in the case of men), not to mention the difficulties in making meaningful comparisons across countries.<sup>15</sup>

Until recently, the general absence of appropriate and systematic data collection on these activities was a serious problem, given that they employ a large proportion of the workforce in many countries. Although the 1993 International Conference of Labour Statisticians introduced the concept of the informal sector for improving SNA estimates, a comprehensive methodological guideline was not developed until the early 2000s so that the task of collecting information tended to be haphazard and inadequate (United Nations Statistical Commission 2004; Husmanns 2004).<sup>16</sup> As mentioned in Chapter 4, the tendency for women to engage in informal employment and to work as casual, seasonal agricultural laborers or unpaid family workers is likely to have increased with the adoption of neoliberal policies and promotion of labor market deregulation, making the need to obtain more accurate estimates of informal employment more urgent.

#### *Household Work*

By far the most serious challenge confronting the Accounting Project has been the longstanding exclusion of unpaid labor spent on household work, which is treated as outside of the SNA boundary. Unlike subsistence producers or informal workers, in this case the exclusion is based on conceptual grounds. With few exceptions such as Margaret Reid, this practice was not seriously questioned and challenged until the 1970s. The issue of unpaid work was taken up by feminists including Sue Himmelweit and Maxine Molyneux who brought attention to the importance of domestic work in their examination of the relationship between capitalist accumulation and its requirement involving unpaid work performed by wives and mothers of workers. Later on, the term "reproductive work" was used by Lourdes Benería (1979) and Benería and Sen (1981) to highlight the necessary and vital role of this form of unpaid work for reproducing the workforce, present and future.<sup>17</sup> The demands of women's groups and feminist scholars to make household work visible continued throughout the 1980s and 1990s at various international conferences, and in policy dialogues and academic discourses.

Since the 1990s, the terms "household work" and "care work" have been used in feminist discourses to emphasize the nature of the work performed for the maintenance and care of children, the sick and disabled, the elderly, and other able-bodied members in the household. In this conceptualization, household and care work is defined as set of activities and relations involved in meeting the physical and emotional requirements of dependent adults and children (Daly and Lewis, 2000; Elson 2005; Razavi 2007). In the last 15 years, further development of the notion of care work has led to varied

conceptualizations. Some adopt a strict definition, referring only to the “direct” care activities of people and distinguishing these from domestic work activities such as cooking, cleaning, washing clothes, etc. However feminist scholars such as Diane Elson, Nancy Folbre, and Shahra Razavi point out that domestic work can be thought of as “indirect care.” In fact, in developing countries the distinction between care and domestic work is often blurred, for the work schedules of many women involve switching from one to the other and even performing them simultaneously. Care work can also be conceptualized in terms of who benefits (Folbre 2012). While typically care work is perceived to involve meeting the needs of dependents that is, children, the sick and disabled, and the elderly, much care is also involved in meeting the needs of healthy adults in the form of domestic work activities. To be sure, many domestic and care activities have progressively been shifted to the sphere of market production while men’s share in these activities has grown in some countries. Yet, by and large, women are still performing most of them (Beneria and Martinez-Iglesias 2014; Craig et al. 2010; Fisher et al. 2007; Gershuny and Sullivan 2003).

The measurement and valuation of goods and services produced within the household domain faced several criticisms and met strong resistance from policymakers and statistical agencies. This is illustrated by the justification made in the System of National Accounts 2008 Report for maintaining the exclusion of household production from the SNA:

It is clear that the economic significance of these flows is very different from that of monetary flows. For example, the incomes generated are automatically tied to the consumption of the goods and services produced; they have little relevance for the analysis of inflation or deflation or other disequilibria within the economy. The inclusion of large non-monetary flows of this kind in the accounts together with monetary flows can obscure what is happening on markets and reduce the analytic usefulness of the data. (UN et al. 2009: 6)

#### *Volunteer Work*

Another type of unpaid work that has remained in the statistical shadows is volunteer work, which refers to “work without monetary pay, or legal obligation provided for persons living outside the volunteer’s own household” (UN 2003: 4). Even though volunteer work has long been a part of the established customs and norms of sharing as well as mutual support mechanisms in most societies and is deeply embedded in many cultures throughout the world, it was conceptualized as outside the SNA boundary as with household and care work. Volunteer work can be performed in public and in non-profit organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, Meals

on Wheels, hospitals, humanitarian aid and social programs, done informally in one’s neighborhood or it can be in the private sector. In all these cases, documenting and analyzing such work is important, particularly if it provides free substitutes for what otherwise would be paid market work. Indeed, in Canada, the growing use of volunteer labor in hospitals has been linked to the reduction and casualization of registered nursing jobs throughout the country (Valiani 2011).

The definition of volunteer work remains unsettled, in part because the term carries different meanings in diverse cultures and settings (Rochester et al. 2009; Salamon et al. 2011). This difficulty undoubtedly fuels the lack of interest among economists and statistical agencies in measuring volunteer work. Also, certain types of volunteer work are difficult to categorize. For example, activities associated with charitable or church-related organizations and assisting in community activities are sometimes viewed as “socializing” or “participation in religious activities,” even though they provide service benefits to members of the community. Second, the close connections between household chores and some volunteer work—as when volunteer work takes place in one’s neighborhood—can make the boundaries difficult to draw. For example, the communal soup kitchens in the Andean countries during the debt crisis of the 1980s and 1990s provide an example of collective voluntary work among the poor that sprung up to deal with the economic crisis. Organized and run mostly by women, these communal kitchens functioned as survival strategies to cope with the drastic deterioration of living standards that resulted from structural adjustment policies and increasing urban poverty. In Lima these communal kitchens were estimated to be run by 40,000 low-income women in 2,000 sites in poor neighborhoods who pooled their resources to feed about 200,000 people as much as five times a week (Barrig 1996; Lind 1997).

Volunteer work tends to vary by gender and educational status. A number of studies indicates that women volunteer in greater numbers than do men. For instance, in the United States, a recent study of over 60,000 Americans showed that in all age groups more women, particularly those who are well-educated and married, reported volunteering compared to men (US Bureau of Labor Statistics 2010). In another study conducted in Ethiopia, more than 80 percent of community health AIDS care volunteers during the 2008 food crisis were women (Maes et al. 2010).

There are also gender differences with respect to the nature of the volunteer work and in the preferences for the type of organization chosen (Mesch et al. 2006; Wymer and Samu 2002; Heymann et al. 2007). For example, a study by Wymer (2011) on US volunteering found that women have a stronger preference than men for serving in organizations dedicated to helping needy people or people in distress. Men, on the other hand, are

more willing to volunteer in risky or dangerous situations, or those involving confrontation and conflict with others. Wymer's study also suggests that women tend to volunteer in organizations characterized by consensus building and participatory decision-making while men tend to prefer volunteering in roles, which place them in positions of authority. However, these differences cannot be generalized since much remains to be done to document systematically the amount of volunteer work worldwide.

That said, the nature of volunteer work is distinct from unpaid household work in terms of its effect on the worker's well-being. Volunteer work is typically done out of choice; its performance provides women and men with a sense of belonging and fulfillment by serving others; it also gives them opportunity to socialize and to be active in the community. Unpaid domestic and care work on the other hand, is often done out of necessity and a sense of obligation as dictated by socialized roles. It can increase one's sense of fulfillment but can also bring stress, fatigue, feelings of isolation, and even boredom, depending on norms, social class, and other factors. For many household workers, the fact that their labor is unpaid makes them economically dependent on the "breadwinners"; and since their contributions are invisible and not valued, they have a low or subordinate status in society.

To date, efforts to measure volunteer work at the country level have been sporadic, partly due to the paucity of reliable and comparable data. With the exception of a few high-income countries, volunteering is not tracked in official surveys.<sup>18</sup> Available data usually come from privately sponsored surveys that use relatively small samples and are based on varied definitions and methodologies, which results in a wide range of estimates (Rochester et al. 2009; Salamon et al. 2011).<sup>19</sup> This picture is expected to change with the increased awareness of the contributions of volunteer workers in various sectors of the economy. Recently, the United Nations Statistics Division, the ILO, and Johns Hopkins University produced documentation on methodologies for systematic data gathering on volunteer work (ILO 2008; 2011a; Salamon et al. 2011). The first global estimates using these methodologies indicate that about one billion people perform volunteer work in public, non-profit, or for-profit organizations, or directly for friends or neighbors in a given year (Salamon et al. 2011).

### **The Accounting Project: Making Women's Contributions More Visible**

The "Accounting for Women's Work" Project refers to the collective efforts that have sought to remedy society's undervaluation of women's unpaid contributions by addressing the conceptual, theoretical, and statistical biases that

are at the root of the undervaluation. The Project has posed far-reaching challenges to the basic tenets of economic thinking and statistical methods by revealing the embedded bias in conventional wisdom that identifies work as paid labor and productive activities for the market. The invisibility of unpaid work has left unnoticed, and perpetuated, the serious imbalances in the distribution of work burden across individuals.

At the most basic level, the Accounting Project entails documenting the unpaid work performed by women by estimating the amount of time spent in each activity and providing a monetary valuation to its labor or outputs. The Project has represented the combined efforts of women's advocacy groups, feminist scholars, international organizations, and policymakers that were energized by the UN World Conferences on Women and the landmark 1995 Beijing Platform for Action. Initially envisioned to obtain a full accounting of women's contributions to human welfare and to integrate the totality of women's work in economic analysis and policy discussions, the Accounting Project has led to the broader objectives of improving labor force statistics on informal work and measuring all unpaid activities. It has also helped generate new measures of well-being, such as time poverty and work intensity, which can be used for policy formulation and evaluation. Moreover, the statistical visibility of unpaid care work has contributed to the discussions around the care economy and its crucial linkages with the market economy.

#### *Why is it Important to Count?*

Feminist economists have articulated a number of arguments in favor of undertaking the project of measuring and documenting unpaid work (Delphy 1984; Delphy and Leonard 1992; Benería 1999c; Folbre 2006; Esquivel et al. 2008). First, unpaid work is an important contributor to building human capabilities, and measuring would make its contribution more visible and socially appreciated. Second, unpaid work, especially unpaid care work, creates disadvantages (costs) for the worker; hence its measurement is crucial to analyze the extent to which total work (paid and unpaid) is equitably shared in the household.<sup>20</sup> Third, its measurement is crucial if there is a case to be made for policy to reconcile paid and unpaid work and address equitable distribution of work. Fourth, it is a crucial input for the project of engendering macroeconomic policies and budgets in order to make explicit their gender-differentiated effects on unpaid work. Such analysis can then help governments in designing gender-aware, macroeconomic, and social policies. Fifth, the Project generates statistics for creating satellite accounts on aggregate household production and for improving labor force statistics. Sixth, even if productivity levels are not easy to compare, time-use indicators can be used to analyze trends in the share of paid/unpaid work overtime, enabling us to understand shortfalls of well-being due to time poverty and intensification

of work. In addition, the measurement of unpaid work has other practical uses such as in litigation and in estimating monetary compensation in divorce cases (Cassels 1993; Collins 1993; Çağatay et al. 1995; Bakker and Elson 1998).

To be sure, there were efforts to include unpaid household work in the 1930s when the national income accounts were being developed in the United States. We have mentioned the work of Margaret Reid who designed a method to estimate the value of housework in her 1934 book *Economics of Household Production*. Later on, Ester Boserup (1970: 163) pointed out that “the subsistence activities usually omitted in the statistics of production and income are largely women’s work.” She was a pioneer in emphasizing the time-consuming character of these activities, which, in rural economies, included physically demanding tasks such as fetching wood and carrying water as well as food production and processing. She saw clearly that these activities underlie the sustenance of human life and maintain the satisfaction of bodily needs, standard of living, and the fabric of affective relations within families and communities. Although Boserup mentioned the omission of “domestic services of housewives” from national accounts, she failed to acknowledge the exclusion of caring for children, the sick, disabled, and elderly.

Feminist economists have contributed to the intellectual explorations of the relationship between gender inequality and unpaid work, and the body of work dealing with the Accounting Project has grown considerably from its early explorations and efforts to conceptualize it (Benería 1981; Folbre and Pujol 1996) to the empirical and technical effort of measurement that followed. Marilyn Waring’s book *If Women Counted*, published in 1988, helped make the case for the underestimation of women’s economic activities and to contributions of unpaid work to human well-being as it reached a wider audience beyond academics and researchers. Thus, it became clear that the valuation of unpaid work, particularly care work, is indispensable to any overall assessment of gendered responsibility for human maintenance and the production of human capabilities. Folbre (2006) argued that, given that men overall tend to devote more money for consumption needs while women give more of their labor (care) time, only by some common denominator between these two, can comparisons of their overall contributions be made.

Another important body of work involved time-use data collection and analysis. Time-use data were first produced in the early 1920s as part of social surveys on the living conditions of working-class families. One of the first estimates of unpaid household work was done by Statistics Norway in 1912 (Aslaksen and Koren 1996). In 1924, the USSR undertook the first systematic collection of this data with the objective of obtaining information about variables such as leisure time and community-oriented work (Juster and

Stafford 1991). The Bureau of Home Economics of the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) also collected time-use data in the 1920s, for the purpose of understanding the impact of new technology on the time use of farm homemakers (Frazis and Stewart 2007). Sweden followed the example of Norway in the 1930s in depicting and measuring the size of the economy as constituted by the household and the market (Aslaksen and Koren 1996).<sup>21</sup>

By the 1980s, the value of time-use survey data as a key source for estimating women’s unpaid work had become evident (Goldschmidt-Clermont 1983; Chadeau 1992). At the time, time-use survey data were not necessarily linked to feminist analysis that questioned workload disparities and gendered well-being, but this changed as feminist economists and other social scientists joined the effort (Bittman 1991; Juster and Stafford 1985; Gershuny and Robinson 1988; Ironmonger 1996; Floro and Miles 2003; Antonopoulos and Hirway 2010; Budlender 2010). Researchers have advanced the collection, methods, and analysis of time-use data in both developed and developing countries, particularly through the activities of the International Association for Time Use Research (IATUR) and its flagship academic journal, the *electronic international journal of time use research* or *e-ijtur*.

The work of the United Nations, leading to the four UN World Conferences on Women in the 1975–95 period and the follow-up mechanisms and related conventions, has been instrumental in putting the question of accounting for women’s work on the agendas of meetings and subsequent plans of action. Since 1986, the International Training and Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) and the Statistical Office of the UN Secretariat took the lead in the initial reviews of national accounts and other statistical information on women’s work and called for their revision. Unpaid work was also a key focus of discussion at the UN Social Summit in Copenhagen in March 1995. These various meetings provided opportunities for government representatives of member countries to discuss the issues pertaining to its measurement and valuation with NGOs, feminist academics, researchers, and women’s groups. The process unfolded gradually over two decades, despite initial skepticism and even hostile reactions to the overall project. A significant consensus was then built on the need to measure unpaid household work on the basis that it makes an important contribution to welfare.

The Accounting Project’s objective was officially sanctioned and summarized in the Platform of Action adopted in 1995 at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, which called for the design and implementation of:

suitable statistical means to recognize and make visible the full extent of the work of women and all their contributions to the national econ-

omy including their contribution in the unremunerated and domestic sectors, and to examine the relationship of women's unremunerated work to the incidence of vulnerability to poverty. (UN 1996: 119)

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Statistics Division, and regional agencies of the UN in the Asia-Pacific Region, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Africa promoted this strategic objective of the Beijing Platform. In a pioneering effort, UNDP reported the estimated shares of paid and unpaid work for a small number of countries in its 1995 *Human Development Report* (HDR). These efforts helped encourage governments in developing and developed countries, researchers, and women's groups to collect and use gender-disaggregated data and information, including on unpaid work, for planning and evaluation (UN 1996). As a result, by 2011 there was a substantial body of research and evidence on time use, which the World Bank reported in the 2012 *World Development Report* (World Bank 2011).

#### *Objections to the Accounting Project*

The methodological concerns and practical difficulties in accounting for women's total contribution, not to mention the institutional resources and efforts that it requires, have cast doubts on the merits of the Project. From the outset, criticisms and debates accompanied the concerted efforts to promote the Project. A number of scholars, feminists, and policymakers have voiced their concerns and serious objections. The objections fall into different categories:

##### Theoretically Misguided

Despite criticisms emanating from economists' circles in fora and meetings, very few have expressed their objections in writing. An early comment by Charlotte Phelps in the *American Economic Review* tended to dismiss the idea altogether, on the basis that "many women regard their household activities primarily as acts of love; i.e., leisure activities by my definition. In that case, the money income they receive is not conditional on earning approval. They suffer no loss of self-respect for the way they choose to occupy their time" (Phelps 1972: 167). Hence, the household division of labor is as much a matter of individual choice as it is a rational one based on comparative advantage; women are maximizing their utility by doing this work without pay and that it is a reward in itself to do this work.

Sujai Shivakumar (1996) further captured several of the unwritten criticisms. He pointed out that any imputation of monetary value to unpaid work is not consistent with modern economics, so it is merely a "rhetorical effort" without theoretical foundation; just a "dubious game of statistical

football" (p. 374). He claimed that the Accounting Project is associated with theories that are debunked or alien to mainstream economics, such as the Ricardian-Marxian labor theory of value and socialist-feminist rhetorical effort that presents gender as the central "tool of analysis" and economic processes in terms of "provisioning of human life." Contrary to these theories in modern economics, he argued, price is established in markets. Thus, it is not possible to assign prices to a service that is not exchanged on the market. Moreover, price is not solely a reflection of value of labor, but also of other production costs. Finally, because mainstream theory offers no theoretical guide to valuation, the selection of the "valuation method" (which wage per hour or price per unit to assign to obtain the total value of an activity) will be arbitrary.

This position is contrary to the longstanding mainstream economic practice of using "shadow prices" and assigning market value to household production in New Household Economics. It is also contrary to the statistical practice of imputing value to subsistence production for national income account estimation. Shivakumar, however, does not make any reference to this body of work. He also ignores the fact that the literature regarding the measurement of unpaid work includes scholars and researchers with diverse theoretical approaches and practical politics. His misplaced arguments and reasoning likely reflects the irritation felt, to say the least, in the economics profession for spoiling a well-defined, presumably "objective" economic paradigm that focuses on markets and their price-based, allocative mechanism—a point also made in the 2008 SNA Report's justification for excluding household production.

While an increasing number of economists have since recognized the importance of non-market (household) production, the resistance to measuring it or to incorporating the information obtained into their research or examination of economic issues remains.<sup>22</sup> The resistance to the accounting of unpaid work may also have to do with the methodological individualism in mainstream economics. As Julie Nelson (2010) argues, this approach reinforces the notion that the autonomous individual is rational and self-sufficient and that dependence on others or any faltering of self-reliance is a weakness. Hence, an acknowledgement of care work is anathema to the "separative selves," who simply don't need care.

##### A Waste of Time

This objection is based on two different arguments. The first stems from the concern that the Project is fraught with serious methodological and practical problems and any attempt to address them would either yield data of poor quality or require a substantial amount of resources, which can be scarce, particularly in the least developed countries. The second argument is based

on the fear that, once measured, the ensuing statistics generated might not improve women's lives. Can the information be of use in reducing the burden of poor women who have to toil many hours a day or in empowering the urban housewife with no income of her own? For example, Bergmann has been skeptical about the possibility that better information on unpaid work "can help a single woman," in the same way that "the inclusion in the GNP of food produced in the subsistence sector does not make any difference to farmers."<sup>23</sup> On the contrary, this argument goes, greater social recognition of the importance of household work might in fact reinforce a division of labor that relegates women to activities that are socially valued but do not provide financial autonomy and offer little control over the resources they need. Bergmann fears that statistics on housework are likely to be used by those who want "to glorify the housewife," as in the case of some conservative groups who view women's primary role as that of homemaker, on the grounds that housework is irreplaceable because it performs crucial services to society. This would therefore not contribute to gender equality; rather, it would help perpetuate women's dependence on men. Bergmann concludes that "there is an anti-feminist implication in valorizing housework." Instead, she argued, feminists should emphasize the need for women to engage in paid work in order to reduce their dependence on men and to increase their bargaining power in and outside of the home. Resources and effort are better used in the advocacy for and implementation of policies that facilitate the participation of women in the labor force, such as affordable childcare provision and paid maternity leave, and that enforce gender equality in the labor market, such as pay equity, affirmative action, and comparable worth.

The first argument does raise valid points, which feminists and women's groups have also acknowledged. Nevertheless, there has been significant progress over the last two decades on the conceptual and methodological issues, which has made it feasible to produce reliable statistics. The establishment of international guidelines and manuals by various UN agencies, the development of training workshops for government officials and statisticians, and the support of donor agencies have fostered attention on data quality issues, and have helped enhance the data collection efforts of many developing countries whose governments, facing strong pressure, have the political will to collect such information. Although this, by itself, does not guarantee an improvement in women's condition, it does generate valuable information that can be used towards this end.

The second argument does raise caution over what changes can be expected in terms of policy design and implementation. Still, it is important to point out that women's engagement in paid and unpaid work requires systematic information on both. As the Indian feminist Devaki Jain once pointed out, "One of the greatest difficulties in assisting women has been

the absence of any reliable data regarding their number, problems and achievements" (Jain 1975, personal communication). Data on the amount of unpaid work can be important, for example, in demonstrating the substantial time spent in fetching water, without which authorities may give low priority to deep-well and safe-water provisioning. Likewise, time-use information on hours spent in caregiving for HIV/AIDS patients can provide vital information for developing a comprehensive health policy. As illustrated by the papers in the special issues of *Feminist Economics*, "Time Use, Unpaid Work, Poverty and Public Policy" (2010 and 2011), time-use research shows the impact of economic and social policies on the quality of life and progress in human development (Grown et al. 2010; Floro and Pichetpongso 2010).

Moreover, time-use statistics are playing an increasingly important role in the critique of government budgets and macroeconomic policies for their gender biases and building arguments for gender-aware policies. For example, in Spain the Personal Autonomy and Dependent Care Law (39/2006), which guaranteed public support for care of dependents, was approved and implemented in 2007, after empirical studies showed the large amount of hours women devoted to caring as part of their unpaid domestic labor (Eurofound 2014). Similarly, in South Korea, the realization of the serious demographic, social, and economic consequences brought about by the neglect of the unpaid care work burden of women as shown in time-use studies, has led to social policy to provide childcare subsidies and eldercare services (Park 2010; Yoon 2014). As Yoon (2014) shows, however, time-use studies continue to be important after the implementation of such policies in order to document the extent to which they transformed gender relations in care provision and redistributed care costs between the family, market, and the state.

The Accounting Project must be viewed not as an end in itself but as a means to understand who contributes to human well-being, and to what extent. While it may be the case that the data can be used for promoting "women's place in the home," this is a matter of political and ideological debate and not a question of whether such information should be collected. The concern that some groups might use the information for their own political agenda must be weighed against its use for a variety of positive outcomes, including the more effective design of gender-aware social, labor, and economic policies.

#### Care Work is Qualitatively Different

Another objection, focused on the care component of unpaid work, springs from the notion that this type of activity involves personal and relational aspects that make it qualitatively different from market work and other types of unpaid work. Himmelweit (1995) raised questions about the merits of the

Accounting Project itself, particularly "whether the best way for women's contribution to be appreciated [is] to force it into a pre-existing category of 'work'" (p. 2). In the first place, caring, or caregiving, encompasses both physical and emotional aspects; while physical care "might to some extent be independent of the relation between the carer and the person cared for," the emotional component requires that "the person doing the caring is inseparable from the care given" (Himmelweit 1995: 8). Moreover, caring contains its own reward in the fulfillment the caregiver derives. These two features make caregiving qualitatively different from wage work and therefore very difficult to quantify and value. Himmelweit concludes that not everything needs to be seen as "work."<sup>24</sup>

This objection also highlights the shift in feminist work on unpaid work away from the economic reductionist formulations of unpaid work that focused on its function for social reproduction, particularly of the labor force. The discursive shift from "unpaid (domestic) work" to "care work" was partly due to dissatisfaction with these formulations but partly due to the transformation of households in the course of market expansion and capitalist development (Esquivel 2011). The decline in the amount of housework required by middle- and upper-class families due to reliance on market substitutes, especially in high-income countries, has meant that "home life is becoming more and more concentrated in sharing meals or telling bedtime stories for which substitutes cannot be purchased" (Folbre and Nelson 2000: 129).<sup>25</sup>

Along similar lines, other feminist economists have argued that something essential is lost in the process of attaching monetary value to unpaid care work in the quest for making it visible. There are fears that imputing monetary value to unpaid care work opens up caregiving to being subjected to the norms of the market, i.e. the price reflects the opportunity cost in terms of foregone earnings. Another issue is that the quality of care can differ substantially, for example in the case of childcare, meals, nurturing services, when provided through the market as opposed to the unpaid caregiver. Folbre argues that when caring work is paid it will likely "corrode ties of affection and obligation" (Dorman et al. 1996: 83). Similarly, Peter Dorman warned about how the "greased chute" of the spread of market ideals leads to the "marketization of just about everything" (Dorman et al. 1996: 75), while Deirdre McCloskey wrote that if childcare, friendly listening, and similar care activities "were paid labor the love would disappear. Love is, in this regard, the opposite of market exchange" (McCloskey 1996: 138). More recently, Julie Nelson (2010) argued that marketization brings with it norms of individualism and self-interest, which are incompatible with the generous, close, emotionally satisfying characteristics that we want in authentic care relationships.

To be sure, some paid care services are not likely to provide the same quality of care and emotional support that a loving family member can offer. However, it is not difficult to find exceptions to these cases. Indeed, there can be market-based care that provides selfless emotional support beyond the exchange contract. For example, motives associated with solidarity, altruism, and caring can be found in the performance of paid caregiving provided by nurses, nursing aides, elderly care assistants, nannies, and daycare center workers. As Braunstein et al. (2011) point out, there can be variety of motives underlying the performance of care work: altruism, self-interest, and the desire/compulsion to fulfill social norms or be useful to others.<sup>26</sup> Hence, it is difficult to argue that there are no personal and relational aspects in services offered in exchange for a monetary reward. Moreover, one cannot assume or idealize families to be sites of mutual caring and love and respect, given the problem of domestic violence (Duvvury et al. 2012). Second, many unpaid activities performed by primary caregivers at home are not necessarily self-fulfilling, nor do they incorporate feelings of care. There can be family care based on selfish expectations (an inheritance) or on some form of social coercion (as in the case of a wife having to take care of her in-laws even when there may not be much affection between them). Third, there are virtually no skills that are intrinsic to unpaid care work. To some degree the skills used in the household can be used in market work and vice versa. Thus, a paid nanny or nurse might provide a high quality of personal care with skills learned at home; and managerial skills learned in the labor market might be used as a way to reduce unpaid work time in the household, without reducing the quality of the service.

To sum up, while some feminists who make this argument against the Accounting Project provide important insights into the nature of caregiving, paid or unpaid, their arguments need to be seen in the broader context of what its measurement can achieve. It may be that something gets lost in the process of measuring the time input and estimating the monetary value of unpaid caring work, but a deeper understanding of the material and time dimensions of care work is crucial in demonstrating its importance for human welfare; it brings attention to the economic costs of care that are ignored in economic analysis and policymaking. These dimensions are just as important as the relational aspects of care and the social norms that determine who provides them.

Another incommensurability argument has centered around one of the main challenges to measuring unpaid work, particularly household work, namely, the difficulty of comparing it with market production. The presumption typically made is that unpaid household work requires lower skills and has lower productivity compared to that of wage labor.<sup>27</sup> As a result, some researchers and practitioners argue that monetary valuation of

non-market work is forced and misleading; and in fact, it can lead to the incorrect conclusion that the market provides perfect substitutes for non-market-produced services.

However, the main reasons for measuring and documenting unpaid work have more to do with making it visible and socially appreciated and for identifying its contribution to social well-being and the reproduction of human resources, than simply for making comparison with paid work. Issues of comparability should not deter us from acknowledging and understanding the crucial linkages between paid and unpaid work, in particular on how total work is shared in the household, and how one's time is allocated between paid and unpaid work, along with leisure and rest.

### Progress Towards Measurement and Valuation of Unpaid Work

Although questions on whether unpaid household work time should be measured continue to be raised, the last decades have witnessed significant progress in addressing conceptual and practical issues pertaining to the Accounting Project. This progress has proceeded mainly on three fronts: conceptual, theoretical, and methodological.

#### *Conceptualizing Work and the Economy*

The task of implementing the agenda of measuring unpaid work required two crucial steps: delineating work from non-work and redefining economic activity.

First, given the numerous and varied activities that are performed in the household, the question of which tasks to include as work has been an important topic of discussion. Margaret Reid's "third person" principle was adopted as the operational criterion. Accordingly, household production should refer to unpaid activities that can also be performed by another person for pay. Tasks such as shopping, cleaning, food preparation, and childcare are included as work under this criterion, while watching television, sleeping, reading, and getting dressed are not. While there are still some ambiguities, for example, the very rich or the ill might have a paid person to help them dress, the adoption of the third person principle represents an important step in setting a standard of definition that allows for comparisons between countries.<sup>28</sup>

Second, as discussed in Chapter 2, a significant shift has recently taken place in the conceptualization of economic activity by feminist economists and scholars since the late 1970s to include social reproduction and human

maintenance tasks that are not directly connected with the market. This redefinition demands that any measure of aggregate output include the production of all final goods and services that human beings need in order to survive and flourish, whether produced for and exchanged through the market, or produced in the home, communities, and social organizations without pay. This expanded concept of the economy has brought into question the conventional use of the SNA in the estimation of production and consumption and has led to the development of "satellite accounts" of aggregate household production, as discussed below.

#### *Theoretical Contributions*

On the theoretical front, major developments in economic modeling preceded or ran parallel to the Accounting Project. As discussed in Chapter 2, since the 1960s a variety of economic models have been developed to examine household production and the gender division of labor within the household, from the New Household Economics to mainstream bargaining models (Manser and Brown 1980; Thomas 1990; Bourguignon and Chiappori 1992). Critical of these approaches, feminist economists have suggested analytical frameworks that place greater emphasis on the social construction of gender roles that result in unequal division of labor and other asymmetric outcomes among household members (McCrate 1987; Sen 1990b; Agarwal 1997; Katz 1995; Braunstein and Folbre 2001; Doss 2013).

At the macroeconomic level, since the 1990s, feminist economists have developed gender-aware macroeconomic models that introduced unpaid work and gender differences in a variety of ways (Braunstein 2000; Fontana and Wood 2000; Ertürk and Çağatay 1995; Braunstein et al. 2011; Walters 1995). These models reveal the hidden costs and adverse consequences of economic policies in terms of unpaid work, women's well-being, feedback loops on future economic growth, and the nurturing and development of both present and future generations. Hence, they have provided a deeper understanding of how non-market production is necessary for the functioning of other economic sectors that conventionally have served as the domain for macroeconomic analysis.

#### *Measurement and Valuation Methods*

In practical terms, the Accounting Project faces two challenges: (a) where to obtain information on labor time spent on these activities; and (b) how to estimate the value of labor time. Efforts to address these concerns have resulted in several developments. First, there have been improvements in data-gathering methods to capture with greater accuracy the various types and amounts of unpaid work performed by men and women. In particular,

efforts by national statistical agencies, the United Nations, and time-use researchers have led to the construction of time-use surveys (TUS) that are suited to developing countries' conditions, leading to their implementation in nearly 100 developed and developing countries.<sup>29</sup> Second, approaches have evolved to measure the value of unpaid work and to produce a parallel "satellite account" that estimates the aggregate value of household production and can accompany a country's SNA (Ahmad and Koh 2011).

#### Role of Time-use Surveys

As recognized by the 19th ICLS of 2013, time-use surveys (TUS) have been invaluable in estimating the labor time contributed by household members and in measuring all forms of work (ILO 2013d). The detailed accounting provided by this type of survey allows for a comprehensive coverage of all activities and enables the documentation of tasks of short duration.<sup>30</sup> Whether by self-administered diary, recall interview or short-task list method, TUS typically asks a household member respondent to record the different activities and tasks that she/he undertakes during a given reference period—usually in the past 24 hours or in the past week.

In addition to providing information on unpaid labor time, TUS has also led to the improvement of data collection in the areas of SNA work that are missed in standard labor force surveys such as in India and South Africa, including subsistence production and informal jobs, for example, casual, contingent, and home-based work (Hirway and Jose 2011; Floro and Komatsu 2011). Comparing the National Sample Survey Organisation's 1999–2000 employment–unemployment survey in India with the findings of the 1998–99 pilot Indian Time Use Survey, Hirway and Jose (2011) show that the size of the workforce in India is much larger than estimated by the labor force survey. The widest gap between the labor-force and time-use survey estimates holds for urban women, whose workforce participation increases from an average of 12.8 percent to 30.9 percent, while urban men's participation increases from 51 to 59 percent. For rural women, the estimates more than double, rising from 25 percent to 58 percent.<sup>31</sup> In the case of South Africa, the 2000 national time-use survey was used by Floro and Komatsu (2011) to identify individuals who would have been classified as either not in the labor force (NLF) or unemployed by standard labor force surveys but who had actually performed subsistence production and casual and short-term jobs. Their study findings indicate that 11.1 percent of women and 15.8 percent of men who were classified as NLF spent an average of 2.6 hours and 3.6 hours per day respectively, in labor market activities. In addition, about 12 percent of unemployed women and 26.7 percent of unemployed men spent about 2.9 hours and 4.6 hours respectively in the labor market working in

very short-term jobs and in subsistence production (Floro and Komatsu 2011).

Admittedly, time-use surveys are costly to conduct and resource constraints have prompted some developing countries to adopt the least expensive approach, which utilizes stylized questions on specific tasks, referred to as "short-tasks list" method (Esquivel et al. 2008). For example, the 2001 Bolivian time-use survey listed only seven tasks, namely, taking care of children, cooking and cleaning, food shopping, laundering and ironing, minor repairing, production for self-consumption, and fuel and water collection. The respondent was then asked a yes/no question for each task and the "average time per day" as well as daily frequency. Similarly, in their 2003 time-use surveys Guinea and Nigeria used the recall interview method with a pre-listing of 9 and 14 activities respectively.

Unlike the systematized data collection of the SNA, the frequency and method of TUS data collection varies across countries. While countries such as Australia, Canada, France, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and the UK have collected them on a regular basis over a few decades, others have only collected the data once or twice.<sup>32</sup> Moreover, the sampling and survey designs tend to vary. This has made the development of international standardization and harmonization of time-use data quite challenging. Proponents of standardization have argued in favor of adopting the International Classification of Activities for Time Use Statistics (ICATUS) developed by the United Nations Statistics Division in 1997 and harmonizing time-use data across countries.<sup>33</sup>

However, standardization is difficult for developing countries, which face other practical difficulties that high-income countries, for the most part, do not. One serious concern, especially for the least developed countries, is the low literacy rate, making it difficult to use the time diary method, which is deemed to be more reliable (Juster and Stafford 1991). Second, many poor households do not commonly use a clock or watch to tell the time, casting doubt on the reliability of responses to short-tasks lists survey or time-use recall questions such as: "How long or how many minutes did you spend in (given) activity?"<sup>34</sup>

Many developing countries have approached time-use data collection in a pragmatic manner. They design their time-use surveys to suit local needs and budgets, aware that there are methodological trade-offs involved (Esquivel et al. 2008). Table 5.1 shows the differing objectives for conducting time-use surveys in a selected group of countries. Similarly, the type of activity classification is selected on the basis of the country's interest and political conditions. For example, South Africa conducted its national TUS in 2000 primarily to assist in the conceptualization and measurement of all

types of work and in making more **gender-responsive policies** (Budlender 2008). Other countries, such as Bhutan and Laos, have other objectives for collecting time-use survey data including the estimation of Gross National Happiness index, measuring productivity in farming, and calculating labor input in small businesses. Time-use surveys in high-income countries, on the other hand, are mostly used for measuring time spent on interactive and mobile technologies, leisure time, quality of life, and travel or commuting time.<sup>35</sup>

Countries also differ in the mode of collecting time-use data. South Africa has implemented a stand-alone TUS with supplementary demographic and other household and community-level information. Other developing countries collected TUS information by attaching time-use modules to other national surveys including household surveys (Thailand, Oman, Laos, Bolivia, Mexico, Tunisia), labor force surveys (China, Costa Rica, Bangladesh, Ecuador, Nepal), health and nutrition surveys (China), or the Living Standards Measurement Survey (Ghana, Guatemala, Madagascar, Malawi, Sierra Leone) (Esquivel et al. 2008). Collecting time-use information using modules to ongoing surveys has proved to be a viable strategy for meeting limited budgets and it is a less costly method for developing longitudinal data that can be valuable as monitoring tools.

Another difficulty that arises in both rich and low-income economies has to do with the prevailing gender norms and patterns of socialization that can lead to underreporting of certain activities, typically childcare. Time-use research has shown that childcare frequently shows up as a secondary activity (Ironmonger 2004; Bittman et al. 2004). Supervision and child-minding as well as care of sick and disabled persons often takes the form of a background activity, which the respondents may not report. For example, childcare may be done in a collective manner by mothers who gather for a chat in the afternoon. The social nature of the activity may be perceived as socializing, and hence reported by women as “leisure.” Likewise, women are often socialized to take on certain tasks such as childcare without being aware that they are performing a task and therefore do not report it. Hence, when a woman carries her baby on her back while tending to her vegetables she may report only vegetable gardening as her activity.

Researchers have shown that “multitasking,” that is, the performance of overlapping or simultaneous tasks, especially by women and involving care work, is not an isolated phenomenon, nor is it limited to developing countries.<sup>36</sup> To address the problem of underreporting of simultaneous activities, time-use researchers have developed a number of methods. One approach is to ask about primary and secondary activities in the same time segment. Second, in high-income countries where time diaries are used,

**Table 5.1** Objectives of national time-use surveys, selected countries, various years

COUNTRY	SURVEY YEAR	SURVEY OBJECTIVES
Bhutan	2007–08	To use time-use studies to measure Gross National Happiness index.
		To understand how people spend their time on different activities to determine their happiness.
		To study time spent on unpaid work (household work, care and so on) linked with socio-economic characteristics of respondents.
Cuba	2001	To gain information on changes in and the status of performing unpaid work, observing the time distribution by activity.
Ecuador	2003–04, 2005	To collect information on the time spent on unpaid care by men and women in informal/subsistence work.
Ghana	1991 <sup>a</sup>	To collect information on the time spent by men and women in Ghana.
		To collect information on living standards of people in Ghana.
India	1998–99	To collect and analyze time-use patterns of men and women.
		To generate a more reliable estimate of workforce.
		To estimate and value unpaid work.
Laos	1997–98 <sup>b</sup>	To develop a conceptual framework and a suitable methodology for designing and conducting time-use studies in India.
		To measure productivity in farming, mainly rice cultivation.
Madagascar	2001 <sup>a</sup>	To measure labor input work in small-scale business and informal sector.
		To understand sharing of paid and unpaid work by men and women.
Malawi	2003–04 <sup>a</sup> 2004 <sup>c</sup>	To estimate time spent on subsistence and informal work by men and women.
		To collect information on the time spent by men and women on household work, collection of fuel, agricultural activities, fishing, and so on.

*continued . . .*

Table 5.1 Continued

COUNTRY	SURVEY YEAR	SURVEY OBJECTIVES
		To estimate unpaid domestic work performed by men and women.
Palestine	1999–2000	To provide data on the time spent by people on different activities for policymaking and decision-making.
South Africa	2000, 2009–10	To measure and analyze time spent by men and women. To provide information on division of paid and unpaid work by men and women. To incorporate unpaid work in satellite accounts. To gain more insight on productive activities such as subsistence work, casual work, and work in the informal sector.
Tanzania	2004, 2006 <sup>c</sup>	To estimate workforce employed in paid work, including informal work. To collect data on time spent by men and women in unpaid work.
Thailand	2000–01	To get comprehensive knowledge on how people over ten years of age spend their time on different paid and unpaid work. To understand gender differences in paid and unpaid work. To provide data to markedly improve the estimates of labor contribution to GDP. To provide internationally comparable time use data for the country.

Notes: <sup>a</sup> Part of the Living Standards Measurement Survey (LSMS).

<sup>b</sup> Part of the Household Income and Expenditure and Consumption Survey.

<sup>c</sup> Part of Labor Force Survey.

Source: Adapted from Antonopoulos and Hirway (2010); Centre for Time Use Research- information gateway, <http://www-2009.timeuse.org/information/studies/> Accessed May 7, 2013.

researchers have incorporated context information in parents' diaries (for example by asking "who else was with you during this activity?") or have combined time-use information of parents and children to obtain better estimates of the care provided (Mullan 2010).<sup>37</sup> These innovations in time-use data collection have provided more accurate measures of unpaid care work especially by women (for example, Bittman and Pixley 1997;

Ironmonger 1996; Floro and Miles 2003; Floro and Pichetpongsa 2010). In turn, more fine-grain time-use data have promoted their use for framing public policy and guiding social policies (Budlender 2010; Grown et al. 2010).

#### Development of Valuation Methods

Parallel to the progress in data collection, there have been methodological developments in the valuation of unpaid work. One method is based on the imputation of a shadow value to labor time, referred to as *input-related method*, and the second method is based on the imputation of market prices to goods and services produced by unpaid labor, referred to as *output-related method*. For the input-related method, the key question focuses on how to impute the market value of unpaid labor time. Three valuation techniques have been identified in response to this question:<sup>38</sup>

- The *global substitute* method, which uses the cost of a hired domestic worker who carries out various household tasks.
- The *specialized substitute* method, which applies the average wage of each "specialist," such as gardener, cook, or nanny, to each specific household task.
- The *opportunity cost* method, which applies the market wage that could be earned by the person performing unpaid work.<sup>39</sup>

The first two methods are also referred to as *replacement cost* method. Each method has some advantages and disadvantages. The global substitute method tends to give low estimates, given that domestic workers are at the lower end of the wage scale, thus reinforcing the tendency to assume that any type of unpaid work requires little or no skill and hence is of low productivity. On the other hand, the specialized substitute method would be more indicative of the market value of the different household tasks, assuming that such specialized markets exist. Its use raises the practical problems of disaggregating unpaid work time according to specific tasks and of obtaining a specific market wage for each.

The opportunity cost method produces a wide range of estimates, depending on the skills and earnings level of the individual involved. Hence, this method can result in rather absurd estimates; for example, a meal produced by a doctor will be imputed a higher value than an identical meal prepared by a market vendor even if the latter might be a better cook. It also reproduces any gender bias embedded in labor market operations and reflected in the gender wage gap, resulting in greater imputed value for unpaid work performed by male household members, compared to that of female household members.

In practice, the replacement cost approach, and the global substitute version, are most commonly used, given the relative ease of obtaining data on domestic workers' wages. Some researchers use two different wage rates to generate lower-bound and high-variant estimates of the value of an activity. For example, Folbre (2008) uses the average hourly wage of a childcare worker and the median wage for all workers to generate two estimates of the value of parental time devoted to childcare for two family types in the US.<sup>40</sup> This exercise leads Folbre to conclude that the conventional estimates of the cost of children (based solely on monetary expenditures on children by parents) overstate parental standards of living and understate the contribution parents make to the economy.

The output-related method involves estimating the value of output produced by unpaid labor, net of the input costs. This approach has the general advantage of being comparable to the accounting method used in the SNA, which uses the market prices for goods and services, rather than time-use data for its calculation. For practical reasons, however, the input methods are more commonly used especially in developing countries, since the labor time spent doing unpaid work can be obtained in time-use surveys.

It is important to note that the estimated value of household production is likely to vary, depending on the method used.<sup>41</sup> The input and output approaches tend to produce different valuation estimates especially in a labor-intensive chore such as childcare (Bittman et al. 2004).<sup>42</sup> Not surprisingly, estimates of aggregate household production using replacement cost approach tend to be lower compared to the opportunity cost valuation method, as shown in Table 5.2. The replacement cost estimates ranged from 53.3 percent in Turkey to 11 percent in Norway, while the opportunity cost estimates varied between 83 percent and 30 percent of GDP for these countries.

In recent years, more nuanced methods of valuing household production and unpaid work have been adopted, such as combining or simply juxtaposing replacement and opportunity cost measures. They put emphasis on what is termed "quality-adjusted" replacement cost as a method of input valuation (Abraham and Mackie 2005). Accordingly, time-use survey data are linked with other survey information to factor in the level of household technology that might be in use in particular households. Overall, the establishment of guidelines by international organizations such as the United Nations Statistics Division, and the accumulation of experience in measuring and valuing unpaid work have laid a foundation from which to proceed in accounting for women's unpaid work and their contributions.<sup>43</sup>

#### Development of Satellite Accounts on Household Production

An important outcome of the efforts to measure household production is the development of supplementary accounts that would permit the generation

**Table 5.2** Estimates of household production for 2008, selected countries

	REPLACEMENT COST APPROACH		OPPORTUNITY COST APPROACH	
	USD PER CAPITA <sup>A</sup>	% OF GDP	USD PER CAPITA <sup>A</sup>	% OF GDP
Australia	9,682	24.73	26,144	53.54
Austria	8,708	21.85	23,833	49.08
Belgium	8,577	23.26	22,928	50.44
Canada	8,882	22.84	22,902	47.95
Denmark	8,731	22.11	23,839	49.43
Estonia	8,999	41.59	21,861	71.35
Finland	8,425	22.29	22,741	49.20
France	8,119	23.72	21,666	51.16
Germany	9,488	25.53	24,726	52.99
Hungary	8,384	40.50	19,524	67.13
Ireland	8,142	19.09	23,248	45.78
Italy	9,429	28.34	24,255	56.81
Japan	6,546	19.31	19,310	47.74
Korea	6,031	22.44	15,605	47.42
Mexico	7,576	49.55	18,064	79.00
Netherlands	9,397	21.91	24,875	47.58
New Zealand	9,182	31.58	23,008	60.14
Norway	6,690	11.04	20,206	30.02
Poland	8,484	46.97	20,340	76.62
Portugal	9,668	38.73	22,854	65.99
Slovenia	9,808	33.54	24,058	61.61
Spain	8,478	25.56	22,594	54.25
Sweden	9,024	22.86	23,936	49.35
Turkey	7,971	53.27	18,934	82.56
United Kingdom	8,861	24.07	23,028	50.41
United States	8,497	18.12	22,720	41.01

Notes: <sup>A</sup> The USD per capita values are expressed in purchasing power parity adjusted terms. The estimates are obtained by taking the difference between GDP per capita and extended GDP (=GDP + Household Production) per capita estimates in Ahmad and Koh (2011), Table 10.

Source: Ahmad and Koh (2011), Tables 9 and 10 (pp. 30 and 31).

of “extended” estimates of GNP (UN 1989). In a pioneering effort to provide a comprehensive picture of economic activity in the late 1980s, Statistics Norway created a satellite account and estimated the value of unpaid household work using national time-use surveys. This value amounted to almost 40 percent of GDP (Aslaksen and Koren 1996: 67). Another example is the development of satellite accounts for household production in Australia. Duncan Ironmonger (1996) provided estimates of the economic value added by the unpaid work and own capital of households, which he termed “Gross Household Product.” He showed that the unpaid labor inputs (in hours, whether used in a main or secondary work activity) in Australian households are approximately the same magnitude as the labor inputs provided in the market (estimated on the basis of SNA data). The satellite accounts of household production now accompany official national accounts for several countries, as shown in Table 5.3.

**Table 5.3** Selected countries with satellite household production accounts to SNA

COUNTRY	YEAR	METHOD USED	ESTIMATED VALUE OF HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION (BILLIONS)	CURRENCY	% OF GDP*
Finland	2001	Input method	62.80	€	33.10
Germany	2001	Input method	820.00	€	29.40
Finland	2001	Wage concept	57.27	€	31.00
Germany	2001	Wage concept	1008.00	€	34.00
Australia	2000	Opportunity cost approach	471.00	2002 AUS\$	43.80
Canada	1998	Replacement cost approach	297.30	CAN\$	33.00
United Kingdom	2000	Output method	877.30	£	37.40
Colombia	2012–13	Specialized substitute wage method	135.87	Colombian Peso	20.40

Notes: \* All percentages are calculated using extended GDP (GDP + SNA household production + non-SNA household production), except for Canada.

Sources: Ahmad and Koh (2011); Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística (DANE) (2014).

## What Difference Does Accounting Make?

### *Monitoring the Gendered Trends and Patterns of Unpaid Work*

As the number of countries that have implemented time-use surveys has increased the availability of statistics on the amount of time women spend in unpaid work and the unequal distribution of the work burden between women and men has expanded. The estimates as shown in Table 5.2 indicate that the economic value of unpaid work can be large. However, as Table 5.4 illustrates, the daily unpaid work hours of women varies widely across countries, ranging from an average of three hours (Benin and South Africa) to over six hours per person per day (Turkey and Italy). Men, on the other hand, spend an average of less than half an hour per day on unpaid work in some countries, including Madagascar, Cambodia, Pakistan, and Republic of Korea, while they spend a little over three hours per day in Bulgaria, Estonia, France, Poland, Slovenia, and Sweden.

A significant proportion of women’s work involves the performance of unpaid care and household work. Strikingly, Figure 5.1 shows that women perform anywhere from 59 percent (in Sweden) to 89 percent (in India) of the total time devoted to these activities. Figure 5.2, reproduced from the 2012 *World Development Report*, reveals that women do most of the housework and care work, even when they perform most of the market work hours done by the couple (World Bank 2011).<sup>47</sup> In Ghana for instance, wives tend to do more than 80 percent of housework even when they earn all of the household income. And in France, women provide half of care work time even if they are the sole earner in the family.

It must be noted however that the unpaid work data used in Table 5.4 and Figures 5.1 and 5.2 are based on time-use surveys that have different sampling designs and data collection methods.<sup>45</sup> Recognizing the need for caution in making comparisons, these estimates nonetheless provide a valuable glimpse of the general pattern of unpaid labor contributed by women and men across countries.

The level of unpaid domestic and care work and the gender division of labor are not static. They change in response to labor market conditions, number and age of household members, policy reforms, and a host of other demographic and social factors such as urbanization, migration, and divorce rates. Changes in technology, earnings, and access to social services can cause households and individuals to shift time between activities. Studies in high-income countries have shown that while large differences persist in men’s and women’s time in paid and unpaid work, these converged between the 1960s and 1990s (World Bank 2011).<sup>46</sup> The change is primarily due to the reduction in mothers’ unpaid work and an increase in the case of fathers’ as mothers’ labor force participation has continued to rise.

**Table 5.4** Time women and men spent in unpaid work (in hours and minutes per day)

REGION	COUNTRY	YEAR OF SURVEY	WOMEN'S MEAN TIME	MEN'S MEAN TIME	MEAN DIFFER- ENCE (W-M)	
Africa	Benin (urban)	1998	3:15	1:00	2:15	
	Benin (rural)	1998	3:15	1:05	2:10	
	Madagascar (urban)	2001	3:45	0:55	2:50	
	Madagascar (rural)	2001	3:30	0:40	2:50	
	Mauritius	2003	4:37	1:13	3:24	
	South Africa	200	3:36	1:23	2:13	
	United Republic of Tanzania	2006	4:13	1:15	2:58	
Asia	Armenia	2004	5:46	1:06	4:40	
	Cambodia	2004	3:54	0:56	2:58	
	China	2008	3:54	1:31	2:23	
	Iraq	2007	5:47	1:00	4:47	
	Kyrgyzstan	2005	5:42	2:19	3:23	
	Lao People's Democratic Republic	2002/03	2:30	0:36	1:54	
	Mongolia	2000	4:36	2:10	2:26	
	Occupied Palestinian Territory	1999/2000	5:01	1:16	3:45	
	Oman	1999/2000	4:56	1:46	3:10	
	Pakistan	2007	4:47	0:28	4:19	
	Republic of Korea	2004	3:31	0:44	2:47	
	Turkey	2006	6:11	1:28	4:43	
	More developed countries	Australia	2006	5:13	2:52	2:21
		Belgium	2005	4:38	2:57	1:41
Bulgaria		2001/02	5:29	3:06	2:23	

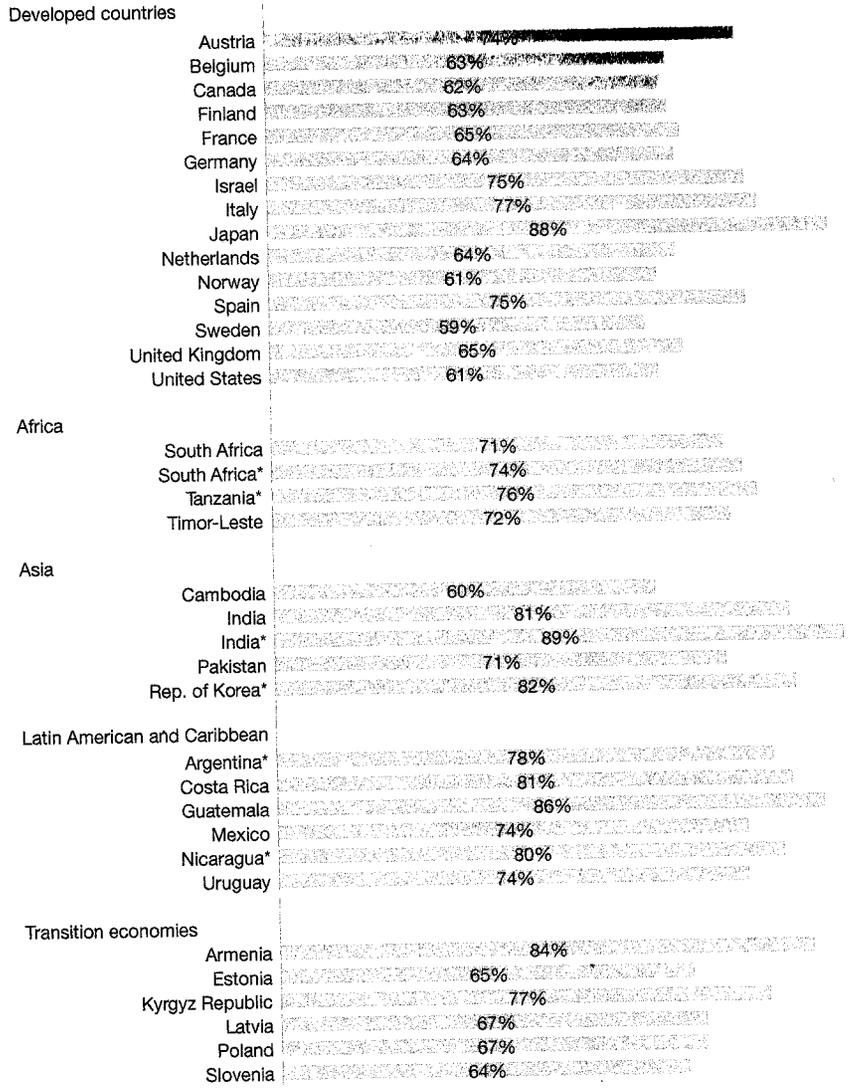
continued . . .

**Table 5.4** Continued

REGION	COUNTRY	YEAR OF SURVEY	WOMEN'S MEAN TIME	MEN'S MEAN TIME	MEAN DIFFER- ENCE (W-M)
	Canada	2005	4:12	2:42	1:30
	Denmark	2001	3:30	2:26	1:04
	Estonia	1999/2000	5:29	3:11	2:18
	Finland	1999/2000	4:34	2:51	1:43
	France	1998/99	4:54	2:45	2:09
	Germany	2001/02	5:01	3:07	1:54
	Hungary	2000	4:57	2:39	2:18
	Ireland*	2005	5:07	1:42	3:25
	Italy	2002/03	6:06	2:06	4:00
	Japan	2006	4:18	1:08	3:10
	Latvia	2003	4:39	2:24	2:15
	Lithuania	2003	5:08	2:46	2:22
	Netherlands	2005	4:01	2:06	1:55
	New Zealand	1999	4:46	2:46	2:00
	Norway	2000/01	4:19	2:53	1:26
	Poland	2003/04	5:38	3:08	2:30
	Portugal	1999	5:02	1:17	3:45
	Romania	2000	5:12	2:42	2:30
	Slovenia	2000/01	5:26	3:10	2:16
	Spain	2002/03	5:32	2:00	3:32
	Sweden	2000/01	4:21	3:07	1:14
	The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	2004	5:42	1:57	3:45
	United Kingdom	2000/01	5:06	2:55	2:11
	United States of America	2006	4:19	2:40	1:39

Note: \* Data refer to weekly average. Paid work refers to employment and study.

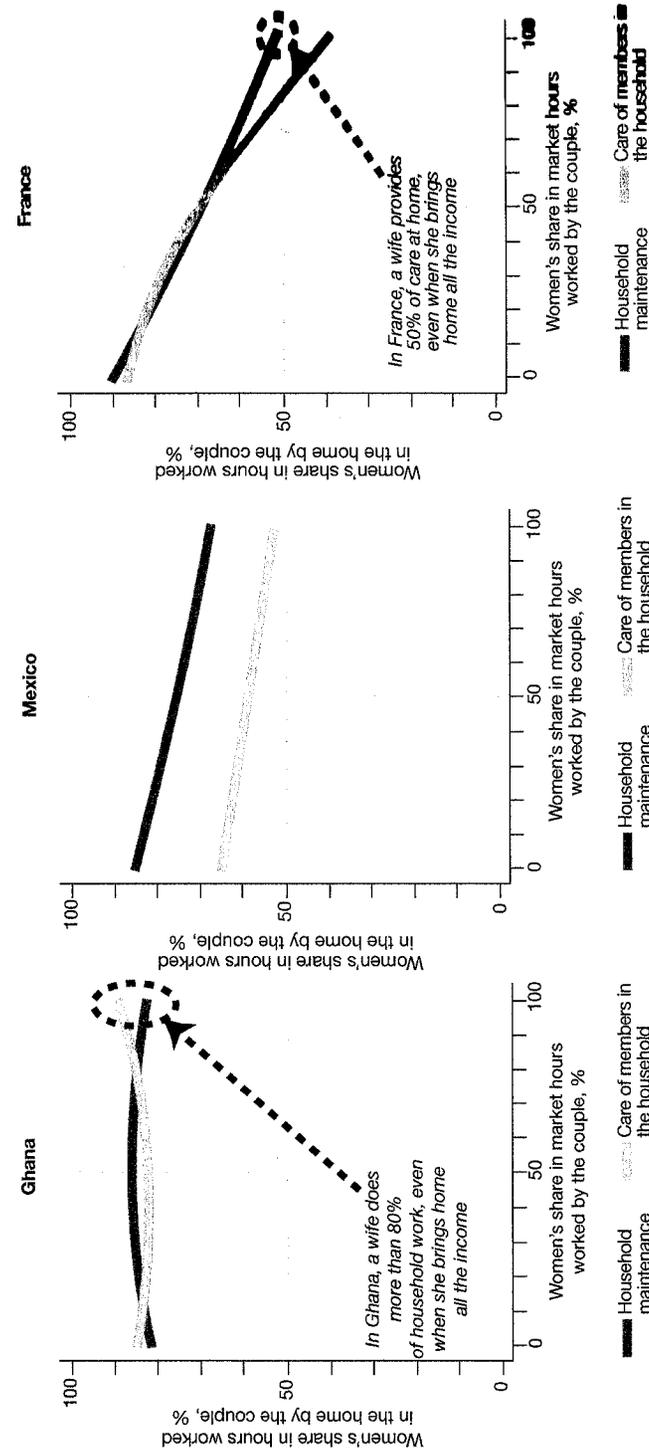
Source: UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2010), Table 4c, p. 211.



**Figure 5.1** Percentage of unpaid care and household work performed by women, by country and region

Sources: World Bank (2011), Figure 5.9, p. 219; Budlender (2007)

Note: \* From Budlender (2007), Figure 4, p. 14.



**Figure 5.2** Patterns of women's share of total household work, by women's share of total market work (at household level), selected countries.

Source: World Bank: 2012 World Development Report: Gender Equality and Development. 2011, Figure 5.10. under CC BY 3.0 IGO license.

<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWDR2012/Resources/7778105-1299699685837786210-131593622006/Complete-Report.pdf>

However, these trends can easily reverse. For example, convergence in Australia seems to have stopped and taken a reversal between 1997 and 2006 in the context of increasing labor market deregulation and the spread of “long-hours culture,” beyond the 40-hour work week norm (Craig et al. 2010). As a result, the 2006 division of unpaid work in households with children was not substantially different from that in 1992. The return to greater gender disparity in paid and unpaid work took place during the government’s adoption of neoliberal and socially conservative policies. Berik and Kongar (2013) show a similar reversal after a small narrowing of the unpaid work gap between mothers and fathers during the US recession of 2007–09.<sup>47</sup> These examples show the strong influence of social policies and macro-economic conditions on the gender distribution of time being spent in housework and care work.

It should be pointed out that the convergence trend (or its reversal) has been identified on the basis of primary activities, without taking into consideration the extent to which secondary work activities (or multiple tasks) are performed simultaneously. As noted earlier, women accommodate the increase in labor market participation by reducing leisure time and by performing overlapping work activities. The work intensification resulting from overlapping activities could require a revision of the convergence thesis; the gender gap in unpaid work time might not have declined if women had increased their multi-tasking in household chores and care work more than men.

Cross-country studies have found a strong relationship between types of welfare regimes and the total workload of spouses and the distribution of housework between them (Fuwa 2004; Goodin et al. 2008; Gálvez-Muñoz et al. 2011; Kan et al. 2011). The comparison of total work time of women and men across 15 European countries by Gálvez-Muñoz et al. (2011) for example, reveals that those with considerably high state provisioning in social services and benefits such as Sweden and Norway show gender parity or near gender parity. This outcome contrasts with the longer work time (at least one hour per day) experienced by women in Southern and Eastern European countries such as Lithuania, Slovenia, Estonia, Hungary, Italy, and Spain, which have relatively low social expenditures per capita and weaker family policies. These findings are consistent with those based on the longitudinal Multinational Time Use Study (MTUS) data for 1961–2004 (Kan et al. 2011; Fisher and Gershuny 2013). Figure 5.3 shows the more rapid decline in women’s proportion of total unpaid work in countries with extensive welfare policies, extended parental leaves, and subsidized childcare, such as the Nordic countries, compared to those with weaker welfare regimes as in Southern Europe. The variation in the rates of decline in women’s share of domestic work across the different policy regimes is indicative of the effect of social and other public policies on gender equality.

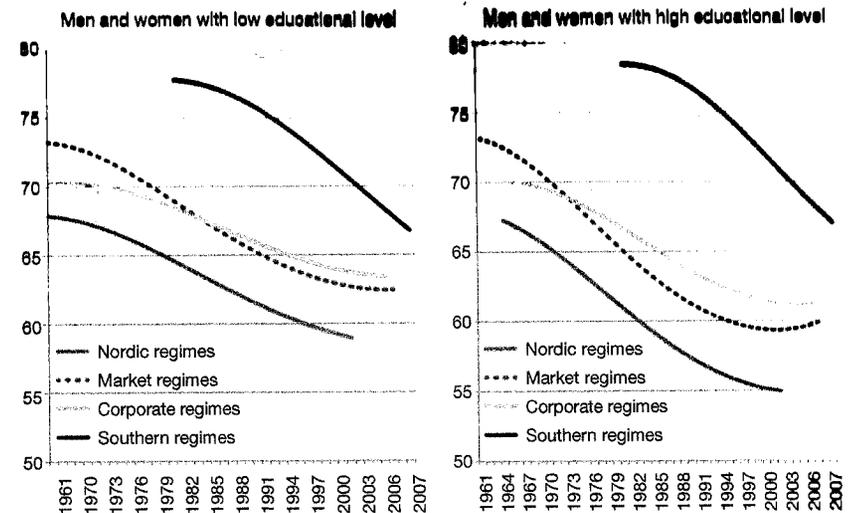


Figure 5.3 Trends in women’s share of total unpaid work (%), 1961–2007, by type of welfare regime

Source: Gershuny and Fisher (2013), Figure 3.

Note: Total unpaid work time of women and men, both aged 40, in couple households with children.

### Enhancing Our Understanding of Poverty, Inequality, and Well-being

#### Time Poverty and Work Intensity

The Accounting Project, along with the early work of scholars like Claire Vickery on time poverty and the development of the capabilities approach, has brought attention to less recognized forms of deprivation such as the intensification of working time and lack of time to develop a person’s capabilities. According to the capabilities approach, any inquiry into people’s well-being must involve asking not only how much people earn but also how they use their time in order to acquire the goods and services to meet their livelihoods. Time poverty is a serious constraint on individual well-being as it prevents having adequate rest and sleep, enjoying leisure, and/or taking part in community/social life. The amount of unpaid work performed particularly by women—as shown in Table 5.4—in addition to paid work that many do, can lead to stress and overwork. In recent decades, a growing body of social science research has shown that chronic and severe time pressures put on balancing family and work life have serious implications for the worker’s health and other functioning (Hyder et al. 2005). This

research has led to the construction of two time-related measures of poverty and well-being namely, time poverty and work intensity.

The notion of time poverty was first developed by Claire Vickery (1977) who argued that official poverty measures do not correctly measure household needs for they neglect the importance of labor time necessary to meet them. She introduced the concept of “time poverty” and developed a method for identifying households whose combined money income and available time are deemed insufficient to provide a standard of living above the poverty line.<sup>48</sup> More recently, researchers constructed a time-poverty threshold in order to identify those who work long hours out of necessity, not out of choice, such that they are deemed to be “time poor” (Goodin et al. 2008; Burchardt 2008; Bardasi and Wodon 2010; Zacharias et al. 2012). According to a 12-hour time poverty threshold, Gammage (2010) estimates that in 2000 in Guatemala an average of 33 percent of women and 14 percent of men were time poor. When examined by income quintile, women experienced between two and three times more time poverty than men across quintiles.

Studies have shown that persons who are time poor are likely to cope by multi-tasking, or performing secondary work activities in conjunction with another (primary) activity such as child-minding and cooking, or childcare and market work (Roldan 1985; Baruch et al. 1987; Benton 1989; Floro and Miles 2003; Floro and Pichetpongsa 2010). The multiplicity of roles that women perform, as income earners, principal housework and care providers has led to the construction of a “work intensity” measure.<sup>49</sup> Work intensity refers to the length of an average (paid and unpaid) working day and the incidence of “likely to be stressful” overlapping work activities. Consonant with the concept of poverty as capability deprivation, work intensity measures the time spent in doing two or more tasks at the same time or through frequent switching within a given slot. The longer the time an individual performs two or more simultaneous tasks, the greater is the amount of stress generated from the work process, especially when the activities at hand require continued concentration or energy. While time poverty can be measured on the basis of time use on primary activities, if secondary data are also compiled the time poverty rate of women increases more than men’s rate because women are the ones who typically engage in overlapping tasks. For example, Diksha Arora’s research in northern Mozambique shows that when time spent on simultaneous care work while enjoying leisure is accounted for, daily work hours of women go up from 11.70 hours to 12.42 hours while men’s total work day is virtually unchanged (increases from 6.42 to 6.46 hours) (Arora 2014). This gender gap reflects women’s experience of carrying out care work during their leisure time and not reporting care as work, unless asked about simultaneous activities.

### Paid and Unpaid Work: The Continuing Debate

As an increasing number of countries implement time-use surveys, time-use data can be used to examine new research questions that emerged or became prominent in the new millennium for the design of policies to support care provision or alleviate workloads. In particular, it is important to keep track of what is happening to unpaid work, along with paid work hours, as a result of a number of developments that suggest care needs are growing.

The major developments that signal growth of care needs have to do with women’s increasing labor force participation since the 1980s in a context of aging populations and rising healthcare needs and inadequate or declining government provisioning of social services. These trends have in fact developed into the so-called “care crisis” affecting high-income countries but also beginning to be felt in some developing countries. As a result, the debate on the importance of unpaid work to policymaking continues.

First, in most countries the increased participation of women in the labor market has brought to the forefront of social and employment policy debates the tensions around the distribution of family work. Women have increasingly been taking on the dual responsibilities of income earners and caregivers. Moreover, urbanization, migration, and the nuclearization of households, especially in urban areas, have undermined the traditional caregiving support provided by kinship networks so that families are further stressed to find their own solutions to meet their care needs. Thus, attempts to meet the demands of both paid and unpaid work have been shown to lead to long hours of work and stress, especially for low-income workers, as shown in the study among home-based workers in Thailand (Floro and Pichetpongsa 2010).

Second, the demographic changes witnessed over the last few decades in many countries, such as lower fertility rates, longer life expectancy, and urbanization have intensified the need for care of the elderly. In many countries, fertility rates have reached levels below replacement, such as in Spain, Italy, Japan, and South Korea (Benería 2009; Floro 2012). In developing countries, major health concerns such as HIV/AIDS, dengue, and malaria have contributed to the increased time spent on caregiving. Hence, the crisis of care is already being felt in many countries, intensified by the fact that, as Mary Daly (2001: 6) has argued, “care work tends to be squeezed to the margins of many people’s lives.”

In turn, the rise in unpaid caregiving hours can adversely affect labor force participation and earnings (Lilly et al. 2007; Friedemann-Sánchez and Griffin 2011). Market liberalization policies reinforce the notion that workers and their families should find their own solutions to deal with family and care responsibilities, albeit these solutions are conditioned by social class. Historically and in the present, hiring domestic workers, typically women,

is a common solution for middle-income and upper-class families in both developing and high-income countries—Spain, South Africa, Kenya and the Philippines (ILO 2007; Carrasco and Domínguez 2011). This is not an option for many low-income workers, who have to find a way to combine employment and unpaid care work. The study by Vo et al. (2007) among working parents in Vietnam found that 63 percent of one or both parents (the majority of whom are mothers) lost income or promotions or had difficulty retaining jobs due to their caregiving responsibilities.

Studies show that household and care responsibilities are one of the reasons why women often turn to informal employment. For example, 40 percent of mothers in the slums of Guatemala City cited lack of childcare as a key reason for not taking formal economy jobs where children could not accompany them (Quisumbing et al. 2003). Survey evidence also shows that many women in Costa Rica have opted to take on informal employment that involves low wages and no benefits because of the need for flexible work hours (Ramírez and Rosés 2005). Time-use data are needed to document the amount and gender distribution of the changing workload in households as they face increasing care needs or cope by taking on informal jobs.

Third, the general deterioration of labor market conditions worldwide, brought about by the interplay of technological change, firm restructuring, and neoliberal policies, amplifies the need to monitor the level and distribution of unpaid work. Those who are unemployed, underemployed, and face unstable and low incomes in labor markets are likely to develop coping mechanisms that involve greater reliance on unpaid work for meeting their needs. These private solutions may involve an increase in unpaid domestic and care work, volunteer work, and subsistence work and unpaid family labor on farms and enterprises in an effort to substitute for market purchases that are no longer affordable. Under the current conventions these changes in time use are not captured in labor force statistics, but can be captured in time-use surveys. The pressures to substitute home-produced goods and services using unpaid labor are particularly acute in countries with weak or non-existent unemployment compensation and social protection schemes. The increase in unpaid work however is not necessarily shouldered equally among household members; gender norms tend to put much of the additional work burden on female members (Berik and Kongar 2013; Benería and Martínez-Iglesias 2014).

Related to these trends, market reforms associated with contemporary globalization have resulted in shrinking resources for social services, and inadequate government provisioning can increase the unpaid labor in housework and volunteer work. To be sure, until the 2008 crisis the majority of the OECD countries had made important strides in extending paid parental

leave and expanding public and subsidized childcare (Benería and Martínez-Iglesias 2010; 2014). While there are a variety of social policies in OECD countries, which affect affordability and access to care, the level of publicly financed care is inadequate in most countries (Gornick and Meyers 2003; Floro and Meurs 2009; İlkcaracan 2013a).

Post-Soviet countries had achieved high rates of preschool participation (ages 3–6) in the 1980s, ranging from around 70 percent or more in the European areas to about 20–50 percent in Central Asia and the Caucasus. But these rates have fallen in Central Asia and the Caucasus since 1990, as state subsidies, household incomes, and access to education have decreased (UNICEF 2008; Giddings et al. 2007). The trend towards the shrinking of social welfare schemes, in high-income and post-Soviet countries alike, has made it increasingly difficult for women and men to balance the time demands of their jobs and family life. In China, for example, recent reforms that reduced public care services have increased the time women devoted to caring for elder kin, particularly parents-in-law, resulting in their reduced participation in paid labor and earnings (Liu et al. 2010).

In developing countries, government support for care provisioning remains limited or declining. In some developing countries there are efforts to address childcare needs by providing child support grants to all low-income people (in South Africa) and developing childcare policies and establishing publicly provided or subsidized daycare (in Colombia, Mexico, Argentina, and Brazil) (Niño-Zarazúa et al. 2012; Patel 2012).<sup>50</sup> An evaluation of the effects of these policies in terms of the changes in workload, its distribution in the household, and the effects on time poverty requires systematic statistical information on unpaid work. In Colombia, a 2012 national law mandates the government to collect time-use data and to monitor trends in unpaid work (Rey de Marulanda 2012; López-Montaña 2013). This has led to the collection of the country's first national time-use survey data in 2012 and the production of Colombia's satellite accounts of household production in 2014 (DANE 2013; 2014).

On the policy front, time-use data also can help address the unintended adverse effects of policies and program initiatives on the total workloads of women. Research on conditional cash transfer schemes (CCTSs), a millennial strategy for poverty reduction, suggests that participation in the program can increase the unpaid workload of women in beneficiary households in addition to taking time away from paid work (Molyneux and Thomson 2011; Escobar and González de la Rocha 2008). In Guatemala, using time-use data Gammage (2010) shows that women's time poverty can intensify as they substitute for their children's labor when the children maintain regular school attendance as a condition of the cash transfer. In households that are already

time and income poor the additional unpaid work burden may reduce well-being. Time-use data can help monitor the impact of these cash transfers and help design programs to adjust for time poverty (by increasing the cash transfer and reducing the implicit costs).

In sum, the Accounting Project has helped push the development and social policy agenda forward to address the critical issue of care by bringing visibility and recognition to the significant amount of unpaid work that is performed by women. And time-use data can help make the case for and design care policies that promote work-family balance and gender equitable distribution of workloads.

Conclusion

This chapter has evaluated the Accounting Project, which has sought to make unpaid work visible. Since the 1980s the Project has addressed the conceptual underpinnings of the statistical biases that led to the underestimation of women's contributions. It has also promoted the development of methodologies to make unpaid work visible, and an increasing number of governments, statistical agencies, and researchers throughout the world have taken up the Project and have included the collection of time-use data in their agendas. The Accounting Project also illuminates the connections between paid and unpaid work and how gender inequalities are replicated in the allocation of the unpaid workload and the distribution of care. In turn, the unequal sharing of unpaid workload between men and women has a profound impact on their access to decent paid work, mediated by class, ethnic, and racial divisions among women: affluent households can purchase market substitutes such as cooked meals and laundry service or employ other women for household chores and care work, while those in poorer households have to produce these goods and services at home and without paid help. Finally, the Accounting Project also helps make the case for the design and implementation of policies that seek to balance family life with paid work, to achieve gender-equitable distribution of unpaid work, and to promote shared responsibility of care provision among families, governments, and employers.

At a more general level, the Accounting Project can be characterized as transformative in Elizabeth Minnich's terms, since it calls for "transforming knowledge" or moving beyond the boundaries of conventional paradigms. This includes the rethinking of "mystified concepts" or "ideas, notions, categories, and the like that are so deeply familiar they are rarely questioned" and which result in "partial knowledge" (Minnich 1990). Although the information regarding unpaid work has sometimes been used in conservative

agendas so as to emphasize the importance of having women stay at home, these instances do not detract from its significant impact. The Project has led us to question the ways in which we measure well-being and to understand who contributes to life sustenance in our communities and in society as a whole. Further, it leads us to question the assumptions behind received knowledge, in this case those that identify "work" with paid labor and market-oriented work. By deepening our understanding of unpaid work, particularly the centrality of care in our daily lives and its economic/financial and time dimensions, the Project underscores women's fundamental contribution to life's sustenance and reproduction as well as an important dimension of gender inequality: namely, the unequal division of household labor.

Notes

- 1 A rare exception is John Stuart Mill, a classical economist who made some reference to domestic labor in his discussion of productive consumption and the potential advantages of women's employment in his *Principles of Political Economy* (John Stuart Mill 1848 [1965]) and *The Subjection of Women* (John Stuart Mill 1869 [1970]).
- 2 By the heterodox tradition we refer to Marxian, institutionalist, and Keynesian perspectives, albeit institutionalist economists use a broader focus on provisioning activities and have been attentive to gender norms. We consider feminist economics to be a part of heterodox economics at this point in time, although it has emerged after the earlier heterodox perspectives.
- 3 Preface to *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* ([1884] 1981).
- 4 As typified by the expression "my mother does not work" even if she may work very hard in domestic, unpaid activities. An exception is the New Household Economics discussed in Chapter 2.
- 5 First adopted in 1953 as an official accounting system of the United Nations member-states, the SNA defines what is considered market production of goods and services. The SNA has since undergone several revisions. The last major set of revisions was done in 1993. Pressures from women's organizations, feminist scholars, and some women parliamentarians led to substantive changes in the SNA during the 27th Session of the United Nations Statistical Commission, such as the inclusion of subsistence production and the gathering of fuel and water activities in a harmonized and systematic way. The 1993 revision of the system was coordinated by the Inter-Secretariat Working Group on National Accounts (ISWGNA), which comprised the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank (WB), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat), and the United Nations regional commissions.

- 6 Using a "main purpose" test, it identifies five categories of work:
  - a) *own-use production work* comprising production of goods and services for own final use; b) *unpaid trainee work* comprising work performed for others without pay to acquire workplace experience or skills; c) *volunteer work* comprising non-compulsory work performed for others without pay; d) *employment work* comprising work performed for others in exchange for pay or profit; and e) *other work activities* such as unpaid community service and unpaid work by prisoners, as well as unpaid military or alternative civilian service. (ILO 2013d: 3)
- 7 When women work in small enterprises, especially based at home, or as unpaid family workers, their labor tends to be underestimated in labor force statistics, even though it is supposed to be counted. This is also the case for contractual, temporary, and very short-term jobs performed by both women and men. Labor in subsistence production (tending to animals or work on a garden plot to grow food for the household), is also underestimated in labor force statistics, even though their output is considered part of the system of national accounts.
- 8 The SNA makes a clear distinction between SNA production activities and non-SNA production activities. Accordingly, the work performed is referred to as SNA work and non-SNA work, respectively. The former includes paid market work in formal and informal enterprises, work in subsistence production, and unpaid work in family farms and enterprises. Non-SNA work, on the other hand, refers to productive work outside the SNA production boundary such as unpaid household chores related to its upkeep and management, care of family dependents, and voluntary services (United Nations Statistical Commission 1993).
- 9 Turkey's low rate for women partly reflects the dramatic decline of family farming and women's unpaid family work in the new millennium.
- 10 UN Statistical Commission (1983). For a more detailed account, see Benería (1981).
- 11 By 1960, a working group of African statisticians recommended the estimation and incorporation of rural household activities such as the backyard vegetable cultivation as part of subsistence production in agriculture, forestry, and fishing (Waring 1988).
- 12 Unpaid family workers, also known as contributing family workers, are those who work in a market-oriented establishment or farm operated by a related person living in the same household who is designated as self-employed or own-account worker (downloaded from <http://www.ilo.org/trends>, accessed on March 10, 2013).
- 13 Household production of goods for own use that are included in the System of National Accounts includes: agricultural products; collection of firewood; hunting and fishing; other primary products, e.g. the supply of water; processing of agricultural products, e.g. grain threshing, milling of flour, the preservation of meat and fish products; the production of beer, wine or spirits; the production

- of baskets and mats; weaving cloth, dressmaking and tailoring, production of footwear, pottery, furniture etc. It also includes the production of goods for own capital formation such as machines, equipment, construction of roads, dams, etc. Household production of services for own final use only includes paid domestic services and production of housing services for own final consumption by owner-occupants, e.g. imputed rent (ILO 1993).
- 14 Recognizing the practical difficulties associated in collecting such information, several UN agencies in the early 1990s developed a series of conceptual and methodological guidelines for the measurement of women's work in the informal sector including unpaid family work. These agencies have carried out useful pilot studies, such as in Burkina Faso, Congo, the Gambia, and Zambia (UN Statistical Office/ECA/INSTRAW 1991a; 1991b; INSTRAW 1991). These efforts have resulted in the refinement of labor force definitions to include unpaid family workers, and in the incorporation of their contribution to output as a component of income in the SNA and in GDP estimations (Charmes 1998; 2004).
- 15 For further detail, see Benería (1981).
- 16 See United Nations Statistical Commission 2004 for more discussion of the treatment of the informal sector in the 1993 SNA.
- 17 Ester Boserup (1970) argued strongly for the inclusion in national accounts "of food items obtained by collecting and hunting, of output of home crafts such as clothing, footwear, sleeping and sitting mats, baskets, clay pots, calabashes, fuel collected by women, funeral services, haircuts, entertainment and traditional administrative and medical services," together with "pounding, husking and grinding of foodstuffs and the slaughtering of animals" (pp. 162–63). However, she considered these activities mostly as subsistence production, i.e. as "marketable goods," not as household work. Although Boserup mentioned the omission of "domestic services of housewives" from national accounts, she was less concerned about it than in the case of subsistence production. Moreover, she failed to acknowledge the exclusion of an important household activity, that of caring for children, the sick, disabled, and elderly.
- 18 Regular surveys of volunteering are currently conducted by the statistical offices of Australia, Canada, the UK, Switzerland, Norway, and the United States.
- 19 For instance, a comparison of different survey results shows that participation in volunteer work in the United Kingdom varies wildly from 48 percent of the population in 1997, to 2 percent in 2009, and then back to 29 percent in 2010 (Salamon et al. 2011).
- 20 Unpaid (non-market) work includes both unpaid care work and unpaid family work on farms or enterprises.
- 21 Time-use surveys were also carried out in other developed countries later on but they addressed issues not necessarily related to feminist goals, such as commuting to work, use of mass media, and leisure time (Hirway 2010: 3). In the developing countries, the earliest time-use surveys were conducted by research scholars in Gambia (1952), Burkina Faso (1967), and Peru (1966) to name a few.

- 22 Others, such as Nordhaus (2006), advise against adding major non-market activities into the main National Income and Product Accounts and argue in favor of developing satellite non-market and environmental accounts first.
- 23 Based on Lourdes Benería's conversations with Barbara Bergmann on the topic, March 14, 1998. Bergmann has been a staunch, vocal advocate of labor market solutions to gender inequality.
- 24 "[B]y insisting that domestic activities gain recognition by conforming to an unchallenged category of work, the significance of caring and self-fulfilling activities remains unrecognized" (p. 14).
- 25 These claims are supported by time-use data. See, for example, Bittman (1999); Bianchi et al. (2000); Sayer (2005); Gershuny and Sullivan (2003); Gershuny and Fisher (2013).
- 26 Defined in this way, there is no reason to exclude from care relationships those situations in which the caregiver receives a payment or monetary reward. This newer concept of care departs from the Beijing Platform for Action framework and is defined "more specifically, [as] focusing on the labour process rather than the relationship to the site of production (home vs. market) or the production boundary (in the SNA or not)" (Folbre 2006: 186). This new conceptualization moves beyond unpaid work to include care work performed in the paid economy—the work of teachers, nurses, doctors, paid domestic workers, etc.
- 27 One could argue that the competitive pressures of the market spill over to the household and increase the efficiency of each hour of housework, at least for individuals who engage in both unpaid household work and paid work.
- 28 The third party (or third person) principle has been criticized for assuming the market as the yardstick of economic activity (Wood 1997), even though it could include a domestic activity performed by a third person outside of market exchange, for example, through non-monetary labor exchange.
- 29 See <http://www.timeuse.org/mtus/access> for list of time-use survey data available for research.
- 30 The main categories are: (a) work activities such as labor market work, housework, childcare, shopping, and volunteer work; (b) leisure time, including socializing, active and passive leisure; and (c) other non-productive activities, including sleep, personal hygiene, and education.
- 31 Even when the time-use survey specifies higher benchmark paid work hours to capture stable workers with a certain work status, the estimates for urban women are higher than the NSSO survey-based estimated (at 22.7 percent for those who work for at least four hours per week and 18.8 percent for those who work at least eight hours per week). Without context questions, however, the time-use survey cannot distinguish between participation in informal and subsistence activities.
- 32 For example, Spain carried out two national surveys (2002–03 and 2009–10) and Turkey only one (in 2006).
- 33 See the UN Trial International Classification of Activities for Time-use Statistics (ICATUS) website: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/cr/registry/regcst.asp?Cl=231&Lg=1>. Subsequently, John Gershuny and Kimberly Fisher of Oxford University Center

- for Time Use Research (CTUR), in collaboration with other time-use scholars, produced a Multinational Time Use Survey (MTUS) dataset that contained harmonized activity episode and context information and that encompassed over 60 datasets from 25 countries. But the integration of other time-use surveys, especially from developing countries has stalled, given the political exigencies and methodological challenges in conducting time-use surveys.
- 34 Responses become even more problematic when the reference period is longer say, "in the past week."
- 35 Differences in activity focus as well as data collection objectives can affect the way activities are classified and the level of disaggregation. Unpaid household work can be coded as a single activity combining cooking, feeding the sick, playing with children, helping them in their schoolwork, cleaning the house, etc., or it can be disaggregated.
- 36 Improvements in the design of time-use surveys (TUS) have enabled the instrument to better capture the supervisory aspect of unpaid care work. These improvements range from an inclusion in the TUS of categories such as "minding children" or "passive childcare," which refer to caring for children without active involvement shown in the other care activity codes, to giving interviewers a clear set of instructions regarding secondary activities with "child-minding" as an example. These methods were adopted in the collection of national Australian TUS and in the 2002 TUS sample among Thailand urban homeworkers and provided better, estimates of childcare activities. By contrast, the 1999 South Africa TUS and the 2000 United Kingdom TUS, which lacked both these features, registered much lower levels of childcare (Folbre and Yoon 2007).
- 37 Mullan (2010) makes use of children's time-use information in order to calculate a measure of supervisory childcare, which includes the time when parents and children are not in the same room, but at the same location.
- 38 For more detail, see for example Goldschmidt-Clermont (1983; 1993); Benería (1992); Chadeau (1992); Allard et al. (2007); Craig and Bittman (2008); Fraumeni (1998).
- 39 A variation of the opportunity cost method is the lifetime-income approach (Fraumeni 1998).
- 40 Folbre's time-cost estimates of parental care for 2000 are for time spent in a two-child, two-parent family and in a two-child, single-parent family. The high-variant estimate also includes a broader accounting of parental time as well as using a higher wage rate. Combined with monetary expenditures per child, Folbre's lower-bound time costs amount to 62 percent of total expenditures per child per year in a two-parent family (and 65 percent in a single-parent family).
- 41 In Mullan's valuation of childcare in the UK, the input method using a broad measure of childcare time resulted in a value that ranged between 12 percent and 23 percent of GDP while the output method provided estimates that ranged between 7.8 percent and 13.8 percent (Mullan 2010).
- 42 The input method tends to yield a higher imputed value of childcare in two-parent households, compared to single-parent (mostly mothers) households since the

input value sums the time both parents are caring for children regardless of the number. On the other hand, the estimates of the output method are sensitive to the number of children being cared for. However, when adequate attention is given to the context and institutional aspects of the activity, the imputed value using the input method tends to approximate the imputed value of childcare using output method. This is illustrated in Mullan's study on the valuation of childcare in the United Kingdom.

- 43 The UN Statistical Division has constructed a guide to producing statistics on time-use: *Measuring Paid and Unpaid Work*, in 2005. Its website on time-use statistics contains methods, publications, and meeting documents as well as experiences of countries that have recently conducted time-use surveys. See: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sconcerns/tuse/>
- 44 There is some evidence of change in the division of household labor in some countries over time, which indicate that men's share of unpaid labor is increasing, although still lower than women's hours of unpaid work (Benería and Martínez-Iglesias 2014).
- 45 For example, the data used in creating Figure 5.1 is based on the Multinational Time Use Study (MTUS) that includes time-use survey data from 11 countries as well as 12 country-level surveys, which used different methodologies.
- 46 In the United States, the household division of labor has changed between the 1960s and 1990s as men doubled their housework hours, while women cut their housework hours almost in half (Bianchi et al. 2000). Nonetheless, women in 1995 spent nearly twice as much time on housework as men. Similarly, time-use studies in Australia show that there seems to be a narrowing of the gender gaps in time use in households with children during the 1990s as a result of women's increased labor force participation (Craig et al. 2010). This trend is consistent with that observed in other high-income countries which shows modest convergence in the work composition among men and women (Allard et al. 2007; Fisher et al. 2007; Sayer 2005; Kan et al. 2011; Fisher and Gershuny 2013).
- 47 In this case, the narrowing of the unpaid work gap occurred because women substituted paid work hours for unpaid work hours during the recession, while men did not pick up additional unpaid work. This recession effect came in the context of stagnant trends in both unpaid and paid work gaps after the convergence ended by the 1990s.
- 48 She calculated the trade-off between money and time (a threshold curve) representing a composite (time and income) poverty line, so that households are defined as poor if they have less than a certain combination of time and money.
- 49 Overlapping work activities involve the simultaneous performance of two or more work activities that either require attention and/or energy or that are monotonous and repetitive.
- 50 The evidence from these countries as well as from European countries with similar schemes suggests that the availability of these programs tends to increase the number of hours worked by women as well as leading them to work in formal employment (Folbre and Yoon 2007; Rasevi and Staab 2012; World Bank 2011).