

Estimating the Economic Value of Unpaid Care Work

The invisible labour of caring for others has long been undervalued for its contribution to the economy. Unpaid care work, despite its crucial implications for well-being of society, is often overlooked as it falls outside traditional definitions of work and is not included in national income accounts such as GDP.

Unpaid care work, predominantly undertaken by women, encompasses direct personal care work such as feeding a baby or caring for an ailing partner or parent as well as essential indirect activities such as cooking or cleaning. Globally, women contribute to 76% of total unpaid care work, and this has repercussions such as increased time poverty and reduced participation in the labour force.



Image Source: [Freepik](#)

Valuation of unpaid care work can offer valuable insights for policymakers and organizations. Acknowledging the economic significance of unpaid care work is essential for recognizing its vital contribution to society. Estimating its economic value can offer valuable insights into the development of gender-transformative policies related to employment, labour, and leave worldwide.

Development Analytics has carried out several studies focusing on gender and childcare policies and programmes and their ability to improve the overall well-being of children and their families. These studies were carried out for partners and clients including the World Bank, UNICEF, AfD, Foundation for the Support of

Women's Work (KEDV) and The Mother-Child Education Foundation (AÇEV). DA's extensive work in this area also includes estimating the economic value of unpaid care work in the household.

How would this research study be useful?

- Estimating the value of unpaid care work can help raise awareness about the importance of this work and the need to recognize it.
- By valuing unpaid care work, policymakers and organizations can recognize the unequal burden shouldered by women and work towards redistributing this burden more equitably which is essential for promoting gender equality and ensuring that women have equal opportunities in the labour market.

What kind of datasets are needed to carry out such a study?

In order to carry out this type of study a **time use survey** would be necessary. Time-use surveys systematically capture how individuals distribute their time across various activities, offering a comprehensive glimpse into daily life. In the realm of gender statistics, these surveys are valuable tools, revealing insights into the division of time among women and men in areas like work, household chores, study, personal care, family responsibilities, and leisure.

Additionally, preferably a **labour force survey (LFS)** would be of use in such a study. The LFS is specifically designed to gather comprehensive information about the labor market and related aspects. The key information collected in LFS includes employment status, occupation and industry, earnings and hours of work and education of the workforce. LFS can be used in assigning the unit cost value of time spent on unpaid care activities.

What are the previous project references where Development Analytics related to this topic?

As DA, as part of our gender and women's empowerment expertise are, we have focused on understanding the care burden at home, time spent on care activities in the household and estimating the

gender imbalances in a number of different studies in the last decade.

- **Women's Invisible Contribution: Quantifying the Economic Value of Women's Unpaid Care Activities in Turkey and Policy Options to Reduce Women's Care Burden.**

Women, whether in employment or not, spend a significant amount of time in Türkiye occupied in unpaid home-based care activities, providing care for children and the elderly in their families.

DA has carried out a **study** on quantifying the economic value of women's unpaid care activities in Türkiye. The study explored the substantial time women spend on unpaid home-based care activities and highlighted the considerable economic impact of women's unpaid care work in Türkiye using 2006 Time Use Survey and the 2011 Labor Force Survey.

This study has been supported by the World Bank and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and has been prepared for the Ministry of Family and Social Services (formerly Ministry of Family and Social Policies) of Türkiye.

- **Life in Transition Survey- Gender Analysis and Gender Modules**

While gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls stand as one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, current progress indicates that none of the targets associated with this goal will be achieved by 2030. In this respect, employing an evidence-based approach to assess existing gender inequalities becomes imperative in crafting policies aimed at addressing these issues and fostering tangible progress.

DA carried out a **multi-country gender analysis in 34 countries in the ECA region** for the World Bank, using the World Bank/EBRD Life in Transition Survey, focusing on gender differences in four key areas: including the burden of care in the household and attitudes towards its need and provision.

The study highlighted that the childcare needs in the household affect women adversely in terms of employment outcomes.


If you're interested in conducting a study like this in your country's context, please click to register your interest. Our technical team will then reach out to understand your research needs, assess data availability, and discuss how we can support you in this research project.

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We look forward to being in touch !

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