



Encuentro
Internacional de
**Estadísticas
de Género**

Reconstruir con estadísticas de género:
Hacia el logro de la Agenda 2030

Quantifying Care Time: A Path Forward

Nancy Folbre, Political Economy Research Center, University of Massachusetts Amherst USA



Recommendations and updates based on my report,
**Quantifying Care Work:
Design and Harmonization Issues
in Time Use Surveys**

available at

<https://data.unwomen.org/publications>

What Have We Learned From Time Use Surveys?

- Hours devoted to unpaid work are high (about equal to time in paid work).
- Women do far more unpaid work than men (which reduces potential contributions to family income as well as their economic independence and bargaining power)
- Women typically have longer overall workdays than men.

What Would We LIKE to Learn?

- How do public investments in physical infrastructure (water, gas, electricity, broadband) increase the productivity of unpaid and paid work?
- How do public investments in care provision (health, education, and social services) improve social and economic outcomes?
- How are the costs of producing, developing, and maintaining human capabilities distributed between public and private, taxpayers and families, rich and poor, men and women, privileged racial/ethnic groups and others?

Why is it So Hard to Answer These Questions?

- Lack of comparability between national time use surveys (both within and across regions)

Most Latin American countries use activity-list surveys, such as:

How much time did you spend last week on caring for children?

Most other countries use time-diary surveys, such as:

What were you doing yesterday between 7AM and 7:30AM?

Between 7:30 and 8:00 AM, between 8:00AM and 8:30 AM, and so on..

- Lack of adequate attention to passive or on-call care responsibilities in time-diary surveys.

Most tallies of childcare *activities* come to less than 3 hours per day. Adding supervisory and on-call responsibilities (but excluding time children are asleep at night) more than doubles childcare time.

- Lack of adequate information on consumer expenditures and utilization of public services.

So we can't estimate how households are able to substitute money for unpaid work or how public services (such as childcare) reduce unpaid work time.

Also makes it difficult to assign an accurate market value to unpaid work.

- Lack of enthusiasm (and funds) for methodological innovation by national statistical offices.

Developing more cost-effective surveys utilizing new digital technologies could help solve this problem.

The Path Forward

- Encourage the methodological innovations outlined above.
- Utilize existing data to help build a case for these.
- Emphasize their potential contribution to important policy debates.



Encuentro
Internacional de
**Estadísticas
de Género**

**Reconstruir con estadísticas de género:
Hacia el logro de la Agenda 2030**

¡GRACIAS!

