

Assessing Gender Impact in Macroeconomic Policies in Ghana

- Valuing unpaid work

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Abstract

Since 1995, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of production of domestic and personal services by household members for their own final consumption. Though, various steps have been taken to improve upon the quality and availability of data to measure unremunerated or unpaid work at the national and international levels, it is well noted that macroeconomic frameworks for policy planning, formulation, implementation and evaluation for decision-making, usually failed to recognise the impact of how such policy analyses affects unpaid work, because it cannot be valued or monetized. However, unpaid work is an important part for effective policymaking process,

This is based on the premises that unpaid and invisible women's work has been identified as a key area of policy intervention by the United Nations in the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA).

By failing to take into account unpaid and invisible women's work, these policies are unlikely to achieve the expected inclusive economic growth performance that are sustainable to ensure an enabling macroeconomic stability to effect the levels of productivity, employment, external balance, among others, so as to achieve socio-economic policy objectives such as poverty alleviation, improved access to water and sanitation, education, health, gender equality and women empowerment.

According to Beneria (1995), in incorporating gender in a macro framework, an important area is the aspect of statistical data to capture the average time women's spent on unpaid work with greater accuracy and the methods for the valuation of household unpaid work to estimate its value in national accounts.

Based on this assertion, the paper will assess the impact of gender in Macroeconomic Policies in Ghana through the valuation of the mean time spent by persons engaged in unpaid household work using the Ghana Time Use Survey conducted in 2009. The survey captured how Ghanaian women and men spend or allocate their time in a 24 -hour period. The survey generated quantitative summaries including, total number of hours in a week spent working in paid employment, total number of hours in a weekday working in unpaid domestic work.

The input-based approach (the opportunity cost, the generalist and specialist methods) for the monetary valuation of time spent on unpaid work for household production of domestic and personal services for own consumption, and volunteer work in non-profit institutions serving households (NPISH) in Ghana would be applied and also, preferred over the output-based approach as the cost of production would be difficult to estimate from the survey.

The paper will also discuss the contribution of unpaid work to Ghana's Gross domestic product (GDP) and other macroeconomic indicators, as well as the challenges encountered and the limitations of the data used.