



**Make a house
become
A HÔME**

POLICY BRIEF

Make a house become

A HME

Hanoi, September 2016

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List of abbreviations

Abbreviations	Meaning
AAI	ActionAid International
AAV	ActionAid Vietnam
ADB	Asian Development Bank
C1	Time - diary collection - 1 st round
C2	Time - diary collection - 2 nd round
C3	Time - diary collection - 3 rd round
GDP	Gross Domestic Products
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
UCW	Unpaid Care work
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women



Key messages

- In all the areas under study, 100% women and girls who participated in the survey suffer serious gender stereotypes in labor division.
- On average, women spend 5 hours (314 minutes) every day on unpaid care work (UCW) at household level and within the society, about more than 2 hours (125 minutes) more than men do.
- In the areas with poor gender based public services and economic development, women and girls spend up to almost 9 hours (533 minutes) every day on UCW.
- There is not much difference in time spent on UCW for women with different education levels (primary school, secondary school, vocational school or college). It means that no matter what level of education women achieved, UCW remains their main responsibility.
- Meanwhile, women with whatever marital status (married, divorced, single or widowed) always spend considerably much more time on UCW than men do.
- Men have time to do paid work, at least one hour (60 minutes) more than women do every day.
- Men also have more time to participate in social/entertainment activities in addition to leisure and personal care, about an hour (76 minutes) more than women have every day.
- UCW contributes more than 20% to the total GDP of Vietnam, which was estimated at USD 204 billion in 2015 (Viet times, 2015)¹.

¹ Viettimes. (2015, 12 5). GDP Việt Nam 2015 đạt 204 tỷ USD, người Việt thu nhập 3.200-3.500 USD sau 5 năm. Retrieved from <http://viettimes.vn/kinh-te/tai-chinh/gdp-viet-nam-2015-dat-204-ty-usd-nguoi-viet-thu-nhap-32003500-usd-sau-5-nam-27654.html>

Introduction

Unpaid care work (UCW) is no longer a new concept globally but it is rather new in Vietnam. Recently, there have been many studies and reports using this concept or mentioning the time used for care work in general and in households or community in particular.

This document is a summary of the results from the first phase of the research on UCW in 9 cities/provinces in Vietnam. The report opens for a series of researches of ActionAid regarding UCW and relevant policy recommendations.

This policy brief provides a general overview of UCW concept and research findings based on the time use diary collected in phase 1 within 3 months in 9 cities/provinces where ActionAid Vietnam (AAV) works. It also presents the initial key findings and policy recommendations to the Government and relevant agencies within the scope of this study.

Unpaid Care work (UCW) Concept

According to Diane Elson², UCW refers to “all unpaid services provided within a household for its members, including care of persons, housework and voluntary community work.”

- These activities are considered as work because theoretically we can hire a third party to perform them.
- Work = the activity that involves mental or physical efforts and is costly in terms of time and resources
- Care = the activity that provides what is necessary for the health, well-being, maintenance and protection of someone or something
- Unpaid = the individual performing an activity/work without any remuneration.

² Special advisor of UNIFEM and the coordinator of report “Progress of the World’s Women 2000”. New York: United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)

According to ActionAid, labour in society can be divided into 3 main groups:

- a. The work related to production (Productive work)
 - salaried work, agriculture/ industry production, services, paid work or other services.
- b. The work related to reproduction (Reproduction work) – bearing a child, child care, care for the elderly and the sick, cooking and washing.
- c. The work to maintain social relationships (Social

work) - participating in festivals, family and community events, such as village meeting, weddings, rituals, anniversaries, holidays, and so on.

Code	Activity	Examples
Paid GDP work		
1	Paid GDP work	Doing work for a wage or salary Working in own/family small business Petty trading Producing and selling products Collecting public rubbish

Code	Activity	Examples
Unpaid GDP Work		
2	Unpaid GDP Work	Subsistence agriculture Livestock farming Recycling Members of some representative divisions (People's Committee, Youth Union, Women Union, Invalid Union, Red Cross)
Unpaid care work (UCW)		
3	Collection of fuel or water	Collecting fuel/ firewood Collecting water
4	Housework	Preparing food/ cooking Cleaning the house Washing clothes Grocery shopping
5	Care of children	Feeding a child Bathing and dressing a child Play with a child Helping a child with school work Accompanying a child to school or clinic Looking after a child Attending parents' meetings

Code	Activity	Examples
6	Care of adults	Feeding a disabled, old or sick adult Bathing a disabled, old or sick adult Accompanying an adult to a health clinic or any other public services Taking spiritual care Social works (looking after adults at nursing homes, taking care of children/disabled children at orphanage)
7	Social and cultural activities	Meeting with people/ group/ village Socializing with friends and family Praying Attending a ceremony (wedding/ funeral...) Attending a sports event
Recreational activities		
8	Learning/ Education/ Entertainment	Attending adult education class Doing homework Watching television Listening to radio Using internet Reading newspapers Using mobile phones

Code	Activity	Examples
10	Sleeping/ resting	Sleeping Relaxing
11	Other Self-care	Eating, drinking Dressing Washing Receiving healthcare

In practice, men often actively participate in and spend more time on paid work (a) whilst women are normally responsible for reproductive work (b) and social work (c). UCW mostly includes activities under group b and c, in which activities under “b” have high frequency. Cooking and washing for instance are a daily routine whereas other duties are performed, quarterly or annually (family anniversary, New Year or special vacations). While both men and women participate in unpaid work under group c, men usually choose (or are expected) to play significant roles and have decision making power (host/chairman, ancestors worshiper, facilitator, or negotiator), women are assigned or expected to do less important and “easier” work with no decision making power.

ActionAid’s report strongly reconfirms that this gender discrimination brings disadvantages to women.

Studies related to UCW in the world and the relationship between UCW and GDP:

There are many studies on the subject of UCW or time use/ time diary of women and men which were conducted by ActionAid International, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), World Bank and so on. They are the pioneers to implement such studies or have data analysis in terms of time use by men and women.

According to a survey by Swiss government, if UCW in households is calculated in Switzerland's GDP, it would account for 40%³ of the country's total GDP. According to a research in Massachusetts, the United States, it is estimated that the additional work from UCW would increase the state's GDP from 352 to 504 billion US dollars, accounting for nearly 30% of the value from goods and services produced in the state⁴. Another analysis through time diary survey in India affirms that the amount of UCW can account for 63% GDP⁵.

Therefore, the value of UCW must be counted in GDP as a basis for decision making at policy level. It would help demonstrate the important role of women in contributing to the economy. These indicators represent the social development process, creating space for a comprehensive development of people, particularly focusing on the economic value of the care and education of children. This is a practical method to improve the economic instability, and support the quality of life for everyone, especially

women and children.⁶

Adding UCW's socio-economic values into GDP calculation would reflect the social development level of each region and nation more realistically. As a result, it would demonstrate a general picture including gaps in economy and social welfare towards a more sustainable and balanced development goal. Additionally, it would also indicate where the main inequalities are so that solutions could be proposed appropriately and sufficiently.

3 Landefeld, J. (2009). *Satellite Account of Household Production for Switzerland*

4 Mignon Duffy, R. A. (2013). *Counting Care Work: The Empirical and Policy Applications of Care Theory*. *Social Problems*, 60.

5 Debbie, B. (2008). *UNRISD: Gender Programme Paper*. *UNRISD Paper No.4*, 4.

6 WorldBank. (2012). *Gender Equality and Development*. Washington DC: The World Bank.

Research methods

The research combines desk review; quantitative research (time use diary form) and qualitative research (focus group discussions with respondents after each survey). Desk review was carried out by ActionAid Vietnam's staff and information was extracted from multiple reports, and various sources to provide relevant information.

Study locations and sample size

Province	Sample size	Men	Women	%
Cao Bang	91	38	53	11.0
Dak N�ng	107	45	62	12.9
Ha Giang	79	35	44	9.6
Ha Noi	81	29	52	9.8
Lam Dong	115	53	62	13.9

Province	Sample size	Men	Women	%
Quang Ninh	98	42	56	11.9
Ho Chi Minh City	101	45	56	12.2
Tra Vinh	72	12	60	8.7
Vinh Long	81	31	50	9.8
Total sample size	825	330	495	100.0

Source: Report on UCW, ActionAid Vietnam - 2016

The research was conducted from January to April 2016 and will be continued until the end of July 2017. Research areas are 9 cities/ provinces of the North, the Centre and the South of Vietnam including rural, urban, mountainous and coastal areas.

The total sample size is 5,670 including both men and women above 15 years old with different marital status, and from 11 ethnic groups in all the research areas. The research has 2 phases, each of which comprises of 3 rounds of collection. Researchers were trained with fundamental knowledge on UCW topic and time diary tool to be able to conduct the survey. The size of

valid samples in the first phase is 825/ 2,475 samples collected through 3 rounds of collection, excluding those who do not meet the requirement of information and participation (provided insufficient information and/ or did not fully participate in 3 rounds of the first quarter of the survey).

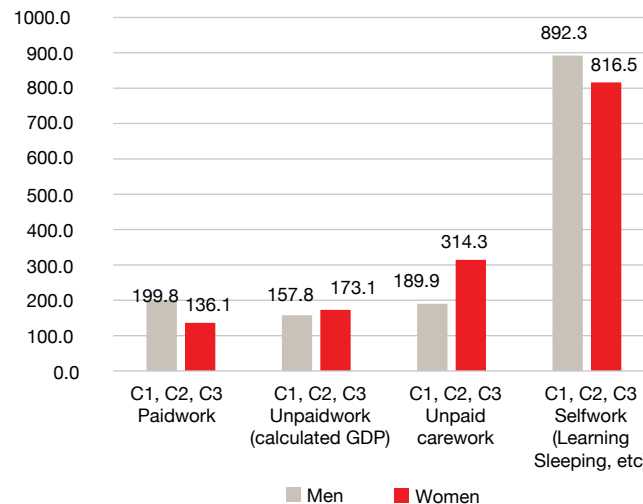


Key findings

The chart below depicts the arithmetical average of the three-phased independent research based on the sample sizes of 825 over the study period.

Men spend an extra hour on paid work compared to women. Besides rests and personal care, men also have time to engage in social activities or entertainments, on which they spend about 76 minutes (about 1 hour and 15 minutes) every day. Therefore, men predominantly engage in paid work and leisure. On the other hand, women spend more time on unpaid work (measured in GDP) and UCW. Unpaid care work (calculated in GDP) may be considered as the most fairly balance for both genders as women spend only 15 minutes more than men per day.

Figure 1 – Overview of time use diary



Source: Report on UCW, ActionAid Vietnam - 2016

Note: C1, C2, C3 are the arithmetical averages at three round of data collection of the research

Based on the research results, UCW is primarily women's responsibility as on average, they spend 125 minutes (over 2 hours) everyday more than men doing this work. Generally, women spend up to 314 minutes (over 5 hours) on UCW every day. According to the job classification for UCW, this is the so called "no name" work but repeating every day and playing an important role, especially in reproduction and social development.

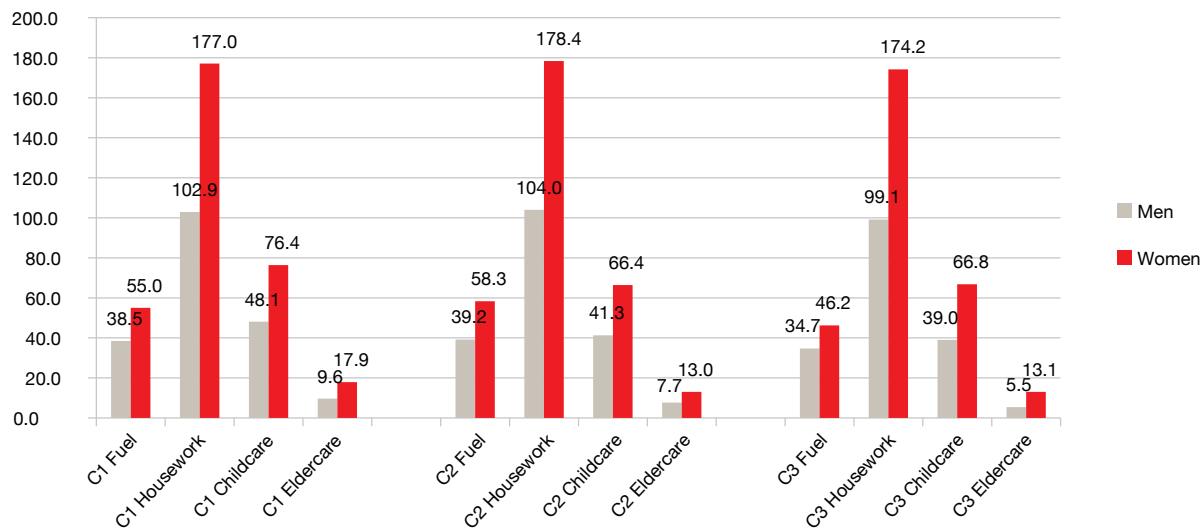
The chart below illustrates the results from three batches and indicates that among all the UCW, housework takes much time for women. This finding does not change through different research batches.

- On average, women spend 175 minutes (about 3 hours) everyday on housework, above 70 minutes (over 1 hour 10 minutes) more than men.
- Childcare preoccupies women's time the second most. They spend about more than 60 minutes (over 1 hour) on this, 30 minutes longer than men.

- The third on the list is fuel and/ or water collection. On average, it takes nearly 60 minutes (1 hour) of women's time, which is 15 minutes more than men.
- Although as shown in the research, elderly care work does not take much time, only 15 minutes, but it is still the activity that women spend more time on than men.

Overall, in terms of four main categories in the UCW list, female respondents spend over 300 minutes (5 hours) per day on UCW, whereas male respondents only spend an average of 189 minutes (about 3 hours) on that work.

Figure 2 – Time use within four main categories work at UCW



Source: Report on UCW, ActionAid Vietnam - 2016

Note: C1, C2, and C3: the data recorded for each batch as C1 – 1st batch; C2 – 2nd batch; C3 – 3rd batch.

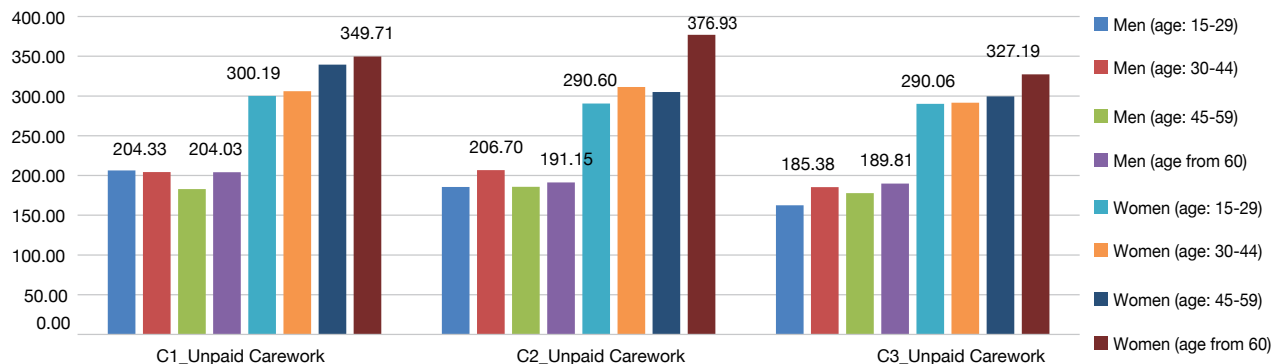
The figures below compare the difference in time spent on UCW between different groups on the basis of age, ethnicity, education level, geographic location, marital status and number of children that the respondents have. It is noted that this difference between women and men is significant regardless of demographics.

- First of all, it can be affirmed that at any age group and at any comparative perspectives, UCW is mainly done by women. This is the same results

from surveys in any community, either within Kinh group or any ethnic minority group, either in rural or urban areas, no matter what education levels the respondents achieved.

- Among all the age groups of female respondents, the elderly group is the one spending more time on UCW than the rest, but the disparity is not much and is similar throughout all three batches.

Figure 3 – Differences about UCW following age group



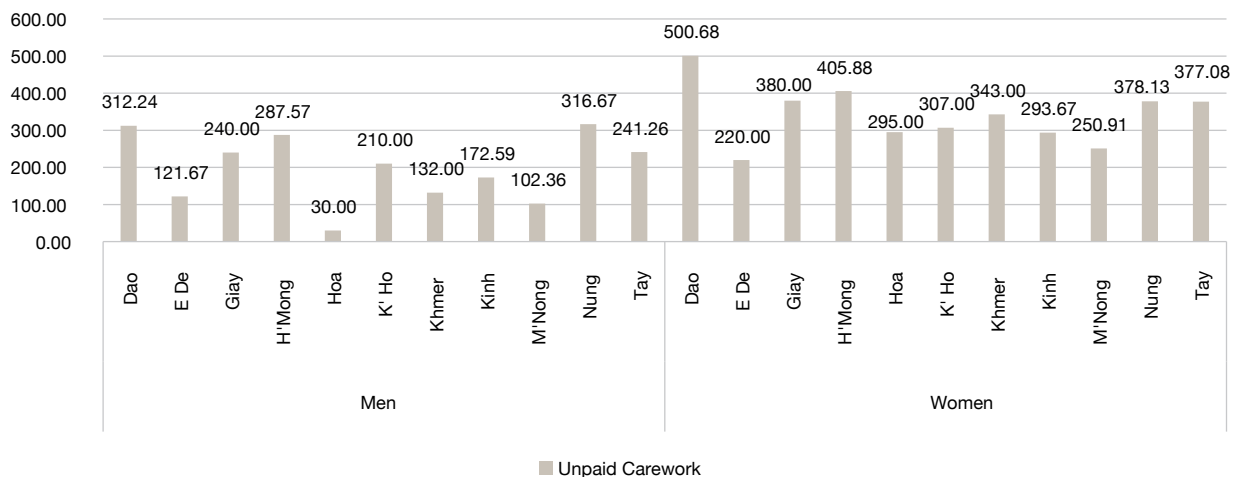
Source: Report on UCW, ActionAid Vietnam - 2016

Note: C1, C2, C3 the data recorded for each batch as C1 – 1st batch; C2 – 2nd batch; C3 – 3rd batch.

Regarding the ethnicity, it can be seen that in any ethnic group, women always spend more time on UCW in comparison with men. Particularly, Dao women spend up to 500 minutes (over 8 hours) a day on UCW which

is much more than women from other ethnic groups who spend from about 120 to 280 minutes (2 – 4 hours) as an average per day.

Figure 4 – Differences about UCW following ethnic minority



Source: Report on UCW, ActionAid Vietnam - 2016

Note: The data was recorded for 1st batch.



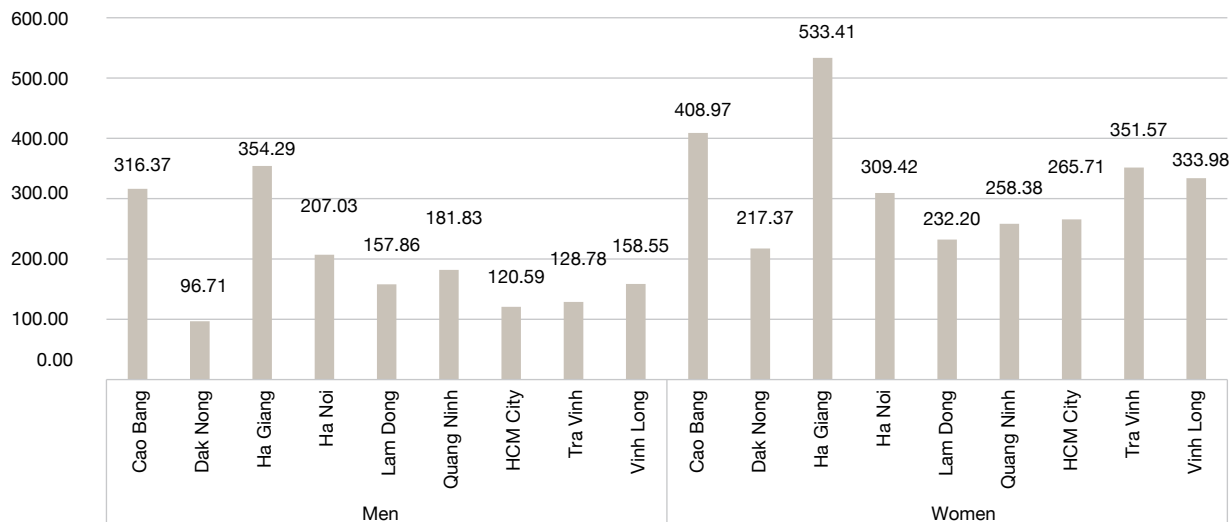
Geographic location and the inhabitation of women significantly influence their time spent on UCW.

- On average, women in Ha Giang province spend up to 533 minutes (over 8 hours) per day on UCW, followed by women in Cao Bang, Tra Vinh and Vinh Long provinces who spend from 330 to 350 minutes per day.

- The remaining provinces and cities such as Hanoi, Quang Ninh, Ho Chi Minh and Lam Dong are ranked the least since women in these cities/provinces spend less time on UCW than those in other provinces.
- However, it should be noticed that men in Ha Giang and Cao Bang provinces also spend much more time on UCW than men in other provinces, and even more than women in the mentioned last ranked cities/provinces (Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, Quang Ninh and Lam Dong).

Supposing that payment for each working hour of a domestic servant in big cities of Vietnam for performing UCW that women in all research areas are doing is valued of 25,000 VND, so women in Ha Giang are basically contributing to the economy 200,000 VND per day (25,000 VND/ hour x 8 hours/ day). In fact, this amount of money has never ever been acknowledged and used in any calculation of the economy or considered for any policy related to public investment on services (hospital, schools...)

Figure 5 – Differences of time spent on UCW among geographic locations



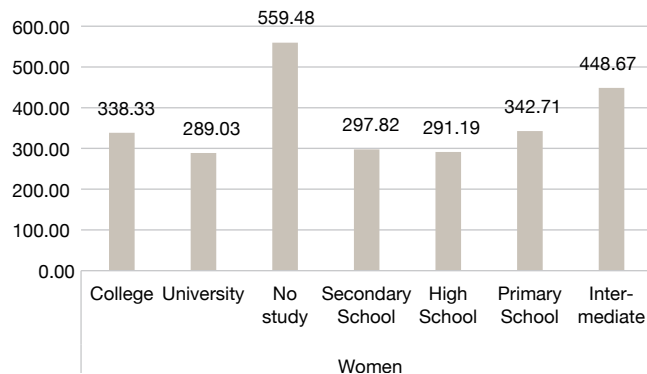
Source: Report on UCW, ActionAid Vietnam - 2016

As shown in the research result, women without education spend much more time on UCW than other women. Surprisingly, the women who have completed Intermediate education tend to work more on UCW and just rank the second highest. It is followed by

women with primary education and college degree. On the other hand, female university degree holders also allocate time for UCW regardless of their level of education... It could be influenced and/or relevant with their current jobs/ part-time jobs that might

require further study. Two groups who have finished secondary and high school seem to have similar time allocation for UCW.

Figure 6 – Women education and time for UCW



Source: Report on UCW, ActionAid Vietnam - 2016

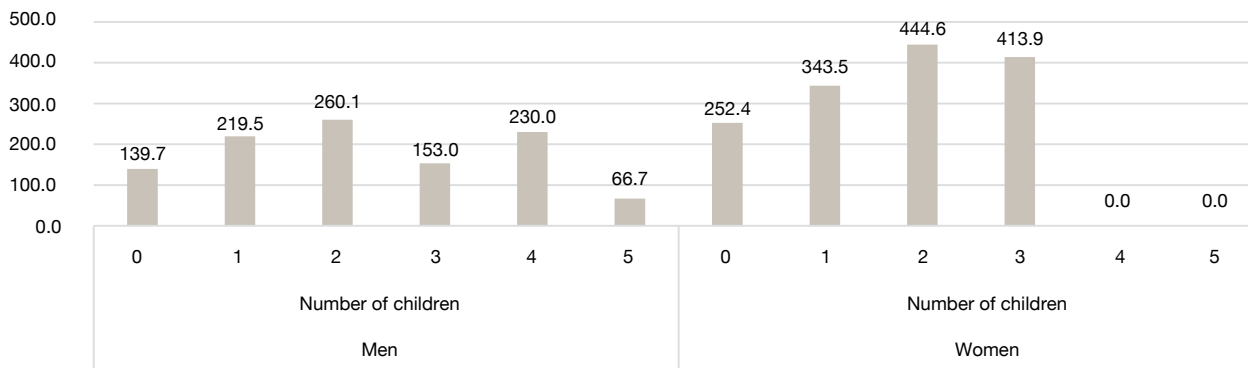
Furthermore, women in any marital status (married, divorced, single or widowed) spend considerably more time on UCW than men do.

In a comparison between women with and without

children, it could be seen that more time is spent on UCW by women with children and there is a tendency for that trend to be increased throughout the three batches of data collection. Especially women who have 2 children are the ones who spend the most time on UCW.



Figure 7 – Number of children and time for UCW



Source: Report on UCW, ActionAid Vietnam – 2016

As it is an initial research, ActionAid has not considered the relation between the availability of public services in the areas under study together with their quality and the amount of time that women spend on UCW.

However, it can be confirmed that if public services of good quality are accessible, the time spent on UCW will be reduced remarkably.

Conclusions

Women's contribution need to be recognized:

As shown in this research whose sample size is big enough to be representative, women, regardless of their education level, ethnicity, marital status, age, location or number of children they have, spend more time on UCW than men do. UCW seems to be the obvious responsibility of women. As a result, women have less time to take care of themselves, relax and engage in paid work or social and cultural activities in order to enrich their knowledge and ensure their legitimate rights.

The most highlighted research finding is the comparative data that illustrates the unfair inequity between the amount of time men and women spend on UCW. Women's contribution through UCW must be recognized by the men in the family, the community and society as a whole. Since then, in order to ensure women's rights to access basic public services, the Government plays an important role in coordinating the whole process which will help bring women more time for their personal care or to improve their knowledge about community and society.

UCW must be an indicator for GDP calculation:

The study results show that women spend from 2 to 2.5 hours on UCW everyday more than men do. In other words, women spend an average of 300 minutes (5 hours) on UCW. This amount of time is nearly equal to that of employees who have a stable job with 8 hours per day as prescribed by law.

Supposing that the female population in Vietnam is 44 million (Nielsen, 2013)⁷, and that 50% (22 million) of the women are at working age spending 2.5 hours on UCW more than men everyday. Based on these figures, a simple calculation (22 million people X 2.5 hours/ day), shows that overall, women spend additional 55 million hours on UCW (equal to nearly 7 million working days). At an average of 100,000 VND to 150,000 VND per day (8 hour), the value of unrecorded UCW by women is significantly huge. Considering the total time spent on UCW by both men and women at an average of 500 minutes (equal to 8 hours) per day, with an average 20 million labours (both male and female), who mainly spend time on UCW, we will have another tremendous result. This figure is equivalent to more than 20% of Vietnam's GDP which was estimated at 204 billion dollars in 2015 (Viettimes, 2015)⁸.

The research's finding clearly indicates that women are more disadvantaged than men as they spend more time on UCW. As a result women's contribution is not well perceived as valuable within families and communities because it is a "no name" job or "obviously-done-by-women" work. The unacknowledgement by men and society about women's contribution to families and communities and subjective evaluation without any specific measurement have been deepening the patriarchal social prejudice - the root causes of gender inequality. Women experience inequality within their families, communities and countries they live, particularly if there are no laws to protect them. Women's contributions and dedication are not recognized if the time they spend on UCW are not well recorded at family, community and national level. Therefore, Women's contribution through UCW should be included in the total GDP calculation. Though invisible, the contribution of UCW is very tangible.

When UCW is counted in GDP, Vietnamese women's contribution will be well acknowledged. As a result, there will be significant changes in the society regarding equality between men and women. This will inevitably lead to the reallocation of work in more detail and help reduce workload from UCW for women. This will not be only "a call

7 Nielsen. (2013). *2013 Pocket Reference Book Vietnam*. Ho Chi Minh: Nielsen Vietnam.

8 Viettimes. (2015, 12 5). GDP Việt Nam 2015 achieved 204 billions USD, <http://viettimes.vn/kinh-te/tai-chinh/gdp-viet-nam-2015-dat-204-ty-usd-nguoi-viet-thu-nhap-32003500-usd-sau-5-nam-27654.html>



for action” anymore, but become a change in the awareness and behavior of every citizen. As mentioned above , the time spent on UCW within Vietnamese households is very significant. The recognition of UCW in households in general, and of Vietnamese women’s contribution in particular as an additional indicator to the overall value of GDP is the most important factor that needs to be considered by Vietnamese Government.

Through the time diary research and based on different studies from other countries all over the world, it is now the time to improve the equal rights for Vietnamese women. It could resolve the problem of unclassifying “no name” work for women thus, shifting the public opinion to value the work as its deserving worth. Therefore, legitimate rights and benefits can be obtained for women.

Recommendations

This policy brief sets out key recommendations to ensure that such efforts and time use for UCW are part of the variables for measuring GDP:

- The research findings from this survey should be used to conduct a comprehensive study and generate a model for incorporating time for unpaid care work which is a preoccupation of most women into the formulation for calculating GDP.
- The Ministry of Labor-Invalids and Social affairs and relevant ministries should have a specific calculation in order to quantify the time use for UCW as an indicator added to the calculation of GDP.
- Government should improve the provision of public services such as clean water, education and health facilities to minimize the time spent by women in accessing these facilities for themselves, children and the elderly and dedicate more time for securing sources of livelihood which guarantees them a life of dignity.
- The government should take a leading role in disseminating information and raise community awareness, capacity building training for women, men and children on gender equality in communities in order to ensure that women's rights are respected.

To make a house become a real home, every member in the family definitely needs to actively share the UCW with women. Furthermore, it is crucially important to have an overall and comprehensive opinion from the Government on GDP calculation and socio-economic policy development. Particularly, women themselves have to be well aware of their roles and contributions to mobilize family and community, to change their attitude and behavior so that UCW can be fully recognized and shared among all members.

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