

NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON WOMEN'S UNPAID WORK

16-17 April 2015
New Delhi

Organised by the Collective on Women's Unpaid Work with
support from UN Women

Workshop Report



About the report: The report captures the proceedings of the National Workshop on Women’s Unpaid Work organised by the Collective on Unpaid Work with UN Women support on 16-17 April 2015. The objective of the workshop was to arrive at a common understanding of the continuum of paid-unpaid work and develop a roadmap for advocacy, research and organising which contributes to forward looking policy and programme strategies that recognise, reduce and redistribute women’s unpaid work. A total of 71 participants from among activists, researchers and practitioners from women’s rights organisations, academic institutions campaigns, networks and trade unions participated in the workshop.

Part A of this report pulls together the discussions that took place during the National Workshop with a focus on the consensus and contestations around definitional issues, policy approaches, and way forward for undertaking advocacy and research and organising women and their collectives towards responsive policies and budgets that recognise, reduce and redistribute women’s unpaid work. Part B of this report covers the detailed proceedings of the workshop.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON WOMEN'S UNPAID WORK

1. Background

The right to work, the rights at work and freedom from discrimination are enshrined in the Constitution of India, and in international conventions such as the Human Rights Declaration, the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights. However, translation of the normative framework into existing legislation, policy and conventions has remained restricted to conceptualising the rights of workers in paid employment. For example, the Decent Work Agenda of the International Labour Organisation spells out clear guidelines for workers' rights with focus on opportunities for sustainable livelihoods, social protection and organising, but does so only in the context of paid work. Similarly, in India, the rights of workers as enshrined in the Factories Act of 1948, the Minimum Wages Act of 1948, the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005, the Unorganised Workers Social Security Act, 2008, etc. address the concerns of workers in remunerative employment. This limits the very understanding of 'work' to that which is done for an income and of a 'worker' to one who provides services in return of remuneration, thereby restricting workers' rights (in the absence of universal social protection) to those in paid employment¹. Consequently, the current discourse on workers' rights excludes a vast majority of individuals in unpaid or non-remunerative work.

In a country like India, where 90 per cent of the workforce is in the unorganised sector, with a majority being women; where only 22 per cent of the labour force comprises of women workers and where nearly 80 per cent of all women workers are associated with the farm economy with little or no social recognition and limited access to social protection, a discussion on unpaid work and its consequences for women workers' identity and their rights at work becomes important². This is especially so because women's labour force participation has seen a declining trend over the last decade, with data pointing to the fact that 21 million women have exited the workforce, and a large majority has moved into the realm of 'domestic responsibilities'. These trends further necessitate more robust research on the issue of unpaid work, towards building a legal, policy and programmatic framework that can effectively contribute towards create an enabling environment for women's work, both paid and unpaid and specifically, ensure the recognition, reduction and redistribution of women's unpaid work.

¹ Statistical accounts systems and time use studies suggest that worldwide and across developed and developing economies, the daily time of a woman spent in undertaking unpaid work is far higher when compared to men's participation in unpaid work. Women daily dedicate an average of six hours in Mexico and Italy; five hours in India and four plus hours in the United States and France to unpaid work. Men spend an hour and a half in Mexico and Italy, less than an hour in India and two plus hours in the United States and France (Antonopoulos 2009) in participating in unpaid work.

² Women in India spend nearly ten times more time on unpaid care work than men, and on average, a woman spends between thirty minutes to five hours each day in provisioning water for the household. Given that the results of the National Sample Survey (NSS) indicated a strong correlation between adequate sanitation infrastructure and high female work participation rates (particularly in households where there is a working tap), the effect of unpaid work on upward mobility should not be understated.

It is in this broad context that a National Workshop was organised on 16-17 April, 2015 by the Collective on Unpaid Work; this was the first ever face-to-face meeting of a large number of members of the Collective. The formation of the Collective was initiated in 2013 and it currently comprises of individuals, organisations and networks, that work towards the recognition, reduction and redistribution of women's unpaid work through campaigns, training, research and advocacy, in the realm of care, labour rights and universal social protection³. The objective of the workshop as formulated by the Collective was to arrive at a common understanding of the continuum of paid-unpaid work and develop a roadmap for advocacy, research and organising which contributes to forward looking policy and programme strategies that recognise, reduce and redistribute women's unpaid work. A total of 71 participants were present at the workshop. These ranged from activists, researchers and practitioners from women's rights organisations, academic institutions campaigns, networks and trade unions, as well as some in their individual capacity.

The first day of the National Workshop saw a discussion on definitional issues regarding women's unpaid work. The opening session covered issues related to the overall discourse and policy context on women's unpaid work, as well as some of the tensions therein. This was followed by a session for unpacking the concept of women's work – paid, unpaid, under-paid – from the lens of sectoral analysis of domains such as labour and employment, unionizing and organizing, health, infrastructure, water and sanitation, disability, sexual labour, and surrogacy. Papers on four pre-selected themes: (1) policy and budgets; (2) data and data systems; (3) care and (4) livelihoods were presented by select members⁴ of the Collective and were followed by special comments by discussants and open conversations. Day two of the workshop comprised of group discussions on the four themes and this was followed by deliberations on forward looking strategies on advocacy, research and grassroots organising.

2. Highlights from the National Workshop on Women's Unpaid Work

A discussion on women's unpaid work was first initiated at the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in the early seventies, where the issue was addressed in terms of the double burden of household responsibilities on women workers in the labour market. Demand for equity between men and women in household responsibilities consequently emerged as an agenda point at the Mexico Conference in 1975. Thereafter, the discourse expanded to include the roles of not just men within the family but also the state and community in sharing women's unpaid work. In 1980, the UN World Conference on Women in Copenhagen identified the provision of safe water, sanitation, and energy as state responsibilities to counter burdens of unpaid work on women. The Beijing Platform for Action in 1995 later highlighted the significance of capturing unpaid work through systems of national accounts. Many years of advocacy and research around unpaid work following the Beijing Declaration has contributed to the inclusion of *unpaid care work* as a target in Goal 5 on gender equality and empowerment of women in the proposed Sustainable Development Agenda. These goals are intended to build on the Millennium

³ At present, the collective connects via a google group which is supported by UN Women.

⁴ Dr. Bhumika Jhamb, UN Women presented a paper on policy and budgetary implications for women's unpaid work, Ms. Sudeshna Sengupta, Mobile Crèches presented a paper on unpaid care work, Dr. Neetha Pillai, Centre for Women's Development Studies presented on the theme of unpaid work and data systems and Mr. Anil Kumar, PWESCR presented on the theme of unpaid work and livelihoods.

Development Goals (MDGs) that culminate in 2015. Recently, a report presented by the Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights, positioned unpaid care as a human rights issue and recommended that care must be a social and collective responsibility. It is important to note that the discussion on unpaid work in international conventions and commissions has focused only on 'care'. The proposed sustainable development agenda and the Special Rapporteur too focus on unpaid care work. Unpaid work in non-care activities on the other hand, especially in subsistence work and in labour markets has as yet not received adequate policy focus.

In this context, the National Workshop provided a platform for subject experts to discuss the globally accepted definitions of unpaid work and deliberate on the contestations that exist. Since the Collective comprises of a range of stakeholders from diverse disciplinary backgrounds, standpoints and political ideologies, it was important to table some of the points of contestations within the current discourse. These were identified at the onset as including questions concerning definitional issues around unpaid work: whether it should comprise only of the care economy or also include the non-remunerative work undertaken in subsistence and formal labour market economies. The second point of contestation highlighted was on the question of unpaid work being as much a modern capitalist construction as a product of traditional systems: the dilemma posed by occupations such as domestic work, home-based work and consultancy work which are dominated by women workers and yet often not considered as 'work' was discussed in this context. The valuation of unpaid work was highlighted as a third point of contestation: should recognition of unpaid work necessarily imply remuneration and monetary compensation? A fourth issue raised was the debate between the individual versus the heteronormative household as the unit of analysis in existing schemes and programmes (reflected in the dominant primary male breadwinner model) and how a lack of consensus on this matter affects the discourse on unpaid work. And finally, contestations in the existing assumptions in public policy which reinforce instrumentalisation of women's labour (especially in sectors such as microcredit) were highlighted in the workshop. These points of contestations were then deliberated in greater detail in the different sector specific presentations that were made in the workshop. Highlights from the presentations are summarized as follows.

Definitional issues surrounding unpaid work

It was pointed out that unpaid work as defined in documents of the United Nations and as conceptualised in the proposed SDGs comprised of "all productive activities outside the official labour market done by individuals for their own households or for others. These activities are productive in the sense that they use scarce resources to satisfy human wants" (United Nations 1999). However, the discussions of the national workshop focused on women's unpaid work ranging from care services within and outside the 'household' to services in subsistence economies and labour markets. One important area of reflection during the workshop was the close relationship between women's work and their right to resources, especially in the context of maintenance of commons such water, cultivable and grazing lands, forests and land. Unpaid work also extends into labour markets in sectors where women are concentrated in large numbers and the work is under-valued within the macroeconomic

market logic, such as in domestic work and home-based work (crafts, bidi making, manufacturing, etc.). It was therefore noted that while these activities are discussed in the context of unpaid work, they may fall anywhere on the continuum of paid, under-paid, unpaid work. In other words, unpaid work should be understood from the lens of continuity and simultaneity of women's work which extends across care, subsistence and formal and home-based labour markets. The lack of clarity on definitional issues surrounding unpaid work is further affected by varied interpretations in the existing data systems and the inability therein of the data systems to capture women's work in their entirety.

Understanding 'care' in unpaid work

Discussions at the National Workshop expanded the concept of 'care' as a public and social good. This was an important starting point since unpaid work is dominantly understood in the context of care. Caution was raised against the construction of mothers alone as the primary care giver. It was discussed that recommendations targeting the recognition of mothers' role in providing care services, although aimed at reducing and redistributing unpaid work, often also contribute to essentialising women's roles as primary care givers. The naturalisation of women's roles as the primary care givers is particularly problematic given the unpaid, unwaged nature of work, the nominal stipends provided for maternity breaks and as pension for the disabled. This approach is premised on a fundamental neglect of viewing mothers (women) as individual rights holders. At the same time, the unidimensional focus on mothers as the primary care providers leaves the recipients of care with no option for alternatives. In the context of disability rights, the one dimensional reliance for care on mothers is particularly problematic given that disability is heterogeneous and the level of care is different for each person. It was also noted that childcare is qualitatively different in that it includes emotional and relational dynamics that cannot be accurately captured in macroeconomic policy or government schemes. Social care comprises a huge range of tasks, and it is difficult to quantify the value of energy, time and effort expended by care givers, alongside the economic benefits accrued for all stakeholders. For this reason, there should be a layered conceptualisation of care that takes into account biological, parental and societal factors. Therefore, a broader perspective on care as a public and social good was agreed upon, and state obligation in creating an enabling and supportive environment for this was highlighted.

On the question of state obligation, the National Workshop positioned maternity entitlements and child care as universal rights. While for the purpose of the workshop, the background paper had combined maternity entitlements and child care, based on the discussions it emerged that while child care is understood better as a public good and should be framed as such, maternity entitlements need to be framed in the context of women workers, their (reproductive) work, and wage compensation in order to ensure that this work is supported and enabled, both for their wellbeing as well as for positive labour outcomes.

In this context, the National Food Security Act's recognition of women as workers and their entitlement to maternity benefits was acknowledged as important in a larger scenario where (1) the state's role in care is seen as necessary only in the absence of the primary care giver, i.e. the mother in a

heteronormative family and where (2) while maternity rights are recognized, they are understood only through the lens of wage compensation as opposed to a comprehensive package comprising of antenatal, post-natal, health and early childhood care and development and intergenerational transfer of knowledge and related issues. The multidimensional approach articulated in the 'care diamond' which clearly identifies the respective roles of the family, community, state and market was identified as another entry point into a discussion on women's unpaid care work.

'Volunteerism' and unpaid work

The 'voluntary and community work' done by women extends to various sectors and schemes and is completely unaccounted for in national budgetary estimates. For example, women's unpaid work and time directed towards the collection of water⁵ and fuel and in maintenance of commons is neither accounted for nor provided support for. This is a result of systematic marginalisation of certain kinds of work that are predominantly done by women, in the name of 'community participation' and 'volunteerism', without investments by the state in the provisioning of basic essential services.

Gender and caste based forced labour

Sexual labour was discussed in the workshop in the context of unpaid work. Perspectives ranged from considering sex within a marital relationship which plays on duty, rather than consent or equality, as a form of sexualised labour; to the equally oppressive religious and traditional sexual contracts outside of marriage. An example is the case of the Devadasis, which was discussed in a presentation in one session at the workshop⁶. This presentation covered the concerns and problems of Devadasis; it was stated that an estimated 300,000 have historically been marginalised in their communities in India; living on the periphery of villages and begging for food. The fact that 99 per cent of Devadasis belong to Scheduled Castes (SC) is also indicative of the intersectional nature of their disadvantages. While the Devadasi tradition is one continuing form of caste based bondage and slavery being done principally by women of marginalised communities, manual scavenging, forced labour in brick kilns, and in houses as domestic workers were other examples that were highlighted as difficult to categorise in the continuum of paid and unpaid work.

⁵ Collection of water is one of the most cited reasons for girls dropping out of schools. India has about 17% of the world's population and 4% of renewable water resources. The draft National Water Policy 2012 recommended that water other than that required for drinking and sanitation be treated as an economic good. Following protests about treating water as an economic good and the policy favouring privatisation, revisions have ensured that the water use for food security and agriculture are also considered primary.

⁶ Under the system of Devadasis, adolescent girls are "dedicated to God" after attaining puberty. This practice is prevalent in communities belonging to the scheduled castes and has been documented to be historically enforced by the dominant castes of a village. Women pushed into this system of exchange of sexual labour are not allowed to get married, pursue independent relationships, or reject the system. They are only allowed to engage in sexual alliances with select men of the village, mostly from the priestly class, in return of token remuneration and nominal food and clothing.

Unpaid work in labour markets

The presentation on the issue of commercial surrogacy revealed the emerging industry to be a complex arrangement rooted in the informal economy and contingent on a mix of gift-giving, perceived altruism and sexualised care work. While technically, commercial surrogacy cannot be classified as 'unpaid work', however it remains a grey area because the compensation is often identified as a gift. The surrogate is continuously told this is altruistic and that she is giving the gift of a child to the customer. This becomes deeply binding and therefore exploitative. The industry plays upon unequal power relations, given that surrogates in India are from poorer backgrounds and are not usually fully informed about the terms of their contract, are often housed in oppressive 'hostels', and can exercise no decision-making powers over the course of their pregnancy. The policies and legislations which have been attempted in India have contributed towards the protection of the multi-million dollar industry, instead of the women who are providing the 'reproductive service'. The existing legal framework has not addressed questions relating to the changing nature of labour in the expanding commercial surrogacy industry, particularly in the context of 'reproductive labour' and the effects of surrogacy on women's physical, emotional and mental health. Equally importantly, one must be mindful of the enabling conditions in the dominant macroeconomic framework which allow commercial surrogacy to thrive and which push women to become surrogates because the opportunities for 'decent work' are almost entirely absent within the labour market.

Unpaid work in the larger neoliberal macroeconomic framework

Discussions at the National Workshop viewed the lack of conceptual clarity as a *consequence* of unpaid work being as much a modern capitalist construction as a product of pre-capitalist systems (such as care). In the current context, neoliberal macroeconomic policies such as shifts towards *labour-intensive export-driven manufacturing* have led to a policy push to increase the number of 'footloose' and cheap labour. Consequently, there has been a substantial increase in the number of workers in vulnerable forms of employment. Public support to labour intensive industries has resulted in measures which perpetuate gender inequality in labour markets by increasing the informality of employment and compromising the rights of marginalised groups, especially women. This has also led to greater public control on women's bodies in the form of their fertility being increasingly seen in contravention to their productivity in the labour markets. Examples of village-based health clinics recommending hysterectomies to increase women's productivity throughout their lifecycle were shared in a presentation. These procedures often coincide with crucial harvest times. In the cases of miscarriages or infertility however, women seen as having failed to fulfil their marital 'contract' and reproductive functions, and have been documented as being punished through additional unpaid work responsibilities in the home or through hazardous work in labour markets.

Furthermore, greater privatisation and tendencies towards private-public partnerships have shifted responsibility from the state to the individual, and paved the way for marketization of all activities. The process of trade liberalisation has been accompanied by declines in access to basic public goods and services in several countries in the region. All of these have had complex effects upon the position of women and their ability to control their own lives. Discussions in the workshop highlighted emerging

issues, which require urgent policy intervention at both national and international levels. These include: reduced social sector spending, cuts in food subsidies and inadequate social protection coverage, deepening crisis of livelihoods in agriculture, escalating numbers of women in vulnerable employment and the rising burden of unpaid work on women. It is important to therefore underscore the structural nature of the issue of 'women's unpaid work'; the argument being that macroeconomic and institutional structures create conditions that are in violation of civic and civil rights to clean water, sanitation, care, health services and maintenance of commons and are therefore directly responsible for women and girls participating in drudgery filled unpaid work.

Assessing limitations in the current framework

Analysing the concept of 'unpaid work' from the lenses of basic entitlements such as water, care, health, and public infrastructure on the one hand and variously interpreted forms of labour such as sexual labour within the home, sex work, sexual slavery, surrogacy on the other hand led the delegates to agree that limitations in the current discourse on 'unpaid work' exist and additional empirical and theoretical work (especially in the context of the neoliberal macroeconomic framework) is required for greater conceptual clarity in order to pursue informed policy advocacy and research towards recognising, reducing and redistributing it. It was further agreed that 'women's unpaid work' as a concept should be seen as existing along the continuum of paid-underpaid-unpaid work. Future discussion should include clarity on which forms of work should continue and which should be eliminated or reduced. For example, hazardous child labour, manual scavenging, the practice of Devadasis, among other forms of activities should necessarily be eliminated even as efforts should continue to reduce forms of work such as water and fuel collection, care and subsistence activities. While redistribution of unpaid work remains the key, one fundamental struggle is to shift the current paradigm where unpaid work is synonymous with women's work to one where unpaid work is redistributed equitably between the state, community and individuals.

3. Recommendations for Way Forward

At the conclusion of the National Workshop, (1) evidence based policy advocacy, (2) action research and (3) bottom-up organising were iterated as the key strategies that may be used by the Collective towards the goal of recognising, reducing and redistributing women's unpaid work. It was agreed that the discourse around women's unpaid work should be shaped by greater engagement with women's collectives and alliances with a view to build grassroots upwards constituencies for campaigning, lobbying, and achieving policy shifts. This would not be possible without detailed efforts towards redefining families, redefining care, redefining the male 'breadwinner' model, and in the process creating a more nuanced and thorough understanding of women's work followed by targeted advocacy towards creation of an enabling environment for all workers.

Enumeration of women's unpaid work in macroeconomic policies and national legislations and programmes was concluded as critical for women to have equal opportunities in the national economy. Towards this end, a need for robust methodological frameworks which could adequately analyse and capture the impact of women's unpaid work on the status of a country's economy, including impact on

the key sectors of care, education, health, livelihoods and public infrastructure in a country- was felt. Tools such as gender ratio, rapid gender assessments, gender budgeting were identified as important to strengthen gender responsive planning in the context of unpaid work as was advocacy for a universal social protection floor. This was noted as critical in a national context where state withdrawal from public service provisioning is being accompanied with expenditure cuts in social sector spending- which are in turn increasing the burden of unpaid work on women.

A number of short term tasks were listed by participants, including a strategy paper on recognising, reducing and redistributing unpaid work, an action research contributing to clarity on definitional issues around unpaid work as well as questions of women workers' identity and social recognition of unpaid work, advocacy plans around existing government programmes and a campaign for generating resources for future evidence based advocacy.

Specific recommendations that emerged from the thematic presentations and from group work are listed below.

Policy and budgets

1. Strategy paper focusing on policy and budgetary review of existing government provisions for recognising, reducing and redistributing women's unpaid work.
2. Research to generate evidence on the implications of the increased devolution of funds to states, particularly on women specific schemes and social sectors, in India.

Data systems

1. Consensus building within the women's movements on measurement and definitions of unpaid work.
2. Advocacy for integrating questions which help capture women's unpaid work in existing surveys like the Census and the National Sample Survey and institutionalizing Time Use Surveys as well as ethnographic studies in measurement systems in the country to strengthen data systems; with a focus on implementing the revised definitions of 'work' under the ICLS into national data systems.

Care

1. Developing a comprehensive understanding of maternity entitlement as well as child care entitlement which involves contributions from parents, community, the government and market.
2. Advocacy for specific care entitlements across specific groups like persons with disability, the elderly, and the sick.
3. Advocating for public, paid care givers' rights which include minimum wages, adequate remuneration, social security, pensions, safety at work, healthy working conditions, adequate leisure, freedom of association, and right to negotiate on their demands with employers and state.

4. Research on maternity entitlements, laws and policies towards recommendations to reduce and redistribute women's unpaid work.

Livelihoods

1. Building evidence of women's contribution as unpaid workers in subsistence and underpaid workers within labour markets (with a focus on specific worker groups – women farmers, care workers, home-based workers, etc.) to create a basis of dialogue and advocacy to push for dignified livelihoods; build capacities of these worker constituencies in the process.
2. Developing methodologies and tools that are interdisciplinary and help to document and highlight the above

Resource mobilization and awareness generation

1. Initiating a national campaign for generating resources.
2. Increasing visibility of unpaid work by reaching out to new stake holders, using popular and unconventional media spaces.

Functioning of the Collective

A core group of members of the Collective was formed at the end of the National Workshop which took on the responsibility for finalising the action points and reverting to the Collective. Members of the core group are as follows: Ritu Dewan, Kuhu Das, Radhika Desai, Sudeshna Sengupta, Meenakshi Balasubramanian, and Shraddha Chickerur. It was also agreed that UN Women will continue to moderate the e-group for the next six months.

PART B: DETAILED PROCEEDINGS OF THE NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON WOMEN'S UNPAID WORK

1. Context Setting: How have we understood Unpaid Work?

Anchored by: Ms. Yamini Mishra, Policy Advisor, UN Women Asia Pacific

1.1 Welcome Note

Dr. Rebecca Reichmann Tavares, Representative of the UN Women Office for India, Bhutan, Maldives and Sri Lanka, opened the workshop by welcoming all the participants. She observed that women's unpaid work (UPW) and its relation to women's economic empowerment is a new area of enquiry at the international level. The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) recently renewed their commitment to the twelve areas identified during the Beijing platform. With inclusion in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the value of women's labour has been recognised in the international framework, reinforcing efforts for recognising, reducing and redistributing women's unpaid care work.

The 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians⁷ adopted the resolution to redefine work, to include women's UPW. This also presents a political opening in the international statistical framework and has given an added impetus towards using data collection and time-use surveys (TUSs) to capture unpaid work. However, she noted that generating time-use data has not translated into effective policy-making and emphasised the need for using this data for the purposes of policy and action.

Dr. Tavares made a note of the key challenges in changing national macroeconomic policy. She spoke about the need to positively frame the responsibilities of men to share care work in law and in policy frameworks. This could strategically help redistribute the wide spectrum of women's UPW, which is often invisible, but contributes millions to the economy.

She proposed some questions for the group to think through in the course of the workshop. These include the following:

- How do we bridge the gap between theory and practice?
- How can we support women's organisations that are doing advocacy and research?
- How can we advocate the policies that address the 3Rs- Recognise, Reduce and Redistribute?
- How do we ensure our work addresses the entire range of women's work?
- How can we map our allies, and collectively create innovative strategies, partnership and action plans during this workshop?

⁷ According to the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) in November 2013 (ratified by the International Labour Organisation in March 2014), "Work comprises 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." The inclusion of the phrase "for use by others or for own use" provides the crucial difference as it includes the production of goods and services performed in the home for other household members and for personal use. (Ghosh,2014)

1.2 Women's Unpaid Work in the Context of India and South Asia

Dr. Indira Hirway, of the Centre for Development Alternatives in Ahmedabad, gave an overview of the concept of UPW, its measurement and its significance in the South Asian context. She highlighted the effects of macroeconomic policies, and explained how they have been detrimental to women's UPW by intensifying their burden. Trade liberalisation, for example, had led to a restructuring of production, resulting in the reorganisation of labour. Thus, greater flexibility at the macro-developmental level, alongside cost-cutting measures have led to a burden for unpaid workers.⁸

She noted that in India, the government has a tendency to reduce expenditure in March, before the end of the financial year in order to meet the fiscal deficit target. This results in cuts to primary services and reduced spending on the social sector, which is in turn, borne by individual households, and primarily women. Privatisation, a decline in subsidies and financial crises place a similar burden on unpaid workers. Many South Asian countries suffer from such phenomena, and coupled with low economic growth, the burden disproportionately falls on women workers.

Dr. Hirway clarified how the concept of UPW is looked at differently in South Asia, and includes aspects beyond care and voluntary services. In the South, UPW does not receive direct remuneration, and benefits received are not related to productivity and equality, nor are they need-based, but based on social norms. UPW is highly unequally distributed and can be both SNA⁹ and non SNA. The household overhead time (HOT) is very high in developing countries, primarily because they have lower access to technology. UPW needs more time and energy, and also suffers from insecurity and vulnerability, which translates into an increased burden on women.

Household economy is crucial from the UPW point of view, but there is currently limited data on the issue that accurately reflects the current situation. Fetching drinking water, and fuel wood; free collection of production goods such as fodder and leaves; production of goods for subsistence, and household enterprises are all activities largely excluded from the national income. The Indian economy involves a pyramid-like style of organisation, in which UPW lies at the bottom. Given the inter-linkage of the household, the market and the state, household production should be a fundamental part of all policies.

Care work at the household level forms the backbone of the Indian economy. The physical and economic needs of the population are the duty of the state, but continue to rest with women. UPW contributes to the well-being of the family unit, contributes to capital formation and the depreciation of labour. UPW

⁸In the context of neoliberal policies, Jayati Ghosh (2009) noted how despite India's high economic growth, there was a decline in employment and real wages as well as an increase in productivity which shows that labour did not benefit from this growth. The resulting austerity measures have put extreme pressure on women and girls.

⁹ UN-SNA is the United Nations System of national accounting which determines what to count in national income and what not to count in national income. UN SNA document, the latest is 2008, divided into three SNA, non SNA, and non-productive activities like watching TV etc. Non SNA are those activities which are for the well-being of people but not counted in national income.

also subsidises the public sector and the market. UPW therefore constitutes one of the three core sectors of the macro-economy.

The major concern with UPW is its invisibility in data and policies. TUS and data collection has been neglected in South Asian countries and as a result it is not addressed in policies either¹⁰.

In many cases, UPW is unattractive; it can be boring and repetitive, there is limited opportunity for upward mobility, there are few opportunities for the worker's personal development, and it is often considered to be inferior work. It is also unequally distributed and socially constructed, and has resulted in miscarriages of justice and human rights violations. Time poverty of women results in time scarcity regarding health, nutrition, and upward mobility, and traps women into low productivity and low income cycles.

The following ways of addressing UPW were also highlighted:

- i. Recognition of UPW, including its reduction and reorganisation within the household.
- ii. Valuation of UPW, making it more visible in the macro-economy. When there is a visible contribution to GDP, workers can access more opportunities to improve their own conditions.
- iii. Greater integration within the labour market for women. Women's participation in labour force is low due to UPW. Provisions such as maternity and paternity benefit, which do not characterise women as unpaid care-givers will enable UPW to be shared by men. Policies need to be reoriented and UPW should be reduced in order to optimise the utility of the entire labour force. Women should have equal access to education, health, financial markets etc., in order for labour to be used more effectively and to reduce its dependency on patriarchal norms.
- iv. The integration of UPW with macroeconomic policies should pave the way for a new macroeconomic model which is equitable, sustainable, gender sensitive and just.
- v. Environmental sustainability is also important but remains invisible in current discussions.

1.3 Women and work: Sites of Contestation

Ms. Subhalakshmi Nandi, UN Women Office for India, Bhutan, Maldives & Sri Lanka, highlighted key debates and reflections on the issue of women's unpaid work. She noted that there are various concepts like 'unpaid work', 'unpaid care work' and 'care'; which have different meanings and need to be clarified, especially in the context of data systems. UPW is not only a function of traditional production

¹⁰Elsewhere Antonopoulos and Hirway (2010) have noted the obstacles in measuring SNA work covered under the production boundary in developing countries. It is not easy to distinguish between informal work and household work, socio-cultural biases in reporting wherein women fail to say they are workers, biases of investigators who fail to note women's economic contributions correctly and informal work is temporary, short term, seasonal, sporadic etc making it difficult to measure in TUS.

systems but it is a modern capitalist construction. It is not only about domestic work in the home, but also about home-based work and virtual consultancy work, which is considered to be within the production boundary but not generally recognised as work. Even within the public domain, remuneration is not adequately distributed and often manifests itself unequally, for example, in the case of the Asha workers. It was said that discussions should also transcend the boundaries of public and private.

Another debate pertains to the valuation and remuneration of UPW. What does valuation mean? Does recognition of UPW in data systems pave the way for its remuneration? However, time use is not necessarily about remuneration, but can be used to capture who does what work, thereby allowing policy makers to recognise that diverse forms of work can reduce drudgery.¹¹

By linking valuation to wages, Ms. Nandi problematized the use of the hetero-normative household as the unit of analysis, which assumes the male bread winner to be the head of the household. *Devadasis* (women who are dedicated to God), single women and a variety of non-normative kinship structures however need a more inclusive frame of analysis. And yet the patriarchal normative construction of society is what is reflected in macroeconomic policies.

Another issue brought to the fore was that of the rights of the care takers where on the one hand there is greater community participation, but on the other, there are assumptions being made about women's labour and autonomy. The example of Argentina was cited, where there are community centres run by women and also in Mexico, which has a cash transfer system and raises questions regarding women's autonomy. In placing the onus of work on women, the state will, at best, provide financial support. *Amma's* kitchen in Tamil Nadu¹², a community kitchen which is creating employment for women near the homes and also reducing their care work, was cited as a positive initiative. However, community-based initiatives tend to operate upon assumptions regarding women's labour. For example, microfinance and microcredit programmes are heralded as progressive interventions, but often end up instrumentalising women's labour. The assumption made is that there is no need for public investments and that poor people only need credit at high interest rates, to personally ameliorate their situation.

1.4 Discussion

The discussion centred on extending the care component to reflect the quantity and quality of the current and future labour forces, and the need to redefine and break up the 'private'. One participant shared that the state was only focused on growth without any concern for safeguarding people's needs, particularly in the context of employment. Another observation referred to the changing nature of wages which had ceased to include provisions such as pension, provident fund and housing. Therefore, what were previously struggles for wages have become a fight for social security. In Mumbai, the mill workers struggles have transformed from workers demanding wages to citizens demanding housing.

¹¹Campaigns on Wages for Housework led by Selma James and Maria Dalla Costa in the 1970s were criticised for making commercial economy the only available framework for analysis and for not addressing the structural nature of the problem.

¹²Amma Unavagam is a food subsidization programme run by the Tamil Nadu state government to provide affordable and nutritious food for working poor people in cities. Every kitchen is run by 16 women from a slum-based self-help group.

The normative being dominant in the care discourse was raised by citing the example of how leave considerations and other concessions are easily given for children's exams but harder for a single woman taking care of her parents.

The need to integrate the political ecology lens was emphasised because women are also voicing concern that policies are obfuscating environmental concerns.

Another concern raised was that of making marginalised women more visible. There is a need to recognise the care provided by women with disabilities, and to integrate them with the labour market and issues of access to basic infrastructure including health, education and employment facilities.

2. Recasting Policy Priorities

Anchored by: Ms. Subhalakshmi Nandi, Programme Specialist, Women's Economic Empowerment, UN Women Office for India, Bhutan, Maldives & Sri Lanka

The session sought to use some of the 'non-traditional' entry points for addressing women's UPW across different sectors. The presentations raised complexities in the context of UPW which had implications for policy-making and activism.

2.1 Surrogacy

Ms. Anindita Majumdar, SAMA - Resource Group for Women and Health

Commercial surrogacy is where a woman is willing to carry someone else's foetus for nine months at the end of which she is given an honorarium or compensation. Ms. Majumdar spoke about the complexities in the arrangement of commercial surrogacy.

Commercial surrogacy is not technically unpaid work, but is considered a grey area because the compensation is characterised as a gift. The surrogate is continuously told that her actions are altruistic, and that she is giving a gift of a child. This is deeply binding, and emotionally exploitative. It is important to therefore explore how work and labour are defined in commercial gestating? As SAMA's work highlights, surrogates identify this work in various ways- some as sexual labour, and others as gift-giving.

The 2013 draft of the Assisted Reproductive Technologies (Regulation) Bill aims at regulating conceptive technologies (like artificial insemination, in-vitro fertilisation and surrogacy) commonly known as Assisted Reproductive Technologies (ARTs). Activists have been concerned that the bill seems to protect the interests of the providers of ARTS rather than effectively regulating and monitoring the multi-million dollar industry. The draft bill insists on the gestational role, as part of which the surrogate is unable to contribute her own eggs, but will only carry the foetus: this is to avoid attachment and claim. There is constant socialisation telling her that she is just a carrier, a 'womb to rent'. SAMA recommends that both genetic and gestational surrogacy should be allowed because attachment or lack thereof can happen in either scenario, but questions whether a hierarchy exists in gestational and genetic labour.

Ms. Majumdar also talked about how surrogacy hostels are emerging where surrogates are housed under surveillance during their pregnancy until delivery. They are subject to constant monitoring, including supervision of their diet and restrictions on mobility, and are removed from their homes and families. In this sense, it is a deeply problematic 'work place'. She raised questions around the neoliberal, economic context that is pushing women to take up commercial surrogacy, which offers bulk payments, instead of the arduous labour that is performed for meagre wages, including factory work, domestic labour, and home-based work; which are all located in the informal economy.

The surrogacy contracts are not between two equal parties. The surrogates are mostly unable to comprehend the contract, with little idea of the terms apart from the fact that they have to give up the baby and the amount they will receive for this work. The issues of medical intrusions in surrogacy and compensation are vital. All births are caesarean- to time it with the parents' arrival and to reduce attachment, and there is no breast feeding.

The presentation posed a lot of questions related to the changing nature of labour, and the way in which 'reproductive labour' can be exploitative.

2.2 Unpaid Work and Sexual Labour in the Context of Devadasis

Dr. Smita Premchander, Sampark, Bengaluru

Dr. Premchander's presentation talked about Devadasi women who have been historically 'dedicated' to God anytime from birth to 12 years of age. 99 per cent of the women belong to the Scheduled Castes. They are not allowed to get married and live a life of restrictions. Men from the general castes use them for unpaid sexual labour in lieu of petty cash, clothes and food. These two are provided only in the initial stages of unpaid sexual labour. In majority cases, the women are abandoned after the first or second pregnancies.

As per tradition, when Devadasis refuse to provide unpaid sexual services to men, they are abused and called '*sulagi*' (sex worker). In the event that men who exploit the Devadasis do not provide for them, the women are allowed to beg for food. In fact, Devadasis are forced to walk around with a begging bowl when first 'dedicated' to God'. During the presentation, a photograph of a woman was displayed on the screen to make the point that while it is difficult for an outsider to identify a *devadasi*; their identities are well known by local villagers. *Devadasis* have historically lived on the periphery of villages, in the hamlets of Scheduled Castes (SCs) and are marginalised within those groups too. There are laws abolishing the practice and schemes targeted at these women, but they are often ineffectual. Dr. Premchander highlighted how the practice continues to be in violation of laws on child marriage, human trafficking, domestic violence and children's right to education.

Devadasis have not been counted but researchers estimate that there are about 300,000. The Government recognises that there are still approximately 50,000 living in the states of Karnataka, Andhra and Maharashtra. Devadasis are increasingly found to be engaging in sex work since it provides opportunities for financial gain and enables them to organise and fight for the recognition of sex work. As a result, the incidence of illnesses (HIV and others) among younger *devadasis* is rising. Alcoholism is

another problem. It was highlighted that organising Devadasis remains a challenge and will take a considerable amount of time especially in the absence of the fundamental realisation that their human rights are being violated in the name of tradition and culture and that mechanisms under the constitution of India exist which guarantee them equal rights.

2.3 Disability

Dr. Anita Ghai, Jesus and Mary College, New Delhi

Dr. Ghai highlighted the complexities of the relationship between the care giver and the care receiver especially in the context of disability rights. There is a 'natural' construction of mothers as care givers where they are expected to look after a disabled child, thus engaging in work which is unpaid and unwaged. It is yet to be understood that disability is heterogeneous and the level of care is very different for each person. And yet, the stipend given by the government is appallingly insufficient.

Interdependence is crucial in understanding these dynamics. When will the state recognise the individuality of mothers? On the other hand, recipients cannot question the care given to them, that they are getting care is enough. It is important to remember that abuse can come from the mother too.

Issues surrounding the employment of disabled women were also raised, for example, sexuality and the difficulties associated with 'exploration', given that people with disabilities are usually cared for in a family environment. This also underpins the 'care versus cure' viewpoint- that somehow people with disabilities should be made as 'normal' as possible.

It was also pointed out that the care that people with disabilities can provide is often underestimated, since they are characterised as the recipients of care. The discussion ended with an emphasis on the importance of unpacking the hierarchies of marginal identities.

2.4 Water & Sanitation

Ms. Mamata Dash, WaterAid

Ms. Dash spoke about water, sanitation and touched upon menstrual hygiene. She started by highlighting how the draft water policy of 2012¹³ does not contextualise water as a 'public good', but as an economic good. This is the politics of denial and in this sense, people's relationship with water has been defined problematically.

There have been limited efforts to quantify the time that is spent in protecting water bodies, in provisioning for the household, or to recognise the effort and violence that women face in doing so. The average woman spends between 30 minutes to five hours in provisioning water for the household, and the situation is further complicated by class and caste. This is in addition to the time spent bathing and

¹³ Collection of water is one of the most cited reasons for girls dropping out of schools. India has about 17% of the world's population and 4% of renewable water resources. The draft National Water Policy 2012 recommended that water other than that required for drinking and sanitation, be treated as an economic good. Following protests about treating water as an economic good and the policy favouring privatisation, revisions have ensured that the water use for food security and agriculture are also considered primary.

washing clothes. The current scenario is a result of systematic marginalisation of certain kinds of necessary work undertaken by women.

In actual fact, public messaging on ‘keeping your surroundings clean’ trivialises a major issue that neglects to further explore sanitation beyond toilets, construction and existing infrastructure. For example, there is an area of Madhya Pradesh which is being declared as ‘open defecation free’; despite this, 50% of the affected households do not have access to toilets, and there seems to be little chance of authorities providing funds for better sanitation infrastructure. For the government, it is also considered problematic to frame water and sanitation as a basic human right, as this necessitates further spending and leaves the burden of responsibility with the authorities, not the individual.

Furthermore, it is shameful that the practice of manual scavenging still exists, with roughly four lakh people still engaged in scavenging, of which 70-80 per cent are women. Although this is paid work, it is deeply problematic that current structures still recognise it as gainful employment. Previous efforts to both eliminate the practice and to rehabilitate manual scavengers have also faced a backlash from successive governments.

The issue of menstrual hygiene was also raised and with it, engaging the workforce in preparing girls to be more sensitive to the largely invisible issue. The question around how unpaid work of this nature should be factored in was raised.

2.5 Infrastructure

Dr. Ritu Dewan, former Director & Professor, Department of Economics, University of Mumbai

Dr. Ritu Dewan placed infrastructure in the boarder context of policy frameworks. The systems of production and reproduction, community management, maintenance and the issues associated with livelihood need to be looked at in two ways- private property resources and common property resources. By using NSS data for 15-16 years for every state, various correlations and regressions have been worked out, for eight aspects of infrastructure and female (urban and rural work) participation rates (FWPR). The strongest linkages were found in the availability of water within the household and especially those families who had access to a working tap. The availability of toilets, adequate roads and fuel also showed a strong correlation for rural FWPR.

Economic constraints facing planners were also highlighted. Restricted mobility leads to social and economic exclusion in rural areas, particularly for women. Lack of access to roads symbolises a means through which the most vulnerable are excluded, since they do not provide effective access to destinations frequented by women, for example, in order to fetch water, fuel and firewood. This is also the case for tribal communities and minorities. This point was illustrated with the following table, which indicates the impact of roads on men and women in terms of location and production. It shows that restricted access to roads impacts upon casual workers most significantly:

WPR & Roads	T-Value	Significance tested at 5%
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Female Casual Worker	2.18	Significant
Male Casual Worker	2.98	Significant
Female Salaried Worker	-3.67	Significant
Male Salaried Worker	-0.23	Not Significant
Female Self-employed Worker	-0.59	Not Significant
Male Self-employed Worker	-0.63	Not Significant

Dr. Dewan suggested the following as possible action points that can be taken up-

- i. Rapid gender assessment surveys to evaluate effectiveness of infrastructure. India can learn from the examples of China and Kenya, where extensive gender assessment surveys are being undertaken.
- ii. The creation of 'gender ratios'
- iii. Gendered budgets integrated in every project
- iv. Environmental Impact Analysis and Social Impact Analysis to be part of all infrastructure projects

2.6 Health

Dr. Manisha Gupte, Mahila SarvangeenUtkarsh Mandal

Dr. Gupte talked about body, sexuality, health and how these definitions relate to work, both within the house and outside. A 1987 study of two drought-hit villages in Purandar *taluka* (development block) was cited. The researchers found that women working on employment guarantee schemes had suffered from a number of miscarriages, for which there was neither grievance procedure nor compensation in the workplace. This example sought to illustrate how public and private patriarchies work hand-in-hand. This is further supported by the existence of son preferential reproductive decisions- a situation which has been further complicated by the introduction of coercive two child policies.

Dr. Gupte also pointed out that in many village-based health clinics, medical complaints involving the victim's hands are often treated more quickly by community health workers, than ailments including backache or white discharge because an inability to use the hands directly exempts one from work. Furthermore, the fertility of women, including issues relating to abortion, contraception and tubectomies, are manipulated according to the needs of the family. The first miscarriage is usually looked upon with sympathy, but subsequent miscarriages and complications can lead to bad situations for women, particularly if the man's fertility has already been proven. Being unable to bear children is considered a failure shouldered solely by the woman, and can even lead to practices such as exorcism being recommended. In some cases, women who are not able to give birth, have to do extra unpaid work to justify their right to stay in the house. In many communities, the first wife is allowed a period of around three to five years to deliver a child, whereas the second wife is expected to get pregnant immediately.

Research has also found that early hysterectomies are becoming more popular, with many women in their twenties opting to undergo the procedure in order to reduce birth rates. Such methods of sterilisation are being encouraged both by the government and the private sector. Another study revealed that hysterectomies were undergone in the sugarcane belts, before the harvest period. The system used in harvesting is called *koyta* (translated as 'axe') which refers to the way in which two people work as a team in order to collect the sugarcane. The hysterectomy is performed to ensure that the woman is not menstruating and so prevented from being unproductive for a few days every month. Such is the importance placed on sugarcane cutting around harvest time that the resolution of family problems is put on hold during this period: for example, if a daughter is facing domestic violence, she might not be brought to her home until the natal family has to go for sugarcane cutting and are running one hand short to complete a *koyta*. To understand what happens to unwanted women, like unwanted organs, the 1994 Shirur case¹⁴ was touched upon, during which activists successfully managed to stop a proposal to perform hysterectomies on mentally-challenged girls from an institution.

Dr. Gupte further highlighted that gender is cross cutting in terms of paid and unpaid work, formal-informal employment, home-based and in the workplace. Family unit labour can also be considered exploitative, since the family receives reimbursement, but often the woman is excluded from remunerative work. Mental health issues are often triggered by entrenched gender roles. For example, the plight of HIV widows who are thrown out soon as the husband dies and the discrimination often faced by young women when seeking employment. The rise of the far right, and an increase in right-wing politics also carries implications for the way in which women are able to work both inside and outside the house. And yet women do exercise agency through mechanisms, such as rebellion, running away, through the use of material possessions, or by engaging in romantic and sexual liaisons before and after marriage.

2.7 Unionising and Organising

Ms. Anannya Bhattacharya, New Trade Union Initiative

Ms. Bhattacharya works in Trade Unions (TUs) that represent all forms of labour, although there is a primary focus on those working in urban areas in the fields of manufacturing, construction, garment and auto parts, domestic workers and healthcare providers; both with informal and formal sector workers, in factories and, in the home. However many vulnerable workers are unorganised, victims of migration and residing in urban slums.

There is inadequate data related to migration, especially with regard to women. In order to find solutions to the issues surrounding vulnerability and migration, it is crucial that there is more research in this field. There are new capitalist structures with old feudal powers, which exhibit a singular focus on production and profit, peripheralising other factors in the process. Planning provisions for working classes, for example, are absent. For the working classes, there is a very low average monthly income of

¹⁴Amid great furore and protests from civil society organisations and progressive groups, mass hysterectomies of mentally handicapped women of the Government Certified School of Mentally Deficient Girls in Shirur, Pune were conducted in February 1994. The incident got national publicity and sparked debates on disabled women's sexual and reproductive choices.

around 5000-5500 rupees, no employment contract, no proof of work or identity, and hazardous working conditions in a workplace in which labour law violations are commonplace.

Ms. Bhattacharya raised the issue of a gendered enforcement of statutory law, particularly for women in paid, female-dominated industries which can lead to structural underemployment. For example, women are forced to undertake under-paid jobs, such as home-based work, and even UPW. Girls can be barred from education due to care responsibilities of younger siblings and housework obligations. The word 'structural' is integral in discussions on women's UPW, since it is largely institutional structures and social norms which are relegating women to certain conditions. Unpaid over-work is caused by violations of civic and civil rights including lack of access to water and sanitation, in addition to inadequate schooling, childcare, elderly care, and healthcare. There are regular family emergencies due to lack of amenities and ineffective security and safety measures.

The lack of choice associated with types of UPW affects skill development in the areas of unionising, leadership, organising, and collective bargaining. Whilst these skills are considered to be more desirable, social norms and cultural practices can make it difficult for women to participate in work that can contribute to personal development.

Her policy recommendations were

- i. Non-discriminatory enforcement of statutory laws
- ii. Education, training, affirmative action
- iii. Regulating home-based work– ('home-office' in high end formal sectors)
- iv. Civic amenities and public infrastructure
- v. Definition of living wage including housework and care work
- vi. Definition of working hours including housework and care work
- vii. Gender-neutral benefits for housework and care work
- viii. Family friendly workplaces

2.8 Reflections on Labour

Dr. Preet Rustagi, Institute of Human Development, New Delhi

Dr. Rustagi started by reiterated that 'Visibility, Reduction and Reorganisation' is the way to reconceptualise unpaid work. Clarity is required on the definition of UPW and how it can be differentiated from underpaid work. On the issue of reduction, one must question what kind of work should be continued and which ones reduced? For some forms of labour, such as manual scavenging and child labour, there is a consensus that they require elimination. However, giving women more dignity is, to some degree, a more complicated task than ensuring UPW is more market-oriented. Providing remuneration for UPW could open up the sector to further exploitation, and the merits of doing so should therefore be discussed in depth. It was argued that labour reorganisation necessitates a paradigm shift from UPW towards 'women's' work.

There should also be an assessment exploring the extent to which UPW is preventing workers from taking up paid work, and the constraints and challenges that it represents. It must therefore be considered whether paid work gives women the capacity to overcome the aforementioned societal constraints.

In India, it has been observed that there is still a high gender wage gap at the lower end of the pay bracket. Women who are well educated and employed are not facing as much of a wage gap between their male counterparts, as opposed to those at the low end. We must therefore question whether this is primarily due to labour market discrimination, and whether social constraints and challenges are contributory factors. It is perhaps a combination of the two, coupled with low social provision, and a higher level of resilience at the higher end of the pay bracket. Some of the typical constraints include marriage, pregnancy and childbirth and child rearing; or 'reproductive functions' which are deemed as normal but necessitate considerable UPW. The situation of *devadasis* and surrogates thus juxtapose these very reproductive roles in a context outside of the family, in the market.

Furthermore, the limits of sex within marital relationships were broached: at what stage does the act become work? It has been opined that when sex is performed as a duty or task and is not a part of a relationship based on consent or equality it can be likened to any other form of work. While other categories have been reflected in TUS and other kinds of studies, there is only limited research in the category of sexual relationships, and its conceptualisation as a household obligation. Further research would allow for a greater understanding of the issue, particularly in a macroeconomic sense. One solution is to move UPW to the paid domain; on the other hand, its reorganisation could be more gender egalitarian.

2.9 Discussion

It was suggested that the declining sex ratio, and issues pertaining to sexual minorities, mental health and those affecting minority communities, such as the *Bedias* (who are engaged in sex work) be included in the agenda. It was also noted that in the absence of personal assistance programmes enshrined in public policy for people with disabilities, there is a huge burden of care and assistance on family members. Within a family, the quality of care can be compromised; and the standards outlined in the CRPD (Conventions on Rights of Persons with Disabilities) may not be met, because family members are largely untrained. Another issue was the UPW performed by persons with disabilities, as a part of the informal workforce. This could be home-based or in shelter workshops which are run by the government and NGOs. Women with disabilities are also engaged in the unpaid care of siblings and as a result, their own education and personal development may be jeopardised by other family members. In this sense, there are limited support systems in place. In case of lack of care givers, persons with disability may be institutionalised, which can result in a denial of their economic, political, social and cultural rights.

There is a need to recognise that paid work and unpaid work are intertwined with one another. The fact that UPW is able to occur results from the existence of salaried work; whilst the way in which waged/salaried work is remunerated is because of the large volume of work that can be passed off as UPW. There is intensification of both unpaid work and of paid work, without similar intensification of

remuneration. The cultural economy leads to naturalisation of work, which can lead to its reconceptualization as non-work- an area which is overwhelmingly dominated by women. There are also questions associated with UPW which have arisen from compensation and maintenance payments in the event of divorce. Property rights can also invisibilise the role of women.

3. Thinking through the Status Papers

Anchored by: Dr. Dipa Sinha, Right to Food Convention and Centre for Equity Studies

Dr. Sinha briefly outlined the processes that culminated into the organisation of this workshop. She explained that the papers are not necessarily academic but that they focus on legislation, policy and programmes, and present an overview of related work undertaken over the years. The session was organised in order to discuss the four identified domains within UPW with the objective of deepening the dialogue.

3.1 Overall Public Policy and Budget Context

Dr. Bhumika Jhamb, UN Women Office for India, Bhutan, Maldives & Sri Lanka

Dr. Jhamb started by looking at how macroeconomic policies can be disadvantageous for women, since they often do not recognise women's contribution to the unpaid economy. Such an underestimation is exacerbated by biased markets and incomplete statistics. The parameters of aggregate production, savings, investment, imports and exports in the paid economy must be sensitive to different patterns of gender relations and take into account gendered distribution of resources (Elson, 1999). Situating UPW in macroeconomic policy, it was noted that the primary focus is on aggregates, not people, which can be explained by a lack of gender awareness. Neutrality fosters a deeper gender bias which is deeply imbued with male bias, particularly in relation to human resources.

It was pointed out that time-use data has been insufficiently utilised in informing policy. It is important to move beyond recognition, and to expand upon capitalist processes which currently exacerbate inequalities and encourage a greater understanding of cultural and economic injustice. The following fields of structural adjustment have resulted in massive shifts from the paid economy to the unpaid economy: the production of labour-intensive manufacturing for export, cut-backs in the production of public sector non-tradeables and cuts in food subsidies. The inherent assumption is that women's capacity to take on extra work is elastic. In the Indian context, the neoliberal reforms of the government have had the effect of adversely impacting upon employment, poverty alleviation and social equality. For example, employment is worse even in states which have registered very high growth rates in the post reform years. Practices which are gender discriminatory are often not simple backward practices, but can form the basis upon which social structures rest. It was also noted that fiscal discipline measures like tax concessions have hampered the situation even further and that further curtailment on social sector expenditures is anticipated.

The care aspect of UPW was further highlighted. This strengthens claims for children; especially in the context of conditional cash transfers. Trade-offs between the needs of women and children also present further complexities: UPW undertaken by men and women extends much beyond 'care', and can be part of their very survival, subsistence and sustainable livelihoods.

The areas of future research suggested were -

- i. Forging an alternative social consensus on macroeconomic policy making
- ii. Understanding the processes and factors that lead to greater visibility of UPW concerns in policy agendas
- iii. Refining methodologies to capture the impact of public expenditure on women's UPW (water, energy)
- iv. Mapping good practices (replication across national contexts)
- v. Developing a social protection floor (UNICEF, child sensitive child protection floor)
- vi. Developing a framework for care providers

Discussion:

Dr. Mridul Eapen, Center for Development Studies

Dr. Eapen noted that the social mingles with economic and macroeconomic policies and is therefore socially relevant. The relationship between patriarchy and capitalist production is thus important. While there is a separation of the sectoral and the social, labour carried out at home remains unchanged and is, to some degree, intensifying.

A recent study undertaken at JNU looked at Codes 92 and 93 from the National Sample Survey (NSS)¹⁵ to examine how all different types of work are not counted, taking into account the domination of household work in the field. Women's work therefore does not amount to inclusion in work participation. They should be part of the labour force, but also regarded as unemployed; in the sense that the work is often considered to be minimally productive and unremunerated. This could be, in part, due to inadequate paid labour.

Furthermore, there should be an institutionalised recognition of unpaid workers who are not actively seeking work as unemployed. Thus, it was suggested that unpaid workers should be counted as unemployed, and that encouraging their registration at the local level could help generate work which better suits their needs. The creation of centres for the purpose of registering women for work has previously had success at the local level in the state of Kerala. The issue of compensation for care givers

¹⁵ The National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) is a focal agency of the Government of India for collection of statistical data in areas which are vital for developmental planning. The surveys are on socio-economic, demographic, agricultural and industrial subjects for collecting data from households and from enterprises located in villages and in the towns. NSSO includes a broad category that it calls 'neither working nor available for work (or not in labour force)' which includes code 92 'attended to domestic duties' and code 93 'attended to domestic duties and was also engaged in free collection of goods (vegetables, roots, firewood, cattle feed, etc.), sewing, tailoring, weaving, etc. for household use' as well as 97 'others (including beggars, prostitutes, etc.)'. All of the above, Ghosh (2014) suggests, can be included as work to significantly alter the overall work participation rate for women in India.

was also brought up, and it was posited that the panchayats could play a larger role in ensuring there is an adequate level of care for the disabled, mentally challenged, and that responsibility for care-giving is more fairly distributed.

Dr. Hirway remarked that the JNU paper was problematic because Codes 92 and 93 only referred to housewives, and were limited to quantifying numbers of people, rather than time spent. Her own paper compared time use data and NSSO data to show that 'distressed workers' will not be captured in NSSO but will be better measured through time use. Time use can help understand the scattered nature of time, women with multiple jobs and varying intensities of work. Improved estimates can also provide information on the characteristics of employment for women, and can help to recognise that many women are trapped in time poverty. It was also remarked that as a result of globalisation, there is limited financial space for women, and that existing patriarchal structures determine the macro economy and organisation of work in SNA and non SNA.

Dr. Chirashree Dasgupta, School of Liberal Studies, Ambedkar University

According to Dr. Dasgupta, the starting point should be the mapping of property rights, taking into consideration three types of endowments: common, public, private. It is about terms of power, interdependence of paid and unpaid work, and interdependence within a power structure defined by patriarchy. Geeta Gandhi's work highlights the importance of the status of the individual in society.

How we define value and productivity are also questionable, particularly in the context of 'hard' and 'soft' in the macroeconomic framework and its intrinsic gendering. Intersectionalities determine who does what work and the extent to which a worker gets paid. It was also noted that India has one of the most under-taxed rich in the world, and that there continues to be increasing hesitation to tax the wealthiest. This raises questions about the process of growth in India, and how it has disproportionately favoured the corporate sector.

Two kinds of solutions were proposed by Dr. Dasgupta- one to directly value and pay the agent and the second to universalise basic public services. Both solutions have implications for raising the wage floor, but might spark cultural resistance, particularly in the event that wages are raised. Therefore, the definition of the household as a unit should be unpacked, in order to reduce cultural and political reservations. However, the idea of increasing the flexibility of work, which has been put forth by many feminists, was rejected, since it can have the undesired effect of contributing to the intensification of work for women. In this sense, more flexible work conditions can increase the burden of work for women, despite masquerading as being 'family-friendly'.

Comments

One participant remarked that there is a need to look at the cultural economy of paid work in order to undo its naturalisation and stereotypical understandings. Another intervention referred to the utility of value and exchange value while working within communities. For example, in the Narmada regions, the *Bhils* (a tribal group) has a practice called *laha*- where one person from the household works, regardless of gender. Thus, the system can give space for the valuation of women's labour.

3.2 Care (Focus on Child-care and Maternity Rights)

Ms. Sudeshna Sengupta, Mobile Creches, New Delhi

Sudeshna started by positioning maternity entitlements and child care within the domain of social reproduction work:

- i) Activities that reposition the worker outside the production process
- ii) Activities that maintain and regenerate non-workers outside the production
- iii) Activities that reproduce human resources

It was noted that current laws and policies including but not limited to, Social Security, the National Policy for Children, National Maternity Benefit, Early Childhood Development, and other educational policies are limited in their approach. For example there is a need to look at maternity entitlements comprehensively, since current policies operate upon the assumption that there is a standardisation of all women in paid work and as a result, there is an inherent focus on wage compensation. This neglects the range of issues including ANC, PNC, health care, ICDS nutrition and breastfeeding breaks which should also be considered. Currently, the state only interferes when the family fails. Care is traditionally defined as a woman's responsibility but the 'care diamond' should also include the role of the family, community, state and market.

Due to a lack of data, there is little clarity on the financial cost of maternity entitlements and childcare. It is important that budgeting needs to be synchronised with the requirements of minority groups, whilst also recognising the financial limitations of the government. It was observed that the overlapping rights of the receiver and the giver are seldom considered together.

The need to amend the National Maternity Benefits Act was also highlighted, given that since 1951, the state has absolved responsibility for the distribution of maternity entitlements- the onus has therefore been entirely passed to private companies. The issues of caste and class are important determinants of who does care work for whom, in addition to gender considerations. Thus, policy recommendations should include detailed budget allocations, capacity building alongside existing institutions and advocacy groups focusing on women's unpaid care work, integrated advocacy from multiple platforms, amendments in the National Maternity Benefits Act and steps taken to recognise the role of men.

Discussion:

Ms. Mina Swaminathan, Educationist

Ms. Swaminathan started by underscoring how the National Food Security Act of 2013 recognises that every woman is working, even if not in the formal sense, and as a result, is entitled to maternity benefit. Despite its shortcomings, the legislation should be taken as a baseline. She also reiterated that the state contributes very little to the care sector, and that companies are responsible for implementing the law, with no records maintained by the state. However, there is limited evidence to suggest that maternity

entitlements were afforded to any workers but government employees. It is significant that the flagship Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) appointed one worker to take care of children. She posited that all in the care diamond must have a stake in the work; care workers need to be professional and have skills and should therefore be paid commensurately. Throughout the domain of UPW, the support of men remains critical.

Dr. Ramya Subramanian, Child Rights Researcher and Advocate

Dr. Subramanian remarked that childcare is qualitatively different from other work. It is about underpinning the emotional and relational aspect and we therefore need to transform the way we characterise childcare by taking steps to better understand these dynamics. However, the existing legislative framework reduces care work to a needs-based assessment that does not take into account the multifaceted needs of care givers and recipients alike and their basic human rights including nutrition, healthcare and rest. This entry point helps understand that rewards, nurturing and emotional labour are involved in care giving and that it should not merely be considered drudgery. In this sense unpaid care work is about intergenerational transfers and is complex.

Comments

Two interventions were highlighted- one, the need for a layered conceptualisation of care which takes biological, parental generativity and societal generativity into account, alongside domestic democracy. It also contributes to adult's learning since it is a two way process. The second point focused on the consideration of multiple forms of care giving within the family, and brought up adoptive parents, grandparents and neighbours.

3.3 Data and Data Systems

Dr. Neetha Pillai, Centre for Development Studies

All data systems currently make a clear distinction between what is considered economic and non-economic work- UPW can fall into both categories. The concept of work in data systems is linked to how production is defined and how national income is defined. Definitions in existing data systems do not necessarily coincide with international definitions of SNA and Census data is limited. The definition of UPW is included for work, but there is no separate data on UPW specifically.

NSS provides regular data where coverage of economic work is limited but has improved over time. The problems associated with unpaid economic work under the NSS were elaborated upon. For example, many women are routinely excluded from the definition of workers due to undercounting; women themselves are not aware of their worker status and many data collectors are not adequately equipped. Presentation of data is faulty in grouping family workers together as self-employed.

She noted how the definitions of unpaid economic work were limited, as NSS has two broad categories, which are outlined as follows:

- i) All market activities are performed for profit

- ii) All unpaid activities in primary sector for own consumption, activities around fixed assets like own house or activities in community services are free of charge

Data systems do not account for the processing of primary products for their own consumption but under the international SNA, this is clearly within the production boundary. If a worker processes their own production, it is included, but if acquired production is processed, it is excluded from the definition of UPW.

NSS provides a definition of economic activities, and women are asked if they routinely undertake the maintenance of kitchen gardens, poultry work, dairy work, and the free collection of fruits, vegetables, fuel, husking paddy, and food grains for household consumption, in addition to sewing, tailoring and water collection- as outlined in Codes 92 and 93. These women are not defined as workers because unless one is working for more than 30 days, one is not counted as a subsidiary worker, as per the definition provided by the NSS.

She also observed how unpaid non-economic work is outside the production boundary, for example, tutoring children. Among the reasons given for women's lack of participation in paid work is the prevalence of domestic duties. Time use surveys, which are a valuable tool, also create hierarchy by giving priority to economic over non-economic work.

Discussion:

Dr. Aasha Kapoor Mehta, Indian Institute of Public Administration

Dr. Mehta focused on a separate report published by the NSS, which reveals that the female work participation rate (FWPR) stood at only 49 per cent in rural areas and 21.3 per cent in urban areas in 1993-94, which the main report does not recognise. She also shared that there is a huge percentage of women in India who are actually working and cannot be called unemployed or unproductive. She noted that dimensions of care include a huge range of tasks and that the value of energy, time and effort required is unrecognised and largely unaccounted for. It includes emotional, physical, spiritual and financial care; all of which are critical.

Dr. Rajni Palriwala, Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi

Dr. Palriwala put forth questions around methodologies for counting and capturing activities by persons. The shifts in the intensity of work are never reflected in the current systems. While simultaneous work and the multiplicity of tasks is extremely important, but only work which is paid is recorded foremost. Majority of the unrecorded work is UPW done simultaneously. How does one then capture intensity, simultaneity and the experience of work?

The meaning of work, the experiences, for whom the work is being done and the social value and economic value of that work are important issues to consider for redistribution. The property, power and patriarchy model, and the social relations of work need to be better understood. This calls for qualitative studies as large scale surveys cannot capture such dimensions. The quantitative cannot be hegemonic and should also include sample studies, village studies which accurately capture the social

and economic relations of work, but redistribution should be located in the context of the social relations in the home and the community. A variety of material needs to be looked at for nuanced data. Framing care in the context of direct care and indirect care can also be a useful strategy and highlights the importance of thinking about achieving economic and social independence for women.

Comments

It was observed that TUS is not an economic instrument, but has instead evolved from a dominant ethnographical understanding. TUS evolved from an initiative that started as a study of lifestyle. Uses have changed over time and from 1975 onward, TUS focussed on UPW and became important for developing countries. TUS is often considered more effective than NSSO since there is less bias; the respondent describes the activities and the investigator subsequently classifies them.

A proximity code had been developed, which includes how near or far the child is from the woman and the kind of care that is required and provided- for example, *zari work/chikan* work with a child on the lap, in visual range and or within audible range; a system which could be helpful in mapping simultaneous child care and work. The value of work determines the support women get in childcare; in a study in Punjab it was found that all the women who did not have simultaneous childcare responsibilities (with men or elders taking care of them) were engaged in productive labour, for example in cutting wheat.

Services for the purposes of home consumption are not included in national accounts, due to the scale of the sector, the conceptual problems associated with showing full employment and the difficulties with quantifying the value of the services. In the future, we need to move towards a changed conceptualisation of the labour force and a restructuring of the understanding of GDP.

DAY TWO

3.4 Livelihoods

Mr. Anil Kumar, PWESCR

The presentation focused on women's traditional knowledge and skills, and highlighted the importance of a convergence of rights, given the linkages between livelihoods and education and health. All women should thus be recognised as economic agents, and policy makers need to move towards recognising, reducing and redistributing women's UPW by focusing on the following:

- i. Women's contribution to livelihood security and subsistence agriculture
- ii. Social security
- iii. Equal opportunities to livelihood
- iv. Traditional knowledge
- v. Access to market and seeds

The discussion also touched upon India's flagship employment generation programmes- the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) and MNREGA Act, and their respective impacts on women's paid and unpaid work.

Discussion:

Ms. Arundhati Dhuru, National Alliance of People's Movement

Ms. Dhuru noted how livelihoods are looked at through a limited lens in both the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) and the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA). NRLM focuses on access to resources, but does not directly address control over resources. The programme aims to strengthen the division of labour, but is also limited in deconstructing the nature of women's work, in addition to other issues related to securing women's right to livelihood.

MGNREGA is important in recognising the right to work and the importance of child care, but has systemic flaws because it recognises the household as a unit, rather than the individual. It does not assess work measurements or levels of productivity through a gender lens, for example, digging is regarded as productive and carrying mud is not.

In the unorganised sector, the relationship between the worker and the contractor remains important. We must question what the informal social assets are that are created in this sector, and how they can be recognised. In defining UPW, transactional relationships need to be captured using a gender lens and not just in monetary terms. The question goes beyond paid and unpaid, and is a question of survival for women who are unable to cope with the stresses imposed by marginalisation, exclusion in existing markets and social relations. Violence and other forms of marginalisation should also be considered. Furthermore, it should be recognised that government programmes tend to focus on increasing access, and neglect the importance of control over assets.

Ms. Sejal Dand, ANANDI

Ms. Dand demanded a holistic view of livelihoods and noted the shift from basic needs to human rights, and then social protection.

The role of the flagship programme MGNREGA was underlined in providing opportunities for asset building and for receiving remuneration to work on household production. It enabled women to negotiate contracts, negotiate wage rates and rates with land owners. It is also important that Government livelihood programmes continue to refer to gender equality as a primary objective, particularly in the context of UPW. In the context of land ownership, most states have adopted legislation enshrining equal land ownership but there is still limited political will to implement the law equally and little opportunities for redress of grievances. It has also been noted that some programmes instrumentalise women's contribution as workers and economic actors. A good measure is to see the type of assets which are being created and controlled by women but this is a measure that many of the programmes are still unwilling to consider.

The centralisation of powers can also affect control over resources. When land, river, and forest become public goods, the state determines their futures, thereby adversely affecting livelihoods. Public investment in governance and decentralised structures which act for the public good are crucial in situations where there are a range of users, including women. To a large extent, individual livelihoods are dependent upon the capacity to make decisions, in a violence-free environment.

Measures requiring minimal organisation are also detrimental to the political process. It is of utmost importance to organise women around livelihoods, and that campaigns are able to adequately pinpoint the role of women across a number of sectors. The role of the livelihood lens cannot be overstated, as part of the wider discussion on women's human rights, and entitlements. Furthermore, women's representation on local governance bodies should also be taken into account, in order to uphold equal representation.

4. Collectively Building a Roadmap: Vision, Strategies, Actions

4.1 Functioning of the collective

A discussion on the functioning of the collective was facilitated by Ms. Sejal Dand and Ms. Sudeshna Sengupta. The collective has been functioning as an informal group of 15-20 people meeting in the UN Women office. At present, the e-group consists of more than 170 individuals, organisations and representatives of various networks. Formalisation of the collective would entail agreeing upon a name, setting an agenda and a mission statement. If the group is formalised, members from its network will need to undergo a permission-seeking process in order to participate. Instead, it was suggested that these conversations should focus on inclusivity and diversity, and enable all intersecting networks to continue participating.

It was thus decided that the group should function as a working or catalysing group, and should be subject to an assessment after a six or 12 month trial period. It was decided that UN Women would support the group for the next six months and then the responsibility would be taken up by another group within the collective. Dr. Ritu Dewan, Dr. Radhika Desai (to lead), Ms. Shraddha Chickerur, Ms. Sudeshna Sengupta, Ms. Kuhu Das, Ms. Meenaskhi Balasubramaniam volunteered to take the proceedings of the meeting forward by identifying tasks that need to be done. It was proposed that Dr. Neetha Pillai should anchor the process of building consensus amongst feminist economists.

4.2 Group Presentations of Action Plans

Anchored by: Ms. Anwesha Ghosh, Institute of Social Studies Trust (ISST)

Public Policy and Budget Context

Short term tasks identified were by the group

1. *Campaign on Resources using a three pronged strategy*
 - Mobilisation

- Research to generate evidence on the implications of the increased devolution of funds to states, particularly on women specific schemes and social sectors.
- Lobbying
- 2. *Visibilise the issue of UPW using the following strategies:*
 - Reaching out to new stakeholders, including students, academic centres, etc.
 - Using popular media such as social media and street theatre to publicise the issue
 - Writing articles on unpaid work in newspapers, blogs & magazines
 - Writing letters to the PMO and using post cards
- 3. *Engendering programmes:*
 - It was discussed that while the long term strategy is to confront the government and challenge existing frameworks, it would also be useful to utilise existing spaces, wherever possible, in order to engender the processes.
 - For instance, since Smart Cities is one of the main programmes promoted by the government, it would be important to conduct an assessment as to whether a gender appraisal could be included at the inception stage of the development of a smart city.

An additional long-term task that was identified was to continue employing the framework for human rights and to confront the government using mass mobilisation strategies.

Data and Data Systems

- i. Mainstream TUS
- ii. Short ethnographic studies to provide qualitative data that could supplement the TUS

Care (Child-care and Maternity Rights)

The group endeavoured to go beyond child care, and include care for sick elderly and persons with disability.¹⁶

Short term tasks:

1. *Defining Maternity Entitlement (ME) and Childcare Entitlement (CE)* – ME should be a comprehensive package of wage compensation, and health entitlements. Wage compensation for informal sector should be nine months, including wage compensation for six months and the provision for the remaining three months before delivery. The woman should also not be exposed to hazardous laborious work before three months of delivery. CE begins with the recognition of child care as a public good for public good. It includes universal childcare support up to six years of age. Childcare should include the provision of child development, care resources and services across the four domains identified; namely, food, health, care and protection, and learning. The delivery of these resources and services should be made in a quality manner in a multiplicity of locations including at home, and child care centres near residence and at workplace of parents.

¹⁶ It was pointed out that mentioning sick and disabled in the way is not acceptable since disabled people are not sick.

2. *Care Entitlement for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), elderly and sick*: Entitlement for PWDs at individual level should include personal assistance provision, rehabilitation assistance provision, and increased disability pension and livelihood promotion. Provision of services for care for the elderly and sick at the individual level should include an increased old-age pension or sickness allowance, personal assistance for care-taking, residential and day-care centres for care and services to the elderly and sick.

3. *Public (Paid) Care-givers' Right to Decent Work*: Care-givers of children employed by the state and private companies/organisations/residences have a right to all aspects of Decent Work identified by the ILO in the four domains of employment, social protection, workers' rights, and social dialogue. This, besides others, would include minimum wages, adequate remuneration, social security, pensions, safety at work, healthy working conditions, adequate leisure, freedom of association, and right to negotiate on their demands with employers and the state.

4. Proposed Study by National Alliance on Maternal Health and Human Rights (NAMHHR) on overlapping rights of women and children to inform policies on ME and childcare services so that women's unpaid work burden is reduced and redistributed.

5. Advocacy and campaign building on ME and childcare

Long term tasks identified by the group were breaking gender stereotypes in the care domain and advocacy work for the right to work for people with disability.

Policy spaces included the development of the National Food Security Act, and a continued focus on Early Childhood Development in order to prioritise working a law outlining care for 0-6 year olds; care as a right and a ring-fenced budget for Integrated Child Development Scheme. The ministries identified were Labour, Women and Child and Rural Development.

Stakeholders- New Indian Association of Women Studies (IAWS), Men Against Violence and Abuse (MAVA), New Trade Union Initiative (NTUI), National Federation of Indian Women (NFIW), Equals, Elderly groups including the Pension Parishad, and single women's networks such as Ekal Naari Shakti Sangathan.

Livelihoods

The key points discussed were:

- Locating basic rights and essential services within the livelihood sector
- Changing political landscape and how this implicates livelihoods
- Using a holistic concept like dignified livelihood, which includes income as well as basic amenities provided by the government
- Replacing minimum wage with minimum living income
- Considering women's activism as unpaid work
- Re-conceptualising the position of disabled women, particularly their situation as unpaid workers at home, their lack of access to resources, and the need to strategise in order to create a more enabling environment

- Thinking about ways to increase women's control over resources and the means of production

Tasks identified

1. Position paper on UPW
2. Mapping all UPW across different sectors and classes and strategizing to reduce women's drudgery
3. Collating tools to calculate UPW
4. Bringing together evidence of women's contributions as UPW to create a basis of dialogue and advocacy, in order to highlight the fact that these contribute significantly to livelihood
5. Creating alliances with trade unions and other groups and networks

6. Special Remarks on Action Plans

(Research, Advocacy and Campaign Agenda)

Ms. Annie Raja, National Federation for Indian Women

Ms. Raja spoke about how previous governments have been withdrawing from the social sector by getting NGOs involved whereas the new government only trusts the corporate sector. This is the context in which policies which affect UPW are framed. Discussions on UPW need to go beyond care work and workers in the *beedi* sector, handloom workers and agricultural labourers should not be ignored. The social and economic costs of UPW should not be negated, and we should question how productivity is measured, through the use of an intersectional approach.

There has been a naturalisation of UPW and a mother is expected to take care of the child, a sick person is to be taken care of by a woman and if there are cattle at home, social norms dictate that women should work to feed them. We need to demystify UPW and emphasise the obligations of men too. Whilst stressing the importance of research, it is also important to mobilise and campaign, in the light of recent budget cuts to the social sector. To this end, it is necessary to collectively mobilise and to synergise across groups and movements, in order to advocate more effectively.

Ms. Anubha Singh

Ms. Singh highlighted that UPW encompasses the work women do which is naturalised by biologically essentialized roles and familial ideologies which render it a feminist issue. Women are located in different positions and whilst it is important to consider all assertions about UPW, a common understanding is also necessary in order to foster greater clarity on the issue. The need to go beyond strategising for recognition was also highlighted, alongside a continued focus on the reduction and redistribution of UPW. Advocacy would lead to reduction and redistribution, particularly through active engagement with the state.

Points of contestation are also important to highlight the distinction between work and pleasure, especially with regards issues like sexual labour in relationships or monetisation of all care work. She concluded by remarking on the diversity of the gathering and the strength that the collective can draw from such diverse viewpoints.

Ms. Pramada Menon

Ms. Menon focused on the issues of sexuality and queerness which remain marginalised, even within feminist thoughts and urged that definitions go beyond the 'man' and the 'woman'. Especially in the context of unpaid work, one cannot proceed without looking at people who identify as queer. Marginalisation needs to be unpacked since many people face multi-faceted discrimination. One way to ensure that the process is inclusive is by looking at UPW across multiple sectors.

For example, the situation in the crafts industry illustrates how all existing UPW cannot necessarily be transformed into paid labour, given the significant financial impact. Language can also be problematic by focusing on 'nurturing' the next generation, for example, we should try to avoid essentialising women's roles. The discussion on maternity should also include adoption.

A position paper on unpaid labour authored by economists and practitioners would help to conceptualise key issues, including family pensions. It could employ the use of info-graphics and technology, in addition to digital story-telling which should be clear and accessible to multiple audiences, and encourage greater engagement on the issue.

Mr. Francisco Cos Montiel, Policy Adviser - Women's Economic Empowerment, UN Women Regional Office for Asia and Pacific

Mr. Montiel shared lessons about the policy-making process which were not just technical but also related to advocacy. Policy is a domain which involves difficult choices, against a backdrop of limited resources and a range of different actors. There are dilemmas like universal or targeted but the negotiable and non-negotiable must be clearly discussed within the advocacy group. One has to be strategic in terms of material interventions to ensure that symbolic and subjective aspects of care are also addressed through concrete interventions.

Symbolic dimensions are crucial in order to change mind-sets, frame the message effectively in addition to addressing subjectivity and individual agency. In feminist analysis, 'love is the opiate of women', in that it is considered to be a cultural and social construction, whilst care is based on ideas of sacrifice, love and abnegation.

For example, advocacy work helped to decriminalise abortion in Mexico City, a Catholic country, and the different strategies used by the feminist movement were discussed. It also emphasised the need to be tactical about specific arguments, data, and type of evidence. However, research should be undertaken in conjunction with sustained political process. This can help to understand the target audience, which includes identifying messengers and using different language to suit the person being addressed.

Open Discussion

The workshop ended with an open discussion where participants made concluding remarks, as follows:

Participants expressed the difficulty of engaging with the state with right-wing ideology and the lack of political will towards addressing pro-poor issues. It was noted that the recognition of work needs to

begin with the self and within communities, since women often do not recognise, take pride in their own work or acknowledge that it requires skill on their behalf. The need to fight for policy changes and mobilise on the streets was reiterated. Academics and activists can work together to build evidence, since such a process helps communities to exercise greater control over knowledge systems. It was felt that feminist economists need to build consensus on methods, measurements and data system, which can then be adopted within the larger collective. IAWS pledged support to take on the issue through their centres across the country and ISST reiterated the need to synergise and strengthen the research, mobilisation and policy work by supporting each other within the collective.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks by Ms. Anaswara from, National Alliance for Maternal Health and Human Rights.

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