

Valuing Women's Time and Care Work: **A Synthesis Report on the Data-to-Policy Link**

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INTRODUCTION

This report synthesizes the results of country case studies in Kenya, Mongolia, Senegal, and South Korea on the influence of time use data in the design and evaluation of economic and social policies, with particular attention to policies around care work and the care economy. The case studies and this synthesis are guided by a conceptual framework, described next in the text, that identifies possible factors that influence the use or uptake of data to shape public policies. Executive summaries of the four case studies are included in the annex.

Care work has been neglected as a policy priority because the bulk of it is unpaid, done mostly by women, and not included in the categories of work that labor force surveys traditionally measure. However, the notion that care work has no economic value has been challenged by gender equality advocates for decades and was upended by the recent COVID-19 pandemic, that elevated the critical importance of caregivers, paid and unpaid, for the economy and society to front page news everywhere.

Change is underway. Labor statisticians in 2013 agreed internationally to begin measuring all types of work, paid and unpaid, in labor force surveys, tasking national statistical agencies to develop reliable, comparable, and simple measures of unpaid care work (ICLS 2013). The Sustainable Development Goals (2015) also underscore the need to collect sex-disaggregated data on this type of work.

These international guideposts, in addition to the salience of care work in post-COVID times, have energized more national statistical offices, including those in Kenya and Senegal, to measure unpaid care—the first step in valuing and improving the terms of this work and reducing women’s heavy care workload. Time use (TU) surveys are the instrument of choice, giving a detailed accounting of how people spend their time over a 24-hour period, although collecting this data is not easy.

Progress has also been made in addressing measurement issues regarding care work in time use data collection. For example, the inclusion in some TU surveys of questions on secondary activities (e.g., “What else did you do?”) and context (e.g., “Who else was with you?”) capture the fact that people sometimes do more than one activity at a time, (i.e., simultaneously performing household and care work with other unpaid or paid work). Still, several challenges remain. For example, activities may overlap, and boundaries between activities may be difficult to define. In addition, the quality of care is an important but intangible component that is difficult to measure (and value). Indeed, a range of contextual and cultural factors significantly influence the way many of these activities are conducted. Fortunately, there is increasingly rich experience in time use data collection and advances in computer technology have made it easier to collect and analyze this data. The UN agencies that are data custodians have been particularly helpful in providing standards, technical guidance, and funding for data collection and analysis².

The challenge, defining the next frontier, is creating the conditions so that the data are used, or more extensively used, to inform and evaluate economic and social policies. The record to date on uptake and policy influence of time use surveys is substandard. Despite their uniqueness and richness, the findings of these surveys are most often underutilized in the design or evaluation of public policies. For instance, an earlier study undertaken by Data2X found that TU surveys

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2 These agencies include UNSD, ILO, UN Women and the UN regional economic commissions.

had a direct, small influence on policies in seven of 18 countries reviewed and indirect influence in another three countries, with eight countries studied recording no apparent influence (Buvinic and King 2018).

The next section presents the data-to-policy framework which guided the case study series. Following the framework, we present a summary of the case study findings, before sharing concluding thoughts.

DATA-TO-POLICY FRAMEWORK

A data-to-policy framework, first developed by Data2X in 2018 to map possible factors influencing the policy uptake of time use data (Buvinic and King 2018), guided these case studies and synthesis report. To start, it is worth noting that the framework's definition of policy uptake encompasses policy documents or legislation as well as processes and decisions, including agenda setting, policy formulation, decision making, and policy implementation and evaluation activities. Further, data in this framework includes evidence or facts that result from generating and analyzing data points from administrative data, surveys (including TU surveys), censuses, or digital data.

The framework (Figure 1)—an updated version of the one in Buvinic and King (2018)—charts the factors that shape the influence of data on public policies and incorporates stages from Open Data Watch (ODW)'s data value chain shown in Figure 2. For data to influence policy, they need to be “taken up” by policymakers or other actors (Lindquist 2001). Data uptake is the process of becoming aware of and accessing data outputs and results from the intersection of the supply of data (from data producers) and demand for it (from data users).

We recognize that policies, in turn, affect the data produced, since policymakers make data requests and approve data budgets. The focus of this framework, however, is the less straightforward, more circuitous route from data to policy and, more specifically, from TU data to a range of public policies, including fiscal, labor market, care, and other social policies.

While TU data has been used mainly to shape social policies, it can also help inform policies in the ‘hard’ economic sectors, such as infrastructure and agriculture, as well as macroeconomic policies. TU data has been used in a growing number of countries to calculate household production satellite accounts that extend the traditional economic activities recorded in the System of National Accounts (SNA) by adding household maintenance, care, and community services and their contribution to GDP.³ The contribution (in percentage) of extended SNA activities to GDP could have significant macroeconomic implications, given that GDP is widely used as a proxy for determining a country's economic output, resources allocation, and wellbeing. While the calculation of household production satellite accounts has yet to influence economic policymaking, it may find new policy wings in a growing ‘beyond GDP’ movement that was endorsed by all UN member states at a recent UN Summit of the Future.⁴

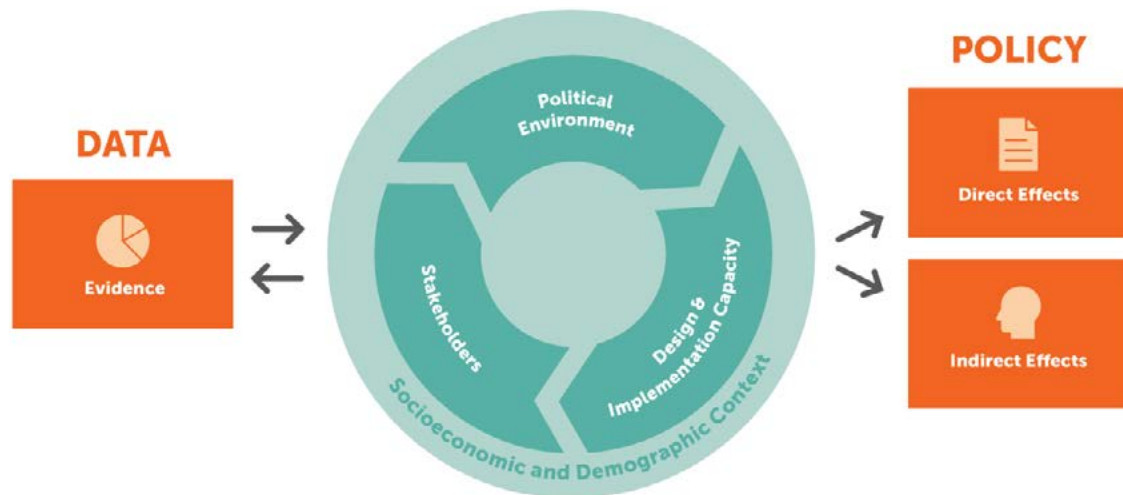
Figure 1 visualizes data (evidence) at one end influencing policy (directly or indirectly) at the other end, mediated by stakeholders, design, and implementation institutional capacity, the political

³ The System of National Accounts (SNA) is the new internationally agreed standard set of recommendations on how to compile measures of economic activity. For more information see: <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/nationalaccount/sna.asp>. According to a 2019 UN Statistics Division review, over 80 countries responded to a survey on national account practices related to satellite accounts See https://unstats.un.org/unsd/nationalaccount/aeg/2019/M13_5_2_Review_Satellite_Accounting.pdf

⁴ UN General Assembly 2024. “The Pact for the Future.” 79th Session, Agenda item 123. 20 September.

environment, and the overall socioeconomic and demographic context.⁵ Below we briefly review these six main elements and what is expected from each.

FIGURE 1: FACTORS INFLUENCING POLICY UPTAKE



SOURCE: BUVINIC AND KING 2018.

Data

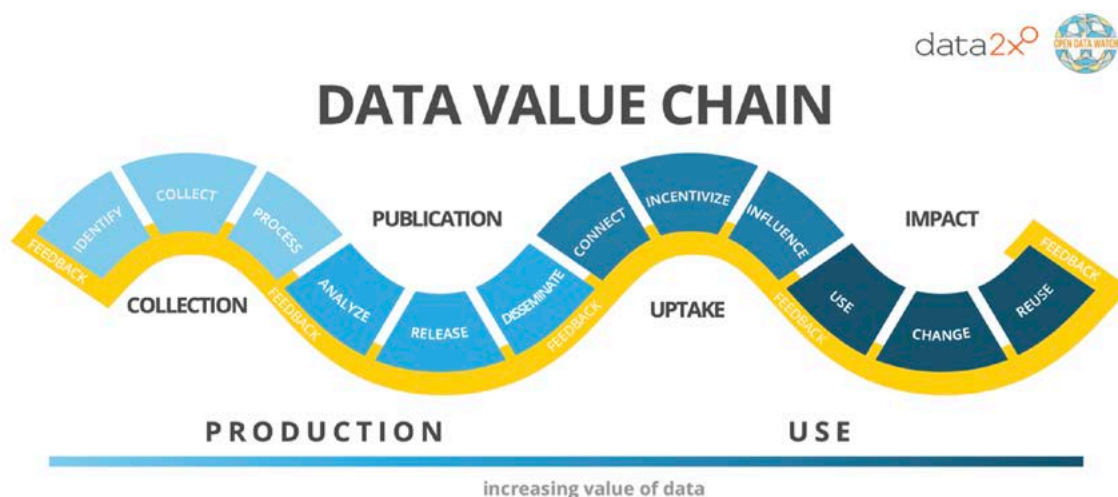
Factors that mediate the data-to-policy link and determine data uptake on the supply side include the collection, publication, and dissemination of high-quality data, including effective strategies for communicating data for uptake by policymakers and the public. The data value chain is a framework that visualizes the life cycle of data and was developed by ODW for Data2X (ODW and Data2X 2018).⁶ It is useful for analyzing the sequence of steps and connections between each step that change low value data inputs into high value data outputs leading to uptake and impact.

We used data value chain analysis to help identify impediments toward policy uptake, focusing on the first three of the four stages in this value chain (see Figure 2): collection, publication, and uptake; and the underlying steps: identify, collect, process (under collection); analyze, release, disseminate (under publication); and, under uptake: connect data to users and build trust on the high quality of the data, incentivize users to use data in decision making, and influence users to see the value of data for decision making. Policymakers can incentivize data producing agencies to publish data and provide data trainings and operating agencies (line ministries) to incorporate data into their decision making and management practices. To optimize the value and use of data, careful thought needs to be given to each of the collection, publication, and 'uptake' steps to engage with users. Throughout the process, from one end of the value chain to another and back again, frequent communication is needed between data producers and stakeholders that will advocate for or use the data.

⁵ Data's effects on policy can be direct, that is, data have an instrumental role in changing policies, or indirect, that is, data affects the understanding or conceptualization of policy issues; it broadens "policy horizons" but does not directly change policies (Lindquist 2001).

⁶ The data value chain framework analyzes the data-to-policy link from the data (supply-side) perspective while the framework presented here analyzes the same link from the policy (demand-side) perspective. The two frameworks are complementary.

FIGURE 2: THE DATA VALUE CHAIN



SOURCE: DATA2X AND OPEN DATA WATCH (2018), THE DATA VALUE CHAIN. WASHINGTON DC.

Stakeholders

Individuals, both as independent agents and as part of advocacy coalitions, mediate the process of data uptake. Advocacy groups, researchers, as well as international organizations and donor agencies play a role in promoting, supporting, and financing data collection. External stakeholders are particularly salient in countries with limited resources and experience in collecting specific types of data such as time use. An enabling environment for the use of data as evidence for policymaking requires the existence of data stakeholders outside of government (in civil society, academia, and the private sector) as well as in government. Who they are, where they are placed, and the convening power of internal government and external clients and advocates for the data are important. The more numerous, visible, committed, and collaborative internal and external stakeholders are, the better.

Political Environment

Stakeholders influence and are influenced by the political environment. The use of data for policymaking is an organic political process. Policymakers' priorities and beliefs that guide choices about policies and budgets, including data budgets, the timing of the data release (start, middle, or end of an elected government administration), and the strength of internal pressure and support from data advocates within government as well as external influence—all help determine the use of data for policymaking. An important part or outcome of this political process is policymakers' buy-in and trust in the data or evidence for policymaking.

Institutional Capacity

The institutions that translate the political will and use the data for designing and implementing policies or programs are the linchpin that actualizes the link between data and policy. Data uptake depends on the design and implementation capacity of institutions, including the type of implementing agencies (for instance, line or coordinating ministries) involved in producing and using data. The budgetary, administrative, and technical capacity of implementing agencies matters, as does the commitment and capability of service providers who will use the data to shape policies and programs. Lastly, data uptake depends on data (and gender-informed data) literacy or capacity and overall data culture in the public sector and relevant private sector agencies. This includes trust between data producers and users, data openness and

transparency, data ownership and a history of or habits of data use. Governments can promote a culture that values evidence-based policies and accurate accounting of outcomes.

Context

Stakeholders, politics, and institutions are influenced by the overarching demographic, economic, and social challenges that countries face, which help define the relevance of data for policy purposes and whether the policy changes that the data addresses are incremental or transformative. Incremental changes are easier to implement than transformative ones. The international context also matters—there are more harmonious times for international cooperation and there are times of retrenchment and conflict, and this affects collaboration and donor investments in data. The launch by the UN of the SDGs and the ‘data revolution’ in 2015 has fostered a more conducive multilateral environment for recognizing the importance of data in countries’ development.

Direct and Indirect Effects on Policy

Data’s effects on policy can be direct, that is, data have an instrumental role in changing policies, or indirect, that is, data affects the understanding or conceptualization of policy issues; it broadens “policy horizons” but does not directly change policies (Lindquist 2001). The direct effects of data on policy include using data to monitor progress in implementing policies and evaluating policy impacts. New data insights may not result in specific policy changes but instead may influence policymakers’ views of policy issues and the terminology they use. These changes, though more difficult to document, may have a longer-term impact on society when contrasted with a direct data impact on specific policies. Indirect effects of data on policy include influencing the discourses among stakeholders and the public at large by disseminating findings and outcomes through different media.

COUNTRY CASE STUDIES

Methodology

Country-based researchers with extensive familiarity with the country context and TU studies undertook case studies in Kenya, Mongolia, Senegal, and South Korea.⁷ They sought to track country experience with TU surveys and assess the extent to which TU data influenced policy, they examined the conditions that facilitated this data-to-policy link, and they identified ways to improve the collection of TU data to increase its usefulness as evidence for policymaking. The researchers were guided by the data-to-policy framework presented here. They reviewed relevant instruments, policies, and legislation and interviewed key stakeholders from government—including policymakers and statisticians—research organizations and academia, and civil society advocates. Ten key informant interviews were conducted on average per country.

Following the data-to-policy framework, researchers analyzed where TU data had a direct policy influence, indirect policy influence, or no influence.

- Direct influence was coded where evidence that a government policy, plan, or action in effect or in preparation was influenced by TU data, or when TU data was used to monitor progress or evaluate policy impact.

⁷ Available in-country research expertise and at least one national TU survey guided the selection of countries.

- Indirect influence was coded when there was an indication supported by informant interviews, studies, reports, or press articles, that TU data had likely influenced “policy horizons.” That is, the TU data helped shape values, beliefs, or mindsets of policymakers or the public (society) more generally.
- No influence was coded when there was no traceable indication that TU data had been used or when there was no way to assess data uptake with the available information.

Tracing the policy influence of TU data is often a case of tracking moving targets. Analyzing the policy influence of data is often imprecise and hard to gauge partly because of the organic and changing nature of the policy process and the varied, anecdotal, and often incomplete sources of information. It is easiest to trace impact when there is a specific use of TU data, for example, for monitoring and evaluating a particular policy. It is most difficult to assert likely indirect influence.

Synthesis Results

We present here the results synthesized across the four case studies to learn from analyzing and comparing different country experiences: two countries with a long track record of implementing national TU surveys and two that have implemented a TU survey only recently.

Mongolia and South Korea have rich experience with TU surveys. They both have run five national TU surveys: Mongolia starting in 2007 and implementing them every four years, and South Korea starting in 1999 and thereafter implementing them every five years. Kenya and Senegal have each implemented only one national TU survey. Kenya’s results were published in 2023, while Senegal’s came out in 2022. Data that are produced by national statistical offices (NSOs) on a regular basis and can be used to derive trends over time are in theory more amenable to influence policy than data that have been produced recently or only once.

The results and lessons learned are presented following the six elements in the conceptual framework, starting from the main outcome of data uptake, that is, direct and indirect policy influence, and tracing back to the supply of TU data as the main input.

DIRECT AND INDIRECT POLICY INFLUENCE

There has been direct policy influence of TU survey data in the four countries, even if this influence may be narrow in coverage or depth. South Korea records direct influence of TU data in the government’s 3rd Gender Equality Basic Plan and the 3rd and 4th Basic Plans for Low Fertility and Aging Society by providing a strong rationale to set these plans’ policy directions towards enhanced family care and parental leave policies, expansion of public daycare centers and workplace childcare facilities, and reduced weekly paid hours for better work-life balance. TU data are also used in the grandparents’ allowance policies being adopted by local governments to determine the size of the allowance. Interestingly, while the country has been running these TU surveys since 1999, the first recorded direct influence was two decades later, with the 2019 Korean time use survey (KTUS).

Mongolia exhibits a similar case, showing significant influence of the TU survey data recently in the policy agenda of a newly formed government coalition. This policy agenda for the 2024-28 period, formulated after the parliamentary election this past June, includes care. The prior direct influence was very specific and narrow: an amendment of the Labor Law in 2021 to include 10 days of paternity leave.⁸

⁸ South Korea showed no policy influence of TU data in the earlier case studies published in 2018. Mongolia showed only indirect policy influence (Data2x, Invisible No More? Country Case Studies (Volume 2) (2018).

Notably, there has been some direct policy influence in the two countries with only one recently published TU survey. Kenya's TU survey results, published in 2023, influenced the National Care Policy announced by the President's Office in October of 2024, a quick turnaround for data recently published to data uptake. Similarly, in Senegal, data from the first national TU survey that came out in 2022 was used by the women's ministry to shape three national programs, a childcare strategy, a family subsidy initiative, and a fund for women's entrepreneurship (all seek to reduce women's domestic workload so that they can engage in paid work). In both countries, however, the influence has been circumscribed to one office or unit of government, with little 'mainstreaming' or cross-fertilization to other relevant government ministries or across other stakeholders.

To date, TU data has had indirect policy influence in South Korea and Mongolia. In South Korea, using the 2019 TU data, the reported valuation of household labor at 490.9 trillion KRW in the household production satellite account changed a prevailing view in economic policymaking that unpaid care work had no economic value. Additionally, the time use data findings of researchers, using the five Korean TU datasets collected since 1999, were shared in research publications and media briefs, which raised public awareness about gender disparities and the value of unpaid work and thus are helping build public support for policies addressing care.

In Mongolia, regular collection of quality TU data and easy access, fostered TU data analysis among researchers; their findings were widely disseminated and received media attention. This has resulted in greater public awareness of the size and importance of the care economy. However, a change in 'policy horizons' has yet to happen in the country's economic ministries. It is premature to assert indirect policy influences of TU data in Kenya and Senegal. Kenya's NSO is planning to develop household production satellite accounts at the local level, which may help change the traditional view that unpaid household labor has no economic value, as it did in South Korea and Mongolia.⁹ Research that quantified the value of unpaid care work in Senegal's social accounting matrix (SAM) has yet to influence policy perspectives in mainstream economic ministries.

More generally, the calculation of household production satellite accounts using TU data seems to influence policy horizons (knowledge, beliefs, values, "mindsets") rather than specific policies, at least in the short term. This has been the case as well in other countries (i.e., Colombia and Mexico) that were documented in the 2018 study and stands in contrast to environmental accounts, which have been instrumental in mobilizing national and global action on the environment. These accounts have measured the size of the unpaid work sector, identified who does the producing (mostly women), who finances this production (mostly women) and who benefits (society). But the notional number (percent contribution to GDP) that these accounts generate is calculated because countries want to know the size of the unpaid sector, but that knowledge has not been tied to specific policy questions. But by influencing mindsets these numbers may create a conducive environment for considering and building public support for care and other social policies.

CONTEXT

Context matters and both international and domestic issues influence their uptake by policymakers. Policy issues that become priority in the international space as well as those that are locally relevant influence which among the many subjects TU data covers are analyzed, disseminated, and taken up by policymakers and the public.

⁹ Remarks by Macdonald George Obudho, Director General, KNBS, World Data Forum meetings, Medellin, Colombia, November 11-13, 2024

A more conducive international environment for data partly explains the observation of direct policy influence in countries with varied experience with TU surveys. It is striking that the policy influence of TU surveys emerged only in recent years (2019 onwards) in the two countries with a long track record of implementing TU surveys. We believe that favorable global circumstances for data and gender data exemplified in the SDGs and the UN led ‘data revolution,’ both agreed in 2015, and the concomitant recognition of the importance of gender data and of measuring women’s unpaid work, gave the right push to Mongolia and South Korea to use TU data (underutilized in prior years) to influence policy. This same more responsive environment enabled donor funding for the recent TU surveys in Kenya and Senegal (see below).

The UN has been a principal external motivating force for launching TU surveys in the four countries. In addition, in Kenya and Senegal, UN Women was instrumental in getting donor funding for and implementing the TU surveys through their Women Count Program. While the four countries share this international influence of the UN, the internal or domestic drive to undertake TU surveys differs by country.

Domestic motivations for undertaking TU surveys should count more than external motivations to encourage policy uptake and long-term commitment. South Korea appears to have had the most explicit domestic justification. It has huge demographic challenges—a rapidly ageing population and declining fertility rates—that create an urgent need for policies that support work-life balance. The shift in public attitude on care provision from being primarily a family responsibility to being a shared responsibility between society (government) and family also mattered. Mongolia’s domestic need for a TU survey was more general and less tied to a specific policy need: it required basic information on the socio-economic and demographic features of the population, male and female, for government planning purposes when it transitioned from a centrally planned to a market economy in the early 1990s. Although the underlying rationale in Kenya was the signing of international and regional treaties on women’s rights, the more immediate trigger was to participate in a global research project (the National Time Transfer Account) with no direct links to policy. Senegal’s longstanding awareness of the need to reduce gender inequalities in the labor market did not stand out enough to become a policy priority until recently.

INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

Domestic resource allocations for TU surveys should indicate the country’s commitment to implementing and using TU surveys for policy purposes. However, this is conflated with the overall level of government resources or fiscal space countries have available to invest in data. Senegal and Mongolia, and less so Kenya are way behind South Korea in having enough fiscal space to include TU surveys in budget allocations. This highlights the unique experience of Mongolia, where a domestic resource allocation to TU surveys is mandated by law despite the government’s comparatively modest budget resources. It also highlights the critical role of donor funding for TU surveys in the interim to ensure the collection of these data at regular intervals so that they can inform the roll out of policies and their policy impact.

The nature of the link between data user and data producer is key. There is a direct link between data and policy, facilitating policy uptake, when a line ministry—with a clear mandate, line responsibilities, and an assigned budget—requests the data. This is the case, for instance, with health surveys used by the health ministry to define health policy and labor force surveys used by the labor ministry to define labor market policies. Coordinating ministries, such as the social development ministry or the women’s ministry, are successful to a lesser extent because coordinating ministries do not usually have line authority and line budgets and instead negotiate with line ministries for both.

In Mongolia a gender equality policy platform that serves as a coordinating governmental body 'took up' the TU data to include care in the government's policy agenda but implementation will depend on political will of line ministries and sufficient financial resources from government agencies or donors. In Senegal, like in most other countries, the Women's Ministry has 'taken up' the TU data to influence policy, but the influence is narrow and constrained by a lack of financial resources. Kenya stands out because the uptake of TU data was done by the Office of the President which should have access to comparatively more governmental resources. However, to successfully implement the new care policies, other line ministries and units of government will need to become better informed and engaged in Kenya as well as in the other three countries.

Inclusion of line ministries in the design and analysis of TU surveys helps establish the data-to-policy link. The inclusion of line ministries, through formal working groups or other coordinating bodies, helps build ownership of data and creates a seamless link between production and analysis of data and resulting policy. The participation of line ministries, particularly those tasked with implementing care, social protection, and labor policies, as well as the participation of the finance ministry or the budget office in charge of resource allocations, facilitates linking data to policy. The participation of local government bodies is also conducive to fostering the data-to-policy link, as the case of South Korea shows, especially when TU data is disaggregated at the sub-national level. Fostering these links with ministries and local governments is needed: in all countries, perhaps except for South Korea, the policy influence has remained limited and has not touched other relevant government functions, and especially government ministries in the economic sectors.

Formal and informal alliances between NSO, researchers, and women's advocates in civil society organizations (CSOs) are key. Alliances between NSOs and advocates in the government, academia, and civil society have helped institutionalize TU data production. For instance, the implementation of the TU survey in Kenya was the result of a collaboration between Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS), UN Women, CSOs, and academic institutions in Kenya.

An evidence-based culture nurtures the use of TU data for policy. While research using TU data may yield no immediate effects on policy, dialogue, and consultation with CSOs and researchers and giving them access to time use data can set the stage for future TU data use for policy analysis. The richness of TU data-based research findings in Mongolia and South Korea, and in the future in Kenya and Senegal should contribute to the growth of an evidence-based culture in these countries, especially if they continue to implement TU surveys on a regular basis to enable trend analysis.

STAKEHOLDERS

Global Gender Equality Frameworks and SDGs Targets. The UN Beijing Women's Conference and Platform for Action (1995) called for and validated the implementation of TU surveys for gender equality objectives globally and UN agencies, including UN Women, UNSD, and the UN regional economic commissions have advocated for the need for TU data at the national level. The UN SDGs (2015) have reinforced this call. SDG indicator 5.4.1 specifically calls for measuring unpaid labor. This external influence has motivated governments to implement TU surveys, as we have already mentioned, but for a direct link to policy, governments need to appropriate or "own" these data and use them to shape national agendas or strategies.

Engaging lawmakers can serve as a medium to institutionalize and prioritize TU surveys. In Mongolia, the codification of TU data within the law (Mongolia's Law of Statistics) is one way to ensure that resources are available on a regular basis to implement TU surveys.

Civil society and academia can be powerful allies in advocating for TU data policy uptake. In the case studies, they were named as important stakeholders and influencers. They have been the main actors in analyzing the TU data and producing research as well as in advocating for policy reforms. Issues and concerns regarding care, gender equality, and the economy that these stakeholders raise can serve as guideposts for designing surveys. Their input can help in prioritizing what data are collected; they also can enhance data analysis for policymaking.

POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

Government buy-in matters. For data to influence policy, they need to be adopted or valued by the country government, particularly line ministries. Demand and use by other actors (for example, academia, civil society, or external actors) is important, but more likely to have an indirect impact on influencing policy horizons instead of directly influencing policy changes.

The four countries show some government buy-in but in different degrees. Kenya stands out as the country where the government buy-in is at a highest government level (the Office of the President), but the scope of this buy-in is narrow at this stage and must be expanded to other relevant government agencies and to external stakeholders, including academics. The extent of government ownership of the data is perhaps the greatest in South Korea where, in response to salient demographic challenges, the government has undertaken initiatives towards improving childcare services and work-life balance, and an increasing number of local governments are adopting grandparents' allowance policies based on the TU data.

Mongolia is a good example of how a more conducive political environment resulting from parliamentary elections and a change in political actors opened possibilities for considering care policies and using TU data to back up these policy proposals.

DATA SUPPLY

The data value chain highlights the importance of following the data production steps with a look towards uptake and impact to increase the value and use of data. High-quality, reliable TU data providing detailed, disaggregated information motivated data usage for policymaking in South Korea. Similarly, the recent inclusion of care in Mongolia's policy agenda is attributed partly to access to good TU data.

Unfortunately, TU data is not easy to collect and analyze. Difficulties with collecting, processing, and analyzing TU data were cited as limiting more extensive policy usage in the four countries studied. In Kenya and South Korea, for instance, collection difficulties included the considerable effort required from respondents (respondent fatigue) and both data collectors and coders, insufficient recording of concurrent activities, and lack of TU data training of key stakeholders. The use of new computer-based information technologies was mentioned as a solution to some of these collection and processing problems.

NSOs in Kenya and Senegal have received technical support in TU survey preparation and planning from international agencies, local CSOs, and academic institutions. In South Korea and Mongolia, NSOs were able to build technical capacity over two decades of TU data collection.

The policy value of TU data would be considerably enhanced with more frequent TU data collection and cross-referencing or data integration with labor force or household surveys.

The Kenya and Senegal case studies found that TU surveys repeated at frequent intervals would allow better testing of the impact of policy reforms. The five-year gap in TU observations prevented measuring the impact of the COVID pandemic in South Korea. The Kenya case study also made the point that standalone TU surveys have limited use unless they are integrated with other datasets by using common identifiers or appending time use modules to different surveys.¹⁰

Underutilization of TU data is often a case of low capacity for data analysis. Lack of capacity to analyze and use TU data for policy purposes seems to have contributed to agencies' low demand for TU information in the cases of Mongolia and Senegal. Lack of training in TU data analysis among academics and researchers is also cited as a reason for data underutilization in Kenya. In government agencies outside the women's ministry, policymakers' lack of understanding of care work and its links with GDP remains a barrier for data uptake in the four countries.

Good dissemination of quality TU data improves policy uptake. This entails practicing open data and disseminating easy to understand and easy to explain TU data. It is notable that the four countries undertook concerted dissemination efforts through meetings, validation exercises, trainings, and media exposure and outreach. This was likely an important factor contributing to policy uptake.

Collaboration is important. Kenya and South Korea mentioned the importance of good communication channels between government and other stakeholders, including international agencies, academics, researchers, and CSOs, underscoring the importance of constant feedback between data producers and data users.

Finally, the data value chain highlights the importance of having clear objectives (in this case, policy objectives) for the use of data at the outset of data production. The UN Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) have provided a common motivation for implementing TU surveys in all four countries, as has already been mentioned (see context). Converting the internationally agreed objectives embedded in the Beijing documents (that is, to measure, value, redistribute, and reduce women's unpaid household and care work) into policy objectives at the national or sub-national level is the last challenge that countries must address to increase the utilization of TU data for public policies.

CONCLUSIONS

The four countries studied are remarkable in that some direct policy influence of TU data was evident, despite their wide differences in domestic resources and their differential track record with TU survey implementation. Our analysis suggests that this is partly the result of an encouraging, UN-led, international environment for investing in data and measuring women's unpaid labor; donor financial and technical support; and, importantly, in-country collaboration between government stakeholders, researchers, civil society advocates, and academics.

But the case studies also suggest that policy uptake can be narrow and superficial or fragile, perhaps except in South Korea where uptake of TU data defining care policies has permeated different government levels and been taken up by local governments. Policy uptake of TU data has yet to move beyond coordinating women's agencies or ministries to other relevant ministries and government offices, including labor ministries and those in the economic sectors

¹⁰ The ILO, in response to these challenges, has developed and tested a TU module to attach to labor force surveys. Kenya will be implementing this module as part of its 2024 labor force survey.

and sub-national government bodies. TU data remains underutilized in most countries to shape care and other social and economic policies and to measure policy impacts.

To increase utilization of TU data, new instruments that take advantage of advances in information technologies to simplify the collection and processing of data are needed, as is capacity building on how to analyze and use the data for policymaking across government, academia, and civil society. There is an important role for data intermediaries within NSOs with technical skills to help use TU data, interlink with other data, and produce easy to understand and visually attractive data reports. Countries need to conduct TU surveys or, more feasibly, incorporate 'light' time use modules embedded in other surveys on a regular schedule to increase their policy relevance and build data ownership and a culture of data-based evidence in policymaking. Financial resources are needed for this to happen, and realistically, domestic resource mobilization will need to be combined with or supplanted by donor allocations in the short-term, especially in the lower income countries.

This synthesis report's framework has helped to identify the factors that mediate the relationship of data to policy uptake and shown that data, stakeholders, institutions, politics, and context all need to align and reinforce each other for countries' successful uptake of TU data. Country experience with the policy process is unique, however, and factors that facilitate data uptake, for instance, good communication between government and civil society, are only part of the equation and can be reinforced or degraded by other factors, such as the active or passive role of civil society and academia, or a strong or weak data culture in policymaking. But awareness of the interplay of these factors is a good first step towards strengthening the data-to-policy link and the use of TU data to inform social and economic policies.

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ANNEX: CASE STUDIES' EXECUTIVE SUMMARIES

Kenya

Case Study Authors: Moses Muriithi (University of Nairobi) and Reuben Mutegi (University of Nairobi)

MOTIVATION

The Government of Kenya's signature of both international and national treaties and instruments provide the underlying rationale for the first national time use survey rolled out in 2021 and published in 2023. Kenya needed to measure unpaid care work to monitor the SDGs agreed to by UN member states in 2015; abide by various international and regional treaties and instruments ratified in previous decades that address the issue of gender equality and women's rights; support the Kenya Constitution (2010) which explicitly gives provisions for care work; and help monitor various national policies (on the elderly, persons with disabilities, etc.); and, most recently, help inform the National Care Policy (in preparation).¹¹ More immediately, however, researchers in Kenya could not effectively include the country in the National Time Transfer Account (NTTA), a global project to measure the economic status of women and men using a lifecycle approach, without a national time use survey. As a result, time use data became a priority area in Kenya's National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) workplan.

TIME USE SURVEY FEATURES

Kenya's first national time-use survey was conducted in 2021 as a module of the 2021 Kenya Continuous Household Survey (KCHS). The module design enabled time use estimations at the national, county, rural, and urban levels using data collected during the four quarters of the 2021 KCHS. Of the eligible households, 16,945 households completed the questionnaire. The time use module targeted individuals aged 15 years and above and covered the previous 24 hours (4 am the previous day to 5 am the day of the interview day). The survey used a retrospective diary method with pre-designated activity codes administered by an interviewer.

Statistics from the survey indicate that Kenyan women spend 4-5 hours per day on average on unpaid care work compared to about 1 hour per day by men on average. If all forms of work (paid and unpaid) are added up, Kenyan women work on average 7-8 hours per day compared to men's 6-7 hours on average, implying that women on average work 1.16 times more than men.¹² Nationally, the proportion of total time that girls aged 15-17 years spend on unpaid work is three times as much as that of boys in the same age group (14% versus 4.1%).

KNBS collaborated with several partners to implement the survey. UN Women took the leadership in providing technical and financial support, with assistance of Oxfam and the World Bank. CSOs and academic institutions such as GROOTS Kenya, SDGs Kenya Forum, and the University of Nairobi aided in designing the survey questionnaire and participated in the dissemination of study findings.

INFLUENCE ON POLICY

The Kenya TUS was published only last year, as a response to a global study demand rather than a specific policy need, so its influence on policy formulation is minimal. The only case regarding the latter is its use by the Office of the President in developing Kenya's National Care Policy,

¹¹ Specifically, SDG 5 Target 5.4.1., that is, measuring the proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work by sex, age, and location.

¹² Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS). (2023). *Kenya Time Use Report* Published by: Kenya National Bureau of Statistics Real Towers, Upper Hill info@knbs.or.ke / directorgeneral@knbs.or.ke / library@knbs.or.ke

which was announced during the International Day of Care and Support in October 2024. The case study focused on investigating public knowledge about the survey and accessibility to the survey data. Of the 22 key informants interviewed, more than half of respondents working in CSOs and half working in the government had moderate or high level of awareness and understanding of time use data while only few academics did so; a majority of respondents who are aware of time use data accessed the Kenya time use data directly from the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) website, signaling the data's accessibility.

The case study also explored key informants' views of the potential policy implications of the time use data. Informants agreed on the important potential role of time use data in the development of fiscal policies to reduce the burden of care and the incorporation of unpaid work into the System of National Accounts (SNA). Time use data analysis, they mentioned, can provide evidence in support of programs aimed at strengthening the care economy, supporting caregivers by enhancing caregiving skills and addressing their heavy workload, and developing public care services and infrastructure. Additionally, they saw the usefulness of time use data to estimate the growth in jobs that can be created by expanding the care economy.

FACILITATING FACTORS

Good communication channels between policymakers, CSOs, academics, and researchers on various aspects of policymaking around the care economy and care support initiatives bodes well for an effective use of time use data in policymaking. CSOs, academics, and researchers have engaged with policymakers and invited them to dissemination workshops and policy dialogues to discuss potential policy applications of their research.

DATA USE CHALLENGES

Challenges in using time use survey data to inform care interventions include:

- Standalone surveys of time use data have limited use unless they are integrated with other datasets by using common identifiers or appending time use modules to different surveys.
- Respondent fatigue, as surveys can grow quite long. KNBS is attempting to combat this by using a light time use module developed by the International Labour Organization (ILO) as a module for labor force surveys.
- There is no historical time use data in Kenya which would enable testing the impact of policy reforms. Undertaking continuous time use surveys could help overcome this.
- There is also inadequate capacity to use time use data to perform the analysis necessary to develop care and labor policies. The solution is to develop and conduct training modules on how to analyze time use data for policymaking.
- Lastly, there are inadequate financial resources to implement continuous surveys. Resource mobilization is needed in correspondence with any national survey and discussions with possible funders should start as early as possible.

LESSONS

Key messages from this case study are the importance of having good communication channels between government, CSOs, and academics/researchers to bridge the gap between data production and potential use; the ever-present financial constraints in developing economies and the need to mobilize domestic and international financial resources to undertake light time use modules on a regular basis; and the need to strengthen capacity to analyze time use data with clear gender-informed policy objectives in mind.

Mongolia

Case Study Author: Otgontugs Banzragch (National University of Mongolia)

MOTIVATION

As Mongolia transitioned from a centrally planned to a market economy in the early 1990s, international donors and national policymakers needed basic information on the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of the population, male and female. This was a main motivation for conducting time use surveys and it was reinforced by the 1995 UN Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action calling for more data on women's participation and wellbeing, which Mongolia signed. In 2000, a pilot time use survey was rolled out in collaboration with UNDP. In 2004, the Law of Statistics of Mongolia was amended to require that a TU survey be conducted every four years and be financed by the government. The first national survey was conducted in 2007.

TIME USE SURVEY FEATURES

Mongolia's National Statistics Office (MNSO) has conducted five time use surveys (MTUS). Survey design has improved over the years with the expansion of the reference period and number of people covered:

TABLE 1. MTUS DATA COLLECTION DESCRIPTION (2007-2023)

	Sample	Number of months of interviews	Data collection method
TUS 2007	3,200 households (HHs) and 14,080 individuals aged 12 and above	Different set of 1,000 HHs were interviewed in March, June, September, and December	PAPI, Paper diary
TUS 2011	3,998 HHs, 10,693 individuals>12	same	PAPI, Paper diary, CAPI
TUS 2015	3,972 HHs, 9,892 individuals>12	same	PAPI, Paper diary
TUS 2019	3,990 HHs, 13,626 individuals>12	same	CAPI for HHs, mobile app for diary
TUS 2023	23,394 HHs	About 1,950 HHs for each 12 months	CAPI for HHs, mobile app for diary

Researchers using data from the 2015 and 2019 time use surveys estimated that the size of unpaid care sector in Mongolia was 17 percent of GDP in 2015 and 15.3 percent of GDP in 2019. Data of the 2019 survey shows that working age (18–59) women spend 2.8 times more time than similar men on unpaid care work.

The 2011, 2015, and 2019 MTUSs are extensively used by local and international academic researchers, civil society organizations, and the government agency on gender equality. Analysis of time use and the care economy helps to understand why female labor participation is declining, how herder families are organizing care in such isolated environments, why the birth rate is not increasing, why economic growth per capita is stagnating, and why the gender wage gap is not narrowing.

INFLUENCE ON POLICY

High quality research using time use data influenced policy only minimally until recently. This may be changing with the advent of a newly formed government coalition after the June 2024 Parliamentary Election. Before this past June, there was only one case where a current labor policy was influenced by the evidence from time use data. It is likely that citation of time use survey data in government documents and conversations about unpaid care and social norms, led by the National Committee on Gender Equality, resulted in an amendment to the Law of Labor in 2021 to include 10 days of paternity leave.

Outside of the government gender agencies, however, there has been little political will to use time use data in policymaking. The two principal macroeconomic policymaking institutions (the Central Bank and the Ministry of Finance) do not see the value or relevance of this data to inform policy.

Recently, however, MTUS reports, research findings, and advocacy efforts have influenced the newly formed government coalition to include care in its 2024-2028 policy agenda. These policy priorities came directly from the gender equality policy platform and relied on time use data and analysis. This is the first time the care economy has featured so prominently in a policy agenda in Mongolia and may result in a direct policy influence of time use data.

FACILITATING USE FACTORS

The recent uptake of care in the government's policy agenda has been facilitated by access to good data and close collaboration between civil society, academia, and government organizations and ministries as well as extensive media coverage of research results.

DATA USE CHALLENGES

Implementation of the policy agenda on care will require substantial financing, trade-offs among the sectors, as well as additional research and collaboration among stakeholders, and political will among policymakers. Likely contributing to limited data uptake are issues with the existing data, including data gaps which limit the value of existing data.

Senegal

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MOTIVATION

The decision to collect time-use data was motivated by a longstanding need to reduce gender inequalities in labor markets, but financial obstacles delayed its implementation. The 2014 Emerging Senegal Plan (PSE), aligned with SDG 5, aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. However, it was only with the specific financial support from the French Development Agency (AFD) through UN Women's Women Count program, and at the request of and prodding by the Ministry of Women, that the first National Survey on Time Use in Senegal (ENETS) was finally carried out in 2021. Results were published in 2022. The main objective of the survey was to collect comprehensive data on the use of time by men and women of all social groups, to quantify the contribution of women to wealth production, and provide relevant information for SDG target 5.4.¹³ A second time-use survey has been planned for 2025. However, funding is not currently available; the National Agency of Statistics and Demography (ANSD) has mentioned the possibility of creating a statistical fund for future surveys.

TIME USE SURVEY FEATURES

ANSD collected the data from May to September 2021 across all administrative territories in Senegal. Using a stratified, two-stage random sample, the survey covered 3,990 households including 1,500 in urban areas and 2,490 in rural areas. Although the unit of analysis for the survey was the individual, socioeconomic and demographic information was collected for households, including questions about the household head (single or joint) and demographic characteristics such as sex, age, and ethnicity.

On average, women were found to spend more time per day than men in productive activities outside of the System of National Accounts (SNA).¹⁴ Specifically, women spend 4 hours per day on unpaid domestic work and 0.5 hours per day on unpaid care work compared to men's 0.5 hours and 0.1 hours, respectively. Using this data, an analysis by the Regional Consortium for Generational Economics Research, integrated in Senegal's social accounting matrix (SAM), showed that unpaid care work should be valued at 4.6 billion CFA francs (approximately 7.7 million USD).

INFLUENCE ON POLICY

Uptake has been mixed. Government agencies and programs dedicated to women and children have utilized the survey findings to design policies while 'mainstream' ministries with economic or sectoral objectives have not. Data from this survey has been used by the Ministry of Women, Family, and Child Protection to integrate considerations on unpaid work into policies such as the National Local Development Program, the National Family Subsidy Program, and the National Early Childhood Development Strategy. These programs seek to reduce women's domestic workload enabling them to more actively engage in paid work, showing the direct influence of data on policy in a short time span. Similarly, in response to time use data the National Fund for the Promotion of Women's Entrepreneurship (FNPEF) directed resources to

13 SDG Target 5.4: recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure, and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate.

14 The System of National Accounts (SNA) is the internationally agreed standard set of recommendations on how to compile measures of economic activity. For more information see: <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/nationalaccount/sna.asp>.

alleviate women's domestic workload as they took up entrepreneurship training. However, in other (mainstream) ministries policymakers lack understanding about the importance of time use data and the unequal distribution of unpaid care and its effects on women's economic empowerment and the overall economy.

FACILITATING USE FACTORS

Widespread dissemination has increased awareness of the data and survey findings and uptake by gender-informed government agencies. Results were disseminated through policy dialogues to facilitate exchanges between policymakers and other stakeholders. Validation workshops were held with representatives from civil society, academics, and other stakeholders.

DATA USE CHALLENGES

Recurring obstacles to data uptake include traditional perceptions about gender roles among policymakers, lack of dedicated resources, and differing political priorities that limit engagement. In addition, challenges related to the collection of the data itself affect data usefulness and uptake. For example, the time diary was found to be too long and took too much time to administer. The survey does not capture sex-disaggregated data for those under the age of 15. Without this information, it is difficult to fully assess the impact of domestic activities and family responsibilities on girls. Additionally, interviewees noted difficulties in accessing the data due to complex bureaucratic procedures. This can slow down uptake for decision making.

LESSONS

To improve the uptake of time use data by policymakers:

- Awareness campaigns are needed targeting policymakers, community leaders, and the public to highlight the importance of recognizing and valuing unpaid domestic work.
- Workshops and training should be held to build the capacity of policymakers to understand the importance and policy value of time use data and analysis and encourage data ownership.
- Challenges of funding follow-up surveys and accessing data should be addressed.
- Monitoring the impact of policies should be a major objective once repeated surveys are conducted.

South Korea

Case Study Authors: Ki-Soo Eun (Seoul National University) and Jiweon Jun (Seoul National University) with research assistance from Jeonghwa Choi (Seoul National University) and Eunhye Kang (Seoul National University)

MOTIVATION

International influence leading to a national mandate underpin South Korea's remarkable trajectory in undertaking nationally representative time use surveys every five years since 1999. The country's motivation to collect national time use data is closely linked to the international influence of the UN and the global women's movement. The Beijing Platform for Action adopted by consensus at the UN's Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 called for counting and valuing women's unpaid labor. Following this consensus agreement, Korea's first Basic Plan for Women's Policies in 1997 mandated national TU surveys to evaluate household labor and integrate them into national accounts by creating a satellite account for household production.

Further, Korea's adoption of the Household Production Satellite Account was influenced by the UN's recommendation of adopting these accounts to get a more comprehensive measure of the economy and the implementation of such accounts in other countries, such as France, Finland, Switzerland, the UK, Canada, and Japan.

TIME USE SURVEY FEATURES

Korea has conducted five TU surveys, with the first survey in 1999 and thereafter every 5 years:

Year		1999	2004	2009	2014	2019
Sample	Number of Households	17,000	12,750	8,100	12,000	12,435
	Number of Respondents (Approx.)	46,000	32,000	21,000	27,000	29,000
Number of Diaries (Approx.)		92,000	64,000	42,000	34,000	38,000
Survey Months		September	September	March September	July, September, November- December	July, September, November- December

The 2019 KTUS employed a stratified two-stage cluster sampling design to ensure a representative sample of the Korean population 10 years and older, sampling 12,435 households across the nation, yielding valid responses from 12,388 households and 26,091 individuals. The 2019 survey reveals enduring gender disparities in the division of paid and unpaid work: In 2019, Korean women aged 19 and above spent an average of 3 hours and 13 minutes per day on unpaid work, a slight decrease from 3 hours and 25 minutes in 2014. During the same period, men increased their unpaid work by 10 minutes daily, from 46 minutes in 2014 to 56 minutes in 2019.

INFLUENCE ON POLICY

The KTUSs have had both direct and indirect influence on policy. The direct policy influence has been through increased awareness of the unequal distribution of unpaid work taking place in

the context of South Korea's low fertility and population aging crisis. South Korea's 3rd Gender Equality Basic Plan and the 3rd and 4th Basic Plan for Low Fertility and Aging Society (2021-2025), for instance, used the 2019 KTUS data on gender inequality in unpaid work among dual earner couples to set policy directions to enhance work-family balance and better childcare support that have been taken up by local governments.

The grandparents' allowance policy, being adopted by an increasing number of local governments use the National Time Transfer Accounts (NTTA), derived from KTUS data, to determine the size of the allowance. The Seoul Metropolitan Government, for instance, provides an allowance of approximately KRW 300,000 per child to grandparents or other relatives (a majority women) who care for children for more than 40 hours per month.

The Household Production Satellite Accounts have indirectly influenced economic policies by quantifying the economic value of unpaid work. The 2019 reported valuation of household labor at 490.9 trillion KRW became a significant topic during the 2022 local elections, with the proposal of a household labor allowance gaining attention as a key policy idea. In Gwangju Metropolitan City, this valuation led to detailed research into eligibility criteria and payment structures, with legislative efforts now underway to potentially establish the allowance.

Additionally, the time use analysis results of researchers, using the five Korea TU datasets collected since 1999, were shared in research publications and media briefs which raised public awareness about gender disparities and the value of unpaid work and thus helped build public support for policies addressing care.

FACILITATING USE FACTORS

The factors that motivated the use of time use data, include, first, South Korea's demographic challenges— a rapidly aging population and declining fertility rates— that created an urgent need for policies that support work-life balance. Data use was further supported by the availability of high-quality, reliable data providing detailed information, and public support. Effective dissemination of this data and media attention, thanks to explanatory materials made available by the NSO to aid understanding complex data sets, strengthened public support.

DATA USE CHALLENGES

Challenges that have limited the use of time-use data for policymaking in Korea include: data demands considerable effort from respondents and both data collectors and coders to produce; the comparative infrequency of data collection which does not allow the evaluation of impacts of current events, for instance, the Covid pandemic; and insufficient recording of concurrent activities and contextual information needed to enhance the policy value of this data. Additionally, policymakers, researchers, and other stakeholders do not always have the necessary training to understand time use data and its policy implications when it is disseminated.

LESSONS

To maximize this data's policy use, South Korea's experience highlights the importance of:

- Aligning time use data with specific policy objectives: By framing data within the context of demographic challenges and urgent policy needs, time use data has been instrumental in driving targeted policy changes.
- Collecting high quality data and the need for technological innovations to streamline data collection processes and reduce burdens on respondents.

- Clear communication and collaboration in maximizing the impact of time use data. Effective dissemination of time use data findings and continuous stakeholder engagement have been crucial in building public support and awareness.
- Enhancing the capacity of stakeholders through targeted training and resources. Addressing capacity constraints helps ensure that the data's full potential is realized in policy development.