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SDC-Gender Equality Network

SDC GENDER EQUALITY NETWORK NEWSLETTER

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Gender and Unpaid Care Work

EDITORIAL

Dear readers,

This newsletter is dedicated to the topic of gender and unpaid care work. Unpaid care work is considered to be one of the root causes of gender inequalities.

The vast majority of unpaid care work, tasks such as cooking, cleaning, caring for family members and collecting fuel and water, is performed by women and girls. While this work is a labour-intensive essential component of daily life, it is unremunerated, unquantified, and unacknowledged in most cases. These excessive responsibilities limit women's and girls' time, mobility, and ambitions to participate in economic, political and social activities. This is especially acute for women and girls living in poverty.



The profound impact that this unequal distribution of responsibility for unpaid care work has on women's and girls' empowerment and full participation in the society and the economy is acknowledged in the 2030 Development Agenda in the stand-alone goal 5 on achieving gender equality and women's empowerment and its specific target to recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work.

How unpaid care work affects women in Nepal and Kyrgyzstan and what development practitioners can do - a study on these issues by SDC and HELVETAS is presented in the focus article of this edition.

In this edition, I also would like to present you the new Gendernet backstopping team that consist of different experts of HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation and the Interdisciplinary Centre for Gender Studies of the University of Bern. Welcome!

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“A woman’s work is never done”: Analysing and addressing unpaid care work

Sarah Byrne, HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation

“When the husband migrates, all the hard work needs to be done by the wife. So our work doubles – we have to do all the work inside the house as well as the work outside of the house.” (Participant in unpaid care work analysis, Kyrgyzstan)

“Most of the time we are limited to housework. The reason why we women are not able to lead social development initiatives is our load of daily chores. We need to talk about changing this.” (Participant in unpaid care work analysis, Nepal)

Articulated by women in Kyrgyzstan and Nepal respectively, these two quotes highlight a common challenge faced by women in these two contexts as, indeed, in many others. This is that women generally do much, if not all, of the unpaid care work needed to ensure the basic physical and social wellbeing of their families and of their society. Otherwise known as domestic work or household work, care work includes caring for children, elderly people and people who have fallen ill, as well as housework, preparing and cooking food, collecting firewood and water, etc. Particularly in contexts with limited public service provision, for example child care services, this responsibility demands a significant amount of women’s time and energy. The situation is further exacerbated in contexts where significant out-migration reduces the labour available in households, such as rural Kyrgyzstan and Nepal.



Unpaid care work: A global issue affecting both human rights and sustainable development

Not only does this place high demands on women’s time, it also affects what women do in the rest of their time. In both the global North and South, men generally spend more of their working time in remunerative or paid employment and women spend more time on unpaid work, particularly unpaid care work.¹ This is based on and reproduces a distinction between “male breadwinners” and “female caregivers”. Women’s disproportionate responsibility for unpaid care work reinforces the notion that women belong in the private sphere, while men belong in the public sphere with the resultant better access to money, resources, opportunities and political power. This has direct implications on women’s ability to invest time in other economic, social and political activities, from paid employment to education,

¹ See data on unpaid work in Switzerland [here](#).

community engagement and leisure. So, it is an issue both of human rights and of sustainable development, particularly the tremendous potential of women's economic empowerment. As a recent UN High Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment noted, gender equality is: the right thing to do and the smart thing to do. The report identified addressing the issue of unpaid care work as one of seven primary drivers for women's economic empowerment.

The 4Rs of addressing unpaid care work: recognition, reduction, redistribution, representation

We recently carried out an action research initiative in Nepal and Kyrgyzstan, the latter supported by SDC, to learn more about this. The first thing we observed in these cases, as well as more generally, is that unpaid care work is rarely explicitly recognised by development actors. Given that we often require intensive community engagement in the initiatives we support, simply recognising the time required for unpaid care work and valuing its importance is a first step. We then noted that there would be a number of practical initiatives that could help to reduce women's unpaid care work – both technological innovations and infrastructure development. We integrated some of these into our ongoing support to these communities. Thirdly, there is the question of distribution, between women and men and among different public institutions and the private sector. In Nepal, the women we worked with identified child care as a priority and we supported them to launch a community child care centre, which was also supported by the local government. Finally, there is the question of representation and the extent to which women's voices and women's interests are represented in policy dialogue on social, political and economic issues such as working conditions, social security entitlements, etc. Together these are the four R's of addressing an unequal unpaid care work distribution: recognition, reduction, redistribution and representation.²



RECOGNITION



REDUCTION

Conversations about entrenched structural inequality from the simple basis of time use analysis

One further observation that struck us during our analysis in Nepal and Kyrgyzstan is that the discussions we had around time use opened doors to discussing social issues that might not necessarily come up otherwise. Collecting time diaries, as we did, allowed the conversation to focus very concretely on how women spend their time. Our skilful local facilitators encouraged women to question why things are as they are. A key issue that emerged in both Nepal and

Kyrgyzstan is child marriage. Though illegal in both contexts, there are still pressures to marry women and girls off at a young age. They thus do not have an opportunity to finish their schooling and are, at a young age, exposed to heavy work in the fields and home alongside childbirth and childcare. This has serious consequences for their health, their potential to engage in economic activities outside of the family home, etc.

A further related point that is important for analysis is that unpaid care work also depends on a woman's particular position in society and can be quite different for women from different social and economic backgrounds. Women from well-off families may be in a position to pay for household help or childcare. Women who have several daughters or daughters-in-law living in the same household may be able to delegate much unpaid care work to them. Women who live on their own, who are widows or whose husband is a long-term labour migrant may have a greater care work burden. Beyond the categories of women and men used for the time diary analysis, it is important to consider issues of

² Very common is also the so-called Triple R framework on recognizing, reducing and redistribution of unpaid care work.

intersectionality along lines such as class, caste and ethnicity.

Unpaid care and women's role in development interventions

Though development interventions clearly cannot be disconnected from the societies in which they seek to facilitate change, sometimes very technical interventions can be so specifically focused that they do not sufficiently consider the broader social issues around them. More effective interventions recognise, for example, that even if women would like to be leaders in community development, there may simply not be enough hours in the day for this, unless their care work burden is reduced or redistributed. This is particularly relevant for highly time-intensive participatory interventions, such as those in the field of local governance or natural resource management.³



REDISTRIBUTION



REPRESENTATION

What can development practitioners do?

The forthcoming SDC Gendernet publication "Unpaid Care Work: Practical Guidance on Analysis and Intervention Design"⁴ builds on this action research and aims to provide orientation to development practitioners on how to analyse unpaid care work. It also suggests a series of practical entry points for working on this issue from different sectoral perspectives. As unpaid care work affects almost all aspects of social and economic development, these are many. For example: tenure arrangements affecting how firewood is collected, the provision of social services by local governments, infrastructure that eases access to water resources, vocational skills development in the care sector, etc. The participants in an unpaid care work analysis will themselves likely have many practical suggestions for how this unequal burden could be eased or redistributed. Ultimately, the most important development to which we can contribute is that women and men are empowered to be change agents in their own lives. And for this, they need time.

This article was written by Sarah Byrne, with Claudia Paixão, Jane Carter, Mona Sherpa, Sara Bachmann and Smriti RDN Neupane, all of HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation.

A practical guidance, published jointly by SDC Gendernet and Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation, on "Unpaid Care Work: Practical Guidance on Analysis and Intervention Design" will be launched and available on the web soon. The guidance aims to provide orientation to development practitioners on how to analyse unpaid care work.

CONTACT: [Claudia Paixão](#), HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation

³ On the issue of time and community development initiatives, see [here](#).

⁴ See section Publications, Events & Links

NEWS FROM THE GENDER FOCAL POINT

New Guidance for the SDC Gender Policy Marker

In February 2017, a [new guidance](#)⁵ for applying the SDC Gender Policy Marker has been introduced, replacing the previous gender checklist. The new guidance is to be used in all new credit proposals. It is based on the OECD/DAC document '[Definition and minimum recommended criteria for the DAC gender equality policy marker](#)'⁶. In addition, the categories specific and transversal have been replaced with the DAC terminology 'significant' and 'principal'. The Gender Policy Marker is an important monitoring and accountability tool in the context of the 2030 Agenda to track financial resources and commitment to gender equality. The aim of the new minimum standards is to improve the quality of the reported data and ensure comparability. The criteria are not new, but minimum standards on applying either principal or significant are more clearly defined, and the category significant is stricter. For example, it is not sufficient to just announce that gender is a transversal theme and is included in all project activities. The credit proposal needs to demonstrate that a gender analysis has been conducted and that the result framework contains at least one explicit gender equality objective (output or outcome level) and a related indicator.

Side Event on Unpaid Care Work at the CSW 61 in New York

SDC organized a high-level side event on [Care policies in the Agenda 2030: Advancing the Triple R framework to Recognise, Reduce and Redistribute unpaid care work](#) the 15th of March 2017 during this year's Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). As the priority theme was on women's economic empowerment, the focus of the event was on unpaid care work as a critical factor for understanding structural constraints to women's economic empowerment, and participation and leadership more broadly. The aim was to promote the understanding of the transformative potential of recognizing, reducing and redistributing unpaid care work and provided a space to share and discuss innovative approaches addressing unpaid care work to achieve the SDG target 5.4. The speakers discussed the different dimensions of the Triple R framework: ILO shared their experiences in recognizing and valorising unpaid care work through social policies and protecting labour rights of women migrant workers in the global care chain. IFAD presented their new toolkit on time reduction through labour saving technologies and infrastructure development. Promundo talked on redistribution of unpaid care work through gender role transformation and promoting men's caregiving role. The director of the Swiss Equal Opportunity Office held the opening remarks, while several governments, including Kenya, the Philippines a.o. made statements on their efforts in enabling and promoting better care policies.

The Aggregated Reference Indicator on 'women's time saving'

As a follow-up to the introduction of the aggregated and thematic reference indicators on gender (ARI and TRI) and given the focus theme of this Newsletter on unpaid care work, we would like to introduce the new ARI on time saving (see [SDC Guidelines on the Use of Aggregated Reference Indicators](#)). This indicator aims to measure the reduction of time spent on domestic workload and care. Time use surveys indicate that women and girls in rural areas all over the world spend millions of hours collecting water and fire woods, processing and preparing food, washing, travelling and transporting items, and taking care of children. SDC engages in rural infrastructure development such as water supply



⁵ The new SAP Policy Marker Guidance is also available in [French](#) and [Spanish](#).

⁶ In addition, the '[Handbook on the OECD-DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker](#)' serves as guidance.

systems, innovative and labour saving agricultural technologies or clean energy and climate change adaptation measures for healthier and more efficient cooking. This all contributes to reduce the workload of domestic tasks and saving time, benefitting many women and girls. In economic development programs, child care arrangements free up time to perform productive task and earn an income. Reducing time for unpaid domestic chores has direct and positive implications for girl's access to education and women's access to work and income. It is a (not yet fully exploited) development opportunity for families and rural communities as a whole. We encourage you to engage with your implementing partner and discuss how they can provide data on time saving as a result to rural infrastructure and economic development programs.

Call to Action on Protection from GBV in Emergencies: Partner Meeting

The annual Call to Action partner meeting the 1-2 March 2017 in Geneva focused on reviewing progress with the implementation of the [Call to Action Roadmap](#) (2016-2020) and planning for 2017. The [Call to Action](#) is a global multi-stakeholder initiative launched in 2013 bringing together states, donors, international organizations and NGOs to work collaboratively towards more effective and accountable GBV prevention and response from the onset and throughout an emergency. Switzerland is partner to the Call to Action and co-chairing the states and donors working group. Many core partners of SDC are also partners to the Call to Action and have made commitments towards the realization of the Call to Action roadmap: UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UN Women, OCHA, WFP, UNRWA, GBV AoR, IPPF, IFRC. The overall lead for the Call to Action will transition from Sweden to ECHO in summer.

Funding for Regional Emergency GBV Advisers

The Swiss Humanitarian Aid provides funding towards the [Regional Emergency GBV Advisers \(REGA\) of the GBV AoR](#) for 2017. The REGAs are based in Dakar, Bangkok, Egypt and Nairobi covering their respective regions. Please feel free to reach out to them for specific advice or information on GBV in your countries/regions. For contact facilitation please write to mes@eda.admin.ch.

Event on the occasion of the International Women's Day in Berne: "Women and Girls in the context of Disasters and Climate Change"

On the occasion of the International Women's Day, FDFA organized the 6th edition of its Event Series



on Women and Girls in Conflict, Crisis and Disaster. 80 participants, including the Swedish Ambassador, were attracted by the title "Women and Girls in the context of Disasters and Climate Change—Agents for Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction." Ambassador Manuel Bessler, Head of Swiss Humanitarian Aid, in his opening remarks, recalled that natural disasters and effects of climate change are not gender-neutral in their impact, as women make up the majority of the world's extreme poor they are more vulnerable to

natural hazard. An excellent panel of experts discussed on how women and girls can be empowered as actors in disaster prevention and preparedness: Nahla Haidar, Member of the CEDAW Committee, Kirsi Madi, Director of UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR), Bridget K. Burns, Co-Director of Women's Environment & Development Organization (WEDO) and Margaret Arnold, Senior Social Development Specialist of the World Bank. The panellists provided concrete solutions for gender-just humanitarian aid, such as building on local knowledge and identifying local needs through close contact with local civil society as well as linking short term relieve and long-term solutions.

From left to right: Regine Gachoud (FDFA), Margaret Arnold, Nahla Haidar, Manuel Bessler*, Sarah Koch (FDFA), Elisa Gilgen, Bridget Burns*, Kirsi Madi. *With flowers as they had their birthday on 8th March!



LET'S HAVE A LOOK AT CEDAW!

The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) from 1979 is the most important legally binding human rights instrument dealing with discrimination against women. With 189 State parties, the CEDAW is also one of the most comprehensively ratified treaties. State parties have to report on a regular basis on the implementation of the Convention by submitting a periodic state report and by engaging in a constructive dialogue with the CEDAW-Committee in Geneva. In November 2016, Switzerland's review took place: see [Concluding observations on the fourth and fifth periodic reports of Switzerland](#). SDC's policy and work on gender equality, is, amongst others, guided by the CEDAW, which, in its preamble, recalls that "the full and complete development of a country, the welfare of the world and the cause of peace require the maximum participation of women on equal terms with men in all fields." This is why we would like to make CEDAW more visible in the SDC-Gendernet. From now on, each newsletter will provide a CEDAW box with latest information on CEDAW relevant to SDC partner countries.

In this edition, we would like to inform you that the following SDC partner countries are being reviewed this year: Rwanda, Sri Lanka, Ukraine, Nigeria, Niger, Kenya, and Burkina Faso. You find more information on the Convention, the CEDAW Committee, the reporting schedule and relevant documents here: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CEDAW/Pages/CEDAWIndex.aspx>

The [International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific](#) (IWRAP AP) is an international women's rights organisation helping women's rights groups to use the CEDAW as a source and normative framework to interrogate laws and policies, to strengthen State institutions, to mould the cultural environment towards gender equality and combating discrimination against women. SDC is supporting the work of IWRAP. Check out these [videos](#) produced by IWRAP for a quick and concise understanding of CEDAW. And watch out for the next CEDAW box for more information about how CEDAW made a difference to women's lives, and how women facing multiple forms of discrimination have been able to access the space for public dialogue, attention and policy focus.

NEWS FROM MEMBERS OF THE GENDER EQUALITY NETWORK

Bolivia

Raising Awareness on Gender Roles Among Farmer in the Highlands of Bolivia

The Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) approach has been applied successfully within the Rural Markets project of the Swiss Development Cooperation in Bolivia, implemented by Swisscontact and PROFIN, together with 4 co-facilitating local NGOs. Through a series of actions such as broadcasting videos and radio spots on gender roles and shared responsibilities at home and in the community, enhancing female farmers' access to markets, and improving their technical knowledge and financial



skills, women improved their incomes and their social position significantly. Equally important, both men and women confirmed that female's decision-making power on family level had increased significantly and that men finally recognized their contributions to the household economy.

More information: Please visit our [website](#) or contact [Rosio Tárraga](#), Swisscontact

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Unpaid Care Work in Peacebuilding Processes

A case study conducted in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the [Civil Society Alternative Report on the National Action Plan 1325](#) demonstrates the importance of considering unpaid care work in peacebuilding process. Despite 20 years of post-war reconstruction, women described their current security situation as precarious. Poverty and marginalization are hampering factors. The lack of interest of donors in the topic of unpaid care work and its relegation to the individual household and domestic sphere leads to an underfinancing of the social infrastructure and public services. The investment in a comprehensive social security system is not seen as rentable enough, and women's voices in rural area are hardly listened to. But security is not only a life without the fear of direct violence; it is also the provision of basic supplies, primary care and dignified work. **More information:** Contact [Annemarie Sancar](#), Senior Program Officer for Gender in the Policy and Platform Program at the Center for Peacebuilding (KOFF)

WHO IS WHO

Dear readers, it is a pleasure to introduce ourselves as the new backstopping team of the SDC Gendernet in the area of Knowledge Management and Quality Assurance and Monitoring:

Knowledge Management Team

Maja Rüegg is Co-Teamleader of the Rural Economy Team at HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation. She coordinates the Knowledge Management Backstopping-Mandate implemented by a team of experts from HELVETAS, IZFG and IAMANEH. Thematically she specialises in the area of Women's Economic Empowerment.

Agnieszka Kroskowska is currently Country Director of HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation Myanmar, and will start in April as Gender and Social Equity Coordinator at the Head Office. She has longstanding experiences in community development, enabling civil society's environment and in participatory governance and inclusive civic engagement, particularly focusing on gender issues.

Maja Loncarevic is head of programme for the Western Balkan Region and senior advisor for gender based violence at IAMANEH Switzerland, with specific thematic competence in the fields of psychosocial health/trauma work, engaging men and boys and work with perpetrators.

Claudia Paixão is Advisor in Migration and Development and has an academic background in Political Sciences and Gender Studies from the University of Zurich. She has worked on unpaid care work, SGBV and the interlinkage between Migration and Gender.



Mona Sherpa is Deputy Director of HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation Nepal, and is well versed in conducting women's rights programmes, campaigns and policy advocacy - mainly on unpaid care work and safe cities initiatives, but also on the rights of (particularly women) bonded labourers.

From left to right: Maya Rüegg, Claudia Paixão, Kai Schrader, Michèle Amacker, Maja Loncarevic, Marianne Meier, Andrea Graf

Quality Assurance and Monitoring Team

Marianne Meier is a post-doc researcher in Gender, Development and Sport at the Interdisciplinary Center for Gender Studies of the University of Bern. She has longstanding professional experience in development and research on five continents. Marianne leads the Quality Assurance and Monitoring backstopping team.

Andrea Graf is a research scientist and advisor on Gender and Development at the Interdisciplinary Center for Gender Studies of the University of Bern. Andrea coordinates the Quality Assurance and Monitoring backstopping team and works also for the Knowledge Management Team, i.a. in editing this newsletter.

Kai Schrader is Evaluation & Learning advisor at HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation. He supports staff and partners in the design of meaningful M&E-system, the provision of evidence for results and knowledge sharing. He holds a PhD in Geography at the University of Berne.

PUBLICATIONS, EVENTS & LINKS

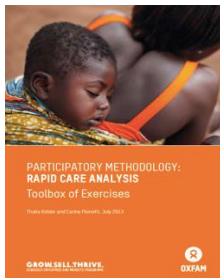


UNPAID CARE WORK – POLICIES AND LEGAL REFERENCES (SELECTION)

United Nations: [Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women \(CEDAW\)](#) (1979), Art. 2, 5a, 11, 14, 16.

ILO: [Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention](#) (1981), No. 156.

United Nations: Resolution A/Res/70/1 [Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), **goal 5, 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 (2016).



UNPAID CARE WORK – RESOURCES AND TOOLKITS (SELECTION)

SIDA: [Quick Guide to What and How: Unpaid Care Work](#) (2012).

OECD Development Centre: [Unpaid Care Work: The missing link in the analysis of gender gaps in labour outcomes](#) (2014).

BRIDGE/IDS: [Gender and Care. Cutting Edge Pack](#) (2009).

UNRISD: [Why Care Matters for Social Development?](#) UNRISD Research and Policy Brief 9 (2010).

UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on WEE: [Leave No One Behind: A Call to Action for Gender Equality and Women's Economic Empowerment](#) (2017). Official report.

UNDP: [Human Development Report 2015](#) (2015), chapter 4: Imbalances in paid and unpaid work.

IDS/Oxfam: [Understanding Unpaid care work to empower Women in Market Systems Approaches: Policy Brief](#) (2016).

Oxfam: [Participatory Methodology: Rapid Care analysis](#) (2013) in English, French and Spanish.

UN Statistic Division: Gender Statistics, [time-use statistics](#), country-level data.



SEXUAL AND GENDER BASED VIOLENCE NEWS

The Swiss Humanitarian Aid Department officially launched **the operational concept on SGBV** in January 2017. The document is not online yet. For more information contact [Sascha Müller](#), Gender Focal Point Humanitarian Aid Division, SDC Head Quarters.

United Nation Population Fund UNFPA launches new and updated version of a free online course on "[Managing Gender-Based Violence Programmes in Emergencies](#)".

CERAH invites to the [Panel on Sexual Violence Against Men and Boys: Breaking the Silence](#) on March 23, 2017.



SDC and CEDAW

Final paper of Certificate of Advanced Studies (CAS) Gender, Justice and Globalisation at the Interdisciplinary Centre for Gender Studies, University of Berne. For more information contact [Sarah Koch](#), Gender Programme Officer SDC.

SDC MAGAZINE

Latest edition of the SDC Magazine "[Eine Welt 1/2017](#)" on Gender and Sustainable Development.