

# A Study on the Economic Valuation of Women's Unpaid Work in Kathmandu Valley



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*Menaka Rajbhandari-Shrestha, Team Leader*  
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## Summary

As elsewhere in South Asia, women in Nepal suffer from a range of discriminatory measures that limit their access to schooling, health care, and appreciation and respect for their hard and useful work. As is typical throughout the world, women in Nepal bear the major burden of work in and around the home; in addition, in this still largely rural country, women perform much unpaid work in the fields which fails to be reflected in national accounting. The invisibility of much of women's work, in the home and the fields, may contribute to their low status and the ill treatment from which they commonly suffer.

It is difficult to appreciate what is unknown. The main purpose of this research was thus to obtain a realistic picture of the economic value of women's unpaid work in and around the home, including unpaid farm work, in Nepal.

It is hoped that dissemination of findings related to the tremendous economic contributions made by women through "invisible", "neglected", and "silent" household work will assist in enhancing the overall social status of women and their access to resources and opportunities. In addition, the research is expected to lead to a process of critically reviewing the conventional practice of the system of national accounting (SNA) which is used in the assessment of GDP.

Women in Nepal work hard at a wide range of household tasks. In most cases, women must perform this work by themselves: about 92% of women report that they receive no help from men in household work, less than 5% of households report having servants, and less than 10% that they receive help from relatives; figures from rural areas are even lower than in urban areas.

For urban women, the most time-consuming activities are food preparation (at least 3 hours a day) and helping in family business/piecemeal work (99 minutes). For rural women, the most time-consuming activities are food preparation (over 4 hours a day), washing clothes, and shopping.

About half of respondents say that their work should have economic value, given the role that it plays in maintaining their families' well-being.

If the unskilled labor rate set by the Government of Nepal is applied to women's work, with an adjustment for the long days and lack of vacations that these women get (as opposed to other workers), then it is estimated that women in Nepal contribute roughly US\$11.25 billion to the economy through their unpaid work. That is, this is the amount that men would have to pay for such work to be performed if their wives did not do it for free.

GDP in Nepal would nearly double if the contribution of women's unpaid household work were included: women's work is equivalent to about 91.3% of the country's GDP.

Further research could clarify and further expand on these findings. In the meantime, the study presents a strong case for better valuing of women and improving conditions for them.



## Background

Women in Nepal, as throughout South Asia, are forced to endure extreme economic discrimination which in turn reinforces other types of discrimination. The economic invisibility of women is one of the fundamental causes of continuing inequality and marginalization of women. As a result, women have been demanding changes to the common practice of undervaluing and neglecting the economic contributions which they render to society.

In Nepal, as worldwide, women's work has remained largely unrecognized and undervalued. Long hours of women's work, which is mainly confined to household activities ranging from cooking, cleaning, washing, child rearing, work in the fields and care of livestock, to community work, are not considered as economically significant. Thus men are spoken of as the breadwinners and women as dependents.

Time use data from research studies conducted in several countries have demonstrated women's proportionally larger household contributions compared to their male counterparts. A review of seven African and Asian countries, including Nepal and Bangladesh, found that women's contribution to household work ranged from 2.5 to 14 times more than men. Such non-recognition and neglect of the immense value of women's work has badly affected women's overall status in the society, their self confidence and their entitlements to wealth, income and other benefits such as access to bank loans and participation in decision-making bodies.<sup>1</sup>

Until national accounting systems are revised to include the

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<sup>1</sup> Human Development Report in South Asia, 2000.

value of women's unpaid activities, women's labour will not be fully recognized, nor will development strategies accurately account for women's work or their role. For this reason, women have long advocated for the use of gender-disaggregated statistics and the inclusion of traditionally women's work in national accounting systems, to obtain a true picture of their economic contribution.

The enhancement in valuation of women's work would likely help women in becoming established as an important player in the economic scene, and would likely have further multiplier effects in improving their overall contribution and participation in economic as well as other activities.

## Methodology

The main objective of the study was to gather evidence of the economic value and importance of women's unpaid work. Other objectives of the study were as follows:

- ✚ To assign a reasonable estimate of the economic value of women's unpaid work in Nepal;
- ✚ To help generate social awareness on the critical contribution made by women in society by highlighting the economic aspect of women's domestic and community work; and
- ✚ To draw the attention of policy makers, planners and economists to the issue so that they can appreciate and recognize women's economic contributions in formulating national policies, strategies and budgets.

This research investigated the types of unpaid work carried out by women and their opinions about the value of such work, as well as such issues as whether or not women have any leisure

time. The study also included the documentation of case studies to provide a more detailed idea of how women and men spend their days.

Three urban municipalities from Kathmandu valley (Kathmandu metropolitan city, Kirtipur municipality and Lalitpur sub-metropolitan area) were selected, as were three rural village development committees (VDCs): Ramkot and Machhegaon VDC from Kathmandu district and Imadol VDC from Lalitpur district.

A total number of 150 respondents were interviewed, consisting of 120 housewives or married females and 30 married men. The married men were not the husbands of the female respondents in this study.

Three focus group discussions, two in Machhegaun and Imadol VDCs and one in Kirtipur municipality, were also conducted. The number of participants in these focus groups varied from 18 to 30 persons (both men and women). In addition to this, six women and four men from these focus groups were interviewed in depth. Interviewees included a mix of rural and urban people.

All completed questionnaires were entered into the computer after being manually edited and validated. A data entry validity check was performed on 10% of randomly selected responses. Data generated through the qualitative study was compiled and analyzed to complement the survey results.

### *Limitations of the study*

This research has some important limitations. The study is based on an attitude and opinion survey of a small sample of 150 respondents from three municipalities and three village development committees (VDCs) in Kathmandu Valley only.

The findings and recommendations of the study may not be generalizable across other parts of the country outside Kathmandu Valley. As such, a more comprehensive study covering a larger area and population as well as using more rigorous methodological tools is recommended to obtain a better picture of the issue.

## Research Findings

### General information

Among the 120 married women and 30 married men interviewed, most of the respondents (62.5%) have from 2 to 5 family members, while 28.3% have from 6 to 9 members and 9.2% have ten or more members. Female respondents ranged in age from 21 to 50 and above, while male respondents were aged 24 to 55, with most women being of age 21-30 and most men 36-45.

Just over half of the respondents in the study were of the Janjati or Newar ethnic group, while more rural than urban participants were Brahmin and Chhetri. Most of the women reported living in a single family, while most of the men reported living in a joint family. Again, it is important to remember that the respondents do not represent married couples. Most of the respondents are Hindus, though there are more Buddhists in urban than rural areas.

According to women respondents, the average monthly income per household in urban areas is Rs.7,370 and in rural areas Rs. 6,237. The figures given by men are far higher for urban areas (11,467) and far lower for rural (4,800).

### **Case Study: the life of a rural housewife**

*Rita Sharma (not her real name) is a 45-year-old housewife from a village close to Kathmandu. She is a Brahmin by caste and is living in a joint family consisting of five members. She has studied up to 6<sup>th</sup> grade. She says that her family income is only Rs.5,000 per month.*

*Rita wakes up at 5:00 a.m. to start her busy day. She has nobody to help her in performing her household activities, and her husband does not help her either. She is busy with household work for at least ten hours a day. She goes to bed at 10:00 p.m. Besides household activities, she spends much time looking after her child and husband.*

*Rita has to prepare breakfast, lunch, a snack and dinner for all family members. She also is involved in cleaning, washing, fetching water, ironing of clothes, feeding cattle, and taking her child to the school in the morning and bringing him back home in the evening. She has to receive guests and take care of her old and ailing father-in-law and mother-in-law. She has to help her child in doing homework. She needs a lot of time in readying the child to go to school. She also shops for goods and fuel. Rita engages in farming, visiting sick relatives and friends, and planting. She is also responsible for paying for her child's school fees as well as the telephone, electricity and drinking water. She thinks that all these activities have economic value.*

*In addition to all that, Rita sometimes finds time for study and community work. Although she says she gets some free time to rest, when assessing her heavy workload it would appear that she rarely enjoys any free time. Rita is typical of rural women.*

## Occupation and educational backgrounds

**TABLE 1: Female Respondents by Occupation**

Area	Primarily Housewives	Service	Trade/Business	Farmers/Wage Earners
Urban	56.7	10.0	28.3	5.0
Rural	65.0	5.0	5.0	25.0
Total	60.8	7.5	16.7	15.0

Most of the respondents in both urban (56.7%) and rural (65.0%) areas are primarily housewives. More women in urban areas are service holders or work in trade or business, while more women in rural areas are farmers or wage earners. The term “primarily” is used as most of the women are housewives in addition to their other occupations.

**TABLE 2: Male Respondents by Occupation**

Area	Service	Trade/Business	Farming	Wage Earners	Sewing
Urban	26.7	60.0	6.7	0.0	6.7
Rural	40.0	6.7	26.7	20.0	6.7
Total	33.3	33.3	16.7	10.0	6.7

Occupations for men also varied widely between urban and rural areas, with most urban men being involved in trade or business, and most rural men in service, followed by farming.

While none of the men reported that they are illiterate, 23% of urban and 32% of rural women indicated that they are. Educational levels are universally higher among men than women and in urban than rural areas, though the urban-rural differential is far more marked among men than women.

## Time for rising and sleeping

Most of the respondents of both sexes report waking up at 5 a.m., though men are more likely than women to wake up at 6 a.m. or later. While most people go to bed at 10 p.m., more women than men report going to bed later. People in rural areas wake up earlier than do those in urban areas, while more people in urban areas stay up until 11 p.m. than do those in rural areas.

## Time spent by women on different household activities

An overwhelming percentage of women (91.7%) report that they receive no help with their housework, with even fewer rural than urban women receiving help. The opinion of men in this matter is similar to women, though more urban men than women believe that women actually receive help. Interestingly, no rural men thought that women receive help in their housework.

**TABLE 3: Lending a Helping Hand for Housework**

Respondents	Area	Receive Help with Housework (percent)	
		Yes	No
Women	Urban	13.3	86.7
	Rural	3.3	96.7
	Total	8.3	91.7
Men	Urban	20.0	80.0
	Rural	0.0	100
	Total	10.0	86.9

In terms of help received from people other than their husbands, only 5% of urban households and none in rural areas report having servants. 13.3% of urban women report

that they receive help from relatives, while only 3.3% rural women say they receive such help.

**Case Study: the lifestyle of an urban married man**

*Saroj Shrestha (not his real name) is a 24-year-old married man in Kathmandu. He is from a Newar family with five members. He has studied up to Intermediate level. He says his family income is only Rs.10,000 per month.*

*Saroj gets up between 7:00 and 8:00 a.m. and goes to bed at about 11:00 p.m. after watching television. He also goes to restaurants with his colleagues on a regular basis after office hours.*

*Saroj explains that they have a helper to share his wife's household work. He did not say how much salary is given to the helper. He thinks his wife enjoys free time. He mentioned that his wife spends about four hours a day on household work, and that he sometimes helps his wife. Saroj also says that he likes to roam aimlessly whenever he gets free time. He agreed that there is economic value of the household work performed by his wife.*

**Case Study: Lifestyle of a rural married man**

*Kaji Bhai (not his real name) is a married man from a village near Kathmandu. He is a Hindu from a Kapali (Newar) family. He lives in single family of five members. He is just barely literate. His profession is tailoring and he earns a meagre Rs.2,000 per month.*

*Kaji Bhai states that he goes to bed at 9:00 p.m. and wake up at 7:00 a.m. He thinks his wife has free time from her work. He further mentions that his wife works about five hours a day. He says that he helps his wife with cooking, cleaning, and marketing. He thinks the work done by his wife has no economic value. When Kaji Bhai gets free time, he goes to the temple and wanders here and there.*

**TABLE 4: Time Spent by Housewives on Housework**

Type of Work	Time on Household Work (Average Minutes Per Day)	
	Urban	Rural
Preparing breakfast	17	27
Cooking lunch	56	81
Cooking dinner	57	86
Preparing afternoon snack	24	35
Washing dishes	28	46
Cleaning in and around house	49	77
Washing and ironing clothes	47	107
Sewing	18	17
Preparing and taking children to/from school	18	35
Cooking preparation	25	23
Collecting firewood/fuel	22	17
Collecting water	10	11
Helping with schoolwork	12	18
Shopping for food	30	38
Shopping for other items	42	86
Helping in family business/piecemeal work	99	43
Community/volunteer work	8	12
Household Planning	15	35
Other Activities	3	0
<i>Total Hours for Household Work</i>	<i>580 minutes (9.7 hours)</i>	<i>794 minutes (13.2 hours)</i>

In addition to work they do for pay, rural women report spending thirteen hours a day on household work, while urban women report spending nearly ten hours. This does not include most of the occasional activities listed in Table 5 above, which would raise the daily average somewhat. For urban women, the most time-consuming activities are food preparation (depending on which activities are included, this occupies at least 3 hours a day) and helping in family business/piecemeal work (99 minutes a day). For rural women, the most time-consuming activities are food preparation (over 4 hours a day), washing clothes, and shopping.

A close comparison of the numbers in Table 6 above yields interesting similarities and differences in terms of time allocation between rural and urban women, with several activities taking far longer for the former to perform.

**TABLE 5: Selected Non-daily Household Activities**

Occasional Activities	Urban		Rural	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Looking after guests	93.3	6.7	93.3	6.7
Sewing/Knitting	31.7	68.3	26.7	73.3
Visiting Sick Friend	91.7	8.3	86.7	13.3
Visiting Relatives	91.7	8.3	95.0	5.0
Farming	31.7	68.3	35.0	65.0
Purchasing Other Household Goods	55.0	45.0	63.3	36.7
Looking after Sick People	96.7	3.3	43.3	56.7
Vegetable Plantation	35.0	65.0	48.3	51.7
Gardening	20.0	80.0	26.7	73.3
Social Services	25.0	75.0	20.0	80.0

Women perform other tasks occur less often than daily. For instance, over 90% of urban women report that they must also occasionally look after guests, visit friends or relatives, and look after the sick. Other tasks that are performed on an irregular/non-daily basis include washing and ironing clothes, collecting fuel, buying foodstuffs, and paying bills. Most urban and rural women report that they have no time to engage in social services.

### *Leisure time*

About 90% of women from single (nuclear) families and about 77% of women from joint families in urban and rural areas report getting some free time from their work. Almost 20% of rural women report having no leisure time. Overall, women from joint families are twice as likely as those from single families to report having no leisure time (23.4% versus 12.3%).

In terms of men’s perception of women’s leisure time, 67% of urban and 73% of rural men said that women have leisure time, while 27% of urban and 13% of rural men said that women do not have leisure time. A further 13% of rural and 7% of urban men said that women only “sometimes” have leisure.

### *Views about the economic value of household work*

When asked a simple yes-no question as to whether household work should have economic value, more than half of the urban women and close to half of the urban men replied that it has **no value**. Up to a fifth of rural women and men replied that they did not know. Although there appears to be a higher valuing of women’s work with higher educational levels, the results are unclear and the sample size is insufficient to make any clear statements in this regard.

**TABLE 6: Respondents' View about Economic Value of the Work**

Respondents	Area	View of the Respondent (percent)		
		Yes	No	Don't Know
Women	Urban	35.0	55.0	10.0
	Rural	45.0	38.3	16.7
	Total	40.0	46.7	13.3
Men	Urban	40.0	46.7	13.3
	Rural	46.7	33.3	20.0
	Total	43.3	40.0	16.7

### *Findings of Focus Group Discussions*

The research team also conducted focus group discussions with 24 participants in Machhegaun VDC, 18 in Kirtipur Municipality and 14 in Imadol VDC. Key findings include:

- ✚ Most of the women wake up between 4:30 to 5:00 a.m. and go to bed between 9:00 to 10:00 p.m. whereas most of the men get up between 5:00 to 6:00 a.m. and go to bed at 10:00 p.m.
- ✚ Cooking, cleaning, washing, fetching water, taking care of children, cattle raising, and farming were housewives' major roles. The married men were hardly involved in household work. However, they occasionally shared the work of the housewives. Still, there were many married men who thought that cleaning the house early in the morning and washing clothes were exclusively the work of women and this work should not be done by men. But they did not mind being involved in activities such as marketing, making payment of bills and farm work.
- ✚ The majority of the participants in focus group

discussions agreed that the women worked more than the men at home. Male focus group participants expressed their view that there should be mutual cooperation between the men and women.

- ✚ Female participants said they did not have domestic servants and their work is shared by family members and relatives. Sometimes they employed farm workers.
- ✚ According to the participants the normal wage rate for the women is between Rs.100 and Rs.120, and Rs.150 to Rs.200 for male employees at the local level.
- ✚ The women from Machhegaun VDC and Imadol VDC in focus group discussions explained that they had any free time and were seldom helped by their husbands, whereas women from Kirtipur Municipality told the researcher that they had leisure time in the day and that their work is shared by their husbands.
- ✚ The women participants earned money by selling vegetables, milk and curd (yogurt), and were increasingly becoming economically independent.
- ✚ Most participants expressed support for this research on the economic valuation of women's unpaid work.

## Estimated Economic Value of Household Work

Given the difficulties and complications of attempting to assign a “wage” for women’s work by task, the research team decided instead to apply a minimal wage for labourers overall, with the assumption that any over-estimate in terms of the number of women involved (the entire population of women aged 15-64 may not engage in the average number of hours of household work) would be more than compensated by using an extremely low wage rate to calculate the amount women contribute to the economy. That wage rate is the one paid for the lowest-skilled work, despite the skill levels required for much of the unpaid work performed by women.

The Labor Act, 1992 (Section 21.1) classifies various types of work into four categories: unskilled, semi-skilled, skilled, and highly-skilled. A further set of categories exists for work performed by children, with higher wage rates for adults than children. Based on these official definitions, household work can be classified under the category of semi-skilled work being performed by an adult. The maximum working hours per day is fixed at seven hours according to government legislation.

If it is assumed that the government wage includes a very conservative one day off per week plus one week of holidays per year, the total working hours per year would be 7 hours/day x 306 days/year (365 days less 52 Saturdays less 7 days holiday) or 2,142 hours/year. This figure can then be applied to a more likely 365-day year at the hours shown above for rural (13.2 hours/day) and urban (9.7 hours/day) women.

Based on the rates prescribed by the government (Nepal Gazette, Srawan 30, 2063 B.S.) of about 120 rupees/day, the

estimated economic value of household work can be calculated. Simply multiplying this daily rate by 30 days in a month yields a figure of about 3,700 rupees per month. However, since rural women spend more hours a day (13.2) on household work than do urban women (9.7), women in rural areas should earn more than those in urban areas despite a lower rural wage rate.

The government wage rate (of 120 rupees/day for working 2,142 hours/year) was adjusted for the higher number of working hours for rural (4,818 hours/year) and urban (3,541 hours/year) women. This yields a salary for the former of 270 rupees/day<sup>2</sup> and the latter of 198 rupees/day, or a monthly salary of 8,210 rupees (US\$111<sup>3</sup>) for rural and 6,033 rupees (US\$82) for urban women. Such calculations fail to take into account the impossibility of assigning an economic value to much of the work done by women, or the unfairness of assigning the low rate of semi-skilled labour.

There are approximately 8.8 million Nepali women in the age group 15-64. According to UNICEF, in 2007 17% of the population was urban. This yields almost 1.5 million urban and over 7.3 million rural women aged 15-64. Multiplying those figures by the low estimates of a monthly wage of US\$111 for rural and US\$82 for urban women, multiplied by 12 months a year, yields US\$9.78 billion for rural and US\$1.47 billion for urban women, or a total of US\$11.25 billion. According to the World Bank World Development Indicators, Nepal’s GDP in 2008 was \$12.8 billion; that figure would nearly double if the contribution of women’s unpaid household work were

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<sup>2</sup> As the working hours are more than twice, the salary more than doubles.

<sup>3</sup> Using the exchange rate for rupees to USD of 73.7.

included. That is, women's work is equivalent to about 91.3% of the country's GDP.

In short, women in Nepal daily assume a large and important share of household work. The value of the work they perform far surpasses the economic value determined through existing methods of valuation. Hence, there is an urgent need to review and reform the entire concept, methodology and practice of economic valuation in order to give justice to the economic contributions of women.

#### **Case Study: An illiterate woman from Kathmandu**

*Bindu Shrestha (not her real name) is an illiterate housewife from the core area of Kathmandu City. She is a 42-year-old Hindu woman from a Newar family living in a joint family with 12 family members. Their family profession is business with a family income of Rs.6,000 per month.*

*Normally, she wakes up at 6:00 a.m. and goes to bed at 10:00 p.m. She says that none of the family members share her work, though she also says that her husband does sometimes help out. She has one servant to clean the pots and dishes, who is paid Rs.800 per month.*

*Bindu mentions that she has no leisure time from her work. She has to work at least nine hours every day in addition to her weekly, monthly and occasional works. She thinks there is economic value of her work.*

*Every day, Bindu has to prepare breakfast, lunch, snacks and dinner. She also needs to clean the home and shop for vegetables, fuel and household items. Sometimes she has to receive guests and go see relatives. Once a week she has to wash and iron the clothes. She has to take care of the children and manage the household work. Since she is illiterate, she cannot help her children in their homework. It would appear that she hardly gets any free time from her work.*

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made to with a view to enabling a change in policies, laws, and conventional mindset related to all forms of gender discrimination and non-recognition of the economic value of household work.

### **To the Government**

- The Government of Nepal is advised to introduce appropriate policy reforms aimed at changing the methodology and practices related to the System of National Accounting (SNA) with the objective of incorporating women's household work into calculations of GDP.
- To achieve this goal, the government should initiate coordinated and concerted policies and programs to change attitudes, values, perceptions, and practices to enhance the overall status of women in society and to end all kinds of gender discrimination and inequality.
- It is recommended that the government introduce programmes which will contribute in decreasing the workload of housewives, such as constructing drinking water taps and schools closer to settlements. These innovations are likely to help in saving both time and workload of the housewives.
- A series of interactions, debates, discussion programs, seminars and workshops on the economic valuation of women's domestic work should be organized to sensitize planners, policymakers, NGOs and government officials and academics so that they are able to integrate this issue

into government's plans, programs and financial accounting and calculations. Such awareness will help them to introduce changes and reforms in related government policies, practices, laws and regulations. The reassessment of unpaid work done by housewives from this angle will also assist economists and planners to have a more realistic picture of the economy.

- Wage rates fixed in the Labor Act 1992 (Section 21.1) for skilled, semi-skilled, highly-skilled, and non-skilled work is very low at present. Therefore, it is recommended that the government review the labor act and increase wage rates.

### ***To NGOs/INGOs***

- One of the findings of the present study is that most women involved in household work experience a range of inequities. Women are paid less than men for the same hours of work. NGOs and INGOs could work to address discrimination, to encourage men to play an important role in household work, and to raise the perceived value of women.
- Setting up day care centres for children as well as for the elderly at the community level is recommended to ease the housework burden on women.

### ***To Women's Organizations***

- Women's organizations should give priority to developing strategies and programs aimed at promoting the economic value of domestic and informal work performed by women, such as special programs on women's legal rights and women's issues, in addition to the regular programs such as literacy, income generation,

and agriculture in order to enhance the knowledge and confidence of women.

- Women's organizations can also play a key policy role in highlighting the importance of the household work performed by women and the need to acknowledge its economic value in national decision-making.
- The formation of associations is recommended to bring women together and enhance their confidence and capacity to address the issues that they face.

### ***To Research Institutions***

- Research institutions and universities are advised to initiate studies on critical issues such as women's overall economic contributions, including those made through household work. Neglect of this issue has resulted in unrealistic economic policies, programs, and projections.
- Researchers and students should be encouraged to conduct studies on these hitherto neglected issues.
- To get a realistic picture of women's economic contribution through informal economic and unpaid domestic work, a national level study is strongly recommended.



## Conclusion

The emergence of a dynamic and vibrant international women's movement has compelled politicians, policymakers, planners, economists and researchers to take note of the critical issues raised by women. Awareness of the structural disadvantages, pervasive discriminatory practices, and intolerable inequality experienced by women is growing. Unfortunately, until now the emphasis in many countries like Nepal has been limited to a rhetorical exercise on the need for the creation of enabling and empowering environments for women in all sectors of the society.

In spite of the changes in the tones and emphasis of discussions on gender equality, progress in achieving the goal of gender justice and gender equality has fallen far short of the target. An important area where women's contribution has not been adequately and properly acknowledged or appreciated is in the economic sector. The conventional conceptual bias and methodological shortcomings in the economic valuation leading to GDP formation has resulted in either neglect or undervaluation of women's contribution, especially in terms of unpaid domestic work. This non-recognition of the household work or care economy has too often rendered the economic presence of women invisible. Overcoming this economic discrimination could have multiplier effects in facilitating equitable sharing and in improving access to resources and opportunities by women as well as in their entitlements to social benefits.

The results of this study suggest that the total contribution of women throughout Nepal to the economy through their unpaid work is roughly US\$11.25 billion, or 91.3% of the country's GDP. That is, GDP would nearly double if the

unpaid work performed by women were added.

Hence there is urgent need to review the current conventional methodological practices related to the System of National Accounting (SNA). Current practices fail to recognize women's tremendous contribution to the economy. Further, it is important to achieve qualitative change in the attitudes, values and outlooks of policymakers and the general public regarding household work. Valuing the caring and household work that are essential to a nation can only bring benefits to all.



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