

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF LAW
MANAGEMENT & HUMANITIES

[ISSN 2581-5369]

Volume 4 | Issue 5

2021

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Institutionalizing Household work: A Road to Homologate Household Employment

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ABSTRACT

A study by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 2018 shows that, worldwide, women undertake 76.2% of total hours of unpaid care work, more than three times as much as men. In Asia and the Pacific, this figure rises to 80%. The International Wages for Housework Campaign started in Italy in 1972 as a feminist movement that highlighted the role of gendered labour in the home and its relevance to the production of surplus value under the reign of capitalism. The movement further spread to Britain and America. Alongside other demands for social and political equality, women's rights campaigners made visible and also politicised women's everyday experience of housework and child care in the 'private' realm of the household. Housework demands effort and sacrifice, 365 days a year, 24/7, despite this, a huge proportion of Indian women aren't "queens" reigning over their kingdom, the family. A large number of women live with domestic violence and cruelty because they are economically dependent on others, mainly their husbands. Every day, an average Indian male spends 1.5 hours per day in unpaid domestic work, compared to about five hours by a female. Despite a legal provision, equal inheritance rights continue to be elusive for a majority of women. More than creating a new provision of salary for housework, we need to strengthen awareness, implementation and utilisation of other existing provisions. Starting from the right to reside in the marital home, to streedhan and meher, to coparcenary and inheritance rights as daughters and to basic services, free legal aid and maintenance in instances of violence and divorce. Women should be helped to reach their full potential through quality education, access and opportunities of work, gender-sensitive and harassment-free workplaces and attitudinal and behaviour change within families to make household chores more participative. Turning to domestic chores, everywhere in the world, the burden falls disproportionately on women, regardless of whether they are "housewives" or not. The enormous weight of endless and repetitive housework leads women to either drop out of paid employment altogether (or temporarily), or to seek part-time work. Women who manage to re-enter paid employment after a childcare break typically enter as juniors of, and earn less than, men comparable to them in age, education and qualifications. In other words, collectively,

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as a society we want children, for which mothers pay a penalty, but not fathers. Feminists have highlighted the sexual division of “reproductive labour”, where women disproportionately bear the load of domestic chores, care and nurturing responsibilities, which eases male participation in “productive labour” and allows the productive economy to continue running smoothly. A typical picture of a standard early 20th century family, where the man is the breadwinner and the woman the housekeeper and caregiver.

I. INTRODUCTION

To ensure a sense of harmony, equilibrium and solidarity among the sexes the proponents seek to create a ‘social capital’ whereby a homemaker’s contribution within the household is considered ‘equal’ to a regular worker’s labor expended in the formal sector. A report by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 2018 shows that, globally, women perform 76.2% of total hours of unpaid care work, more than three times as much as men. In Asia and the Pacific, this figure rises to 80%. A study conducted by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in its 26 member countries and three emerging economies of India, China and South Africa, said that household production constitutes an important part of economic activity. Since this unpaid work is mostly done by women, neglecting to include it would mean underestimating women’s contribution to the economy. The study found that Turkish, Mexican and Indian women spend 4.3 to 5 hours more on unpaid work than the men. It also said that the Indian men spend considerably more time sleeping, eating, watching TV; relaxing in general.

The International Wages for Housework Campaign started in Italy in 1972 under Selma James. It was based on the premise that housework was the basis of industrial work and should be duly paid for. The movement further spread to Britain and America. Silvia Federici, among the founders of the movement, in her book ‘*Wages Against Housework*’ wrote³: “To ask for wages for housework will by itself undermine the expectations society has of us, since these expectations – the essence of our socialisation – are all functional to our wageless condition in the home.”

More recently, in 2014, Giulia Bongiorno⁴, an Italian lawyer and ex-parliamentarian, proposed that homemakers should be paid a salary as a way of addressing the debate on domestic violence. She argued that most women continue in an abusive relationship

³ “Wages Against Housework”, Silvia Federici, Power of Women Collective and Falling Wall Press, 1975.

⁴ The Wire. 2021. *Should There Be Wages for Housework?*. [online] Available at: <<https://thewire.in/labour/should-there-be-wages-for-housework>> [Accessed 18 October 2021].

because they don't have a way out, as they are financially dependent on their partner. This does not mean that the salary would be dependent on victimisation, but that the role of the homemaker needs to be revisited and valued. However, the proposal said that the salary needs to be paid either by the state or in the case of an affluent partner, by the partner himself, reducing the argument to the same flaws as that of the proposal by Krishna Tirath. Venezuela pays its homemakers 80% of the minimum wage (approximately \$180 per month) since 2006. The purpose is to present a feminist perspective of this ethically compelling and economically sensible proposition of a Universal Basic Income (UBI) type 'homemaker's grant'.

For decades, many Indian women have sought recognition of the inherent economic value that lies in house work from both the state and society. Probably the earliest recognition of this need was illustrated in a 1940 report titled 'Women's Role in Planned Economy' (WRPE) prepared by a sub-committee for women under the National Planning Committee (NPC)⁵. The NPC was a body that undertook the process of devising India's future economic developmental plans as the country marched towards Independence. It was set up by the Indian National Congress in 1938 at the joint initiative of Subhas Chandra Bose and Jawaharlal Nehru.

Although the chairmanship of the NPC was entrusted with Nehru, this particular sub-committee formed in 1939 was chaired by an Indian Independence activist and stalwart feminist, Rani Lakshmi Bai Rajwade. Working closely alongside her was member secretary, freedom fighter, Gandhian and avowed secularist, Mridula Sarabhai. She presented the final report of the sub-committee before the plenary session of the NPC in 1940. But it was only seven years later in July 1947 when the WRPE report, along with those of several other sub-committees of the NPC, was sent for official publication under the editorship of KT Shah, a renowned member of the Constituent Assembly and a lawyer. The two women behind WRPE were remarkable in their own right.

Lakshmi Bai Rajwade, a doctor by education, was an influential member of a drafting committee of the All India Women's Conference (AIWC), chaired by Sarojini Naidu. The AIWC sought universal franchise and opposed affirmative action for women in future elections, in a draft report submitted to the 1931 Second Round Table Conference. Married to Major General C. R. Rajwade, the erstwhile king of the Gwalior state, she was also one of the earliest and

⁵2021. *WOMAN'S ROLE IN PLANNED ECONOMY*. [online] Available at: <http://14.139.60.153/bitstream/123456789/8963/1/0038_Woman%27s%20Role%20In%20Planned%20Economy.pdf> [Acc 18 October 2021].

strongest advocates for family planning, which was heavily opposed by certain members of the national movement.

In fact, opposition to her strong views on family planning grew so harsh that Nehru persuaded Rajwade to “approach the subject in a manner which is least offensive to large sections of people”. Suffice it to say, she didn’t quite back down. Post-Independence, in 1950, she became one of three Indian delegates to the United Nations Economic and Social Council. Meanwhile, Mridula Sarabhai, the sister of nuclear scientist Vikram Sarabhai, was barely 19 when she joined the Congress Seva Dal during Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi’s famous Salt Satyagraha in March 1930. During this time, she organised the boycott of British goods, and was even arrested for her participation in the Salt Satyagraha. She would go on to play an integral role in the Congress, leading its women’s wing for some period of time. However, she really came into her own, as India began descending into communal violence a year ahead of Independence.

“She joined Gandhi in his Noakhali tour in 1946, when she saw Hindus being butchered by Muslims and later in Bihar, where Hindus reciprocated with double the brutality. She became danger’s daughter, daring sister. In the pre-Partition weeks and months Mridula was where men blinded by lust and bigotry were making women their special targets. She could have been brutalised a hundred times herself and murdered. Leaders in India and Pakistan alike praised her courage [and] her commitment,” writes Gopalkrishna Gandhi, a former diplomat. Following Independence, she fell out with Nehru and Congress over their Kashmir policy and became one of Sheikh Abdullah’s strongest supporters outside the Valley.

II. ASSIGNING APPROPRIATE VALUE TO DOMESTIC WORK

Firstly, the division of labour between the sexes is such that all the work in the domestic sphere has been allocated to women whereas all formal work is exclusively reserved for men. According to the 2011 Census, nearly 159.85 million women in India stated that ‘household work’ was their main occupation, as compared to only 5.79 million men⁶.

Secondly, women homemakers are not considered as independent individuals having agency, rather they operate as appendages to their husbands. Indian feminist and social reformer Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay aptly noted that the stereotypical image of Indian women was of *“domestic and social parasites living on their husbands and contributing nothing.”*

Thirdly, the laborious tasks performed by homemakers round the clock are not recognised as ‘work’ at all. Rather, their 24X7 365 days’ engagement in the domestic sphere is conveniently

⁶ Bhardwaj, P., 2021. *Notional income of homemaker Archives / SCC Blog*. [online] SCC Blog. Available at: <<https://www.sconline.com/blog/post/tag/notional-income-of-homemaker/>> [Accessed 18 October 2021].

categorised as the inherent ‘duty’ of a loving, nourishing and caring wife and mother. The Report of the Union Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, titled ‘Time Use in India’ (2019)⁷ found that in a day, on an average, women spend nearly 299 minutes a day on unpaid domestic services for household members versus 97 minutes spent by men. Also, women on average spend 134 minutes on unpaid care giving services for household members as compared to the 76 minutes spent by men.

Fourth, a lower value is attached to the products made and services rendered by homemakers because they are not sold in the open market but consumed within the family. As such, the 2011 Census categorised about 367 million Indian women who were engaged in household duties as ‘non-workers’ and equated them with beggars, prostitutes and prisoners who are not engaged in economically ‘productive’ work. Consequently, the non-monetary and non-competitive nature of household work has actually lowered the status of homemakers in the Indian society.

III. INSTITUTIONALISING HOUSEHOLD WORK

No doubt a homemaker’s contribution to a family’s existence and well-being is ‘priceless’. However, it is certainly not ‘valueless’. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay observed: *“to state blandly that woman produces children and rears them, cooks food, cleans, washes, is not enough...the housewife is as much of a working woman as a factory worker. She expends more energy and time and skill in the production of commodities than the unionised, legally protected worker, for her hours are unlimited and her tools countless.”*

Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum’s ‘Capabilities Approach’⁸ enunciates that a human life which is devoid of essential values like a decent standard of living, bodily health, bodily integrity, affiliation, play et cetera is not a life worthy of human dignity. This approach focuses on actual human lives and can be used to determine what a Universal Basic Income (UBI) type ‘grant’ could do to expand the homemakers’ substantive freedoms and capabilities.

In all likelihood, with a regular cash grant at her disposal, a homemaker would ‘be able to be and to do’ what she values ‘being and doing’. This is the minimum level of social entitlement that a just society should distribute among its homemakers. The government would ultimately leave it to the homemaker to decide how she wants to use it.

⁷ Mospi.nic.in. 2021. *Time Use in India-2019 | Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation | Government Of India*. [online] Available at: <<http://mospi.nic.in/publication/time-use-india-2019>> [Accessed 18 October 2021].

⁸ Plato.stanford.edu. 2021. *The Capability Approach (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)*. [online] Available at: <<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/capability-approach/>> [Accessed 18 October 2021].

Such a grant could alleviate many families out of poverty which have a male as the sole earning member and who might have lost his job, particularly amidst the pandemic. Further, women are known for being intelligent, efficient and fair in planning out monthly family budgets and allocating resources among the members. Indian courts have for 30 years developed a sophisticated wages for housework WFH jurisprudence when deciding cases of compensation for deceased housewives under the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 where they viewed unpaid domestic and care work UDCW as an occupation. This is instructive for a WFH experiment. The litigants in the 200 cases I studied were mostly from poor, lower middle-class and middle-class urban and rural families. Some housewives did full-time UDCW but many also worked part-time in the informal economy or did home-based work. When compensating UDCW, courts considered replacement costs, opportunity cost, contribution to marriage as a partnership and looked at minimum wage tables, case law and legislation to fix a monthly salary.

VALUE OF UNPAID LABOUR⁹
* \$10.9 trillion is what women's unpaid labour is worth, according to an analysis by Oxfam.
* This is more than the combined revenue of the 50 largest companies on last year's Fortune Global 500 list, including Walmart, Apple and Amazon

INDIA'S CHORE GAP¹⁰	MINUTES SPEND ON UNPAID LABOUR PER DAY
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⁹ Nytimes.com. 2021. *Opinion | Women's Unpaid Labor is Worth \$10,900,000,000,000 (Published 2020)*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/03/04/opinion/women-unpaid-labor.html>> [Accessed 18 October 2021].

¹⁰ IndiaSpend, T., 2021. *How unpaid work is keeping India's women away from increasing inequality*. [online] Business-standard.com. Available at: <https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/how-unpaid-work-is-keeping-india-s-women-away-from-increasing-inequality-119033000605_1.html> [Accessed 18 October 2021].

Women:	351.9
Men:	52

IV. SALARY- WAY TO ECONOMISE HOUSEHOLD WORK

The International Wages for Housework Campaign¹¹ started in Italy in 1972 as a feminist movement that highlighted the role of gendered labour in the home and its connection to the production of surplus value under capitalism. The movement further spread to Britain and America. Alongside other demands for social and political equality, women's rights campaigners made visible and also politicised women's everyday experience of housework and child care in the 'private' realm of the household. In 2010, an application by the National Housewives Association, seeking recognition as a trade union was rejected by the deputy registrar of trade unions on the ground that housework is not a trade or an industry. In 2012, the then minister for Women and Child development announced that the government was considering mandating a salary for housework to wives, from husbands. The purpose was to empower women financially and help them live with dignity. The proposal never materialised and with the change in the government in 2014, the idea was put to rest.

- Housework demands effort and sacrifice, 365 days a year, 24/7. Despite this, a huge proportion of Indian women are not treated equal to men.
- A large number of women live with domestic violence and cruelty because they are economically dependent on others, mainly their husbands.
- Time-use data from 2019 gathered by the National Sample Survey Organisation revealed that only about a quarter of men and boys above six years engaged in unpaid household chores, compared to over four-fifths of women.
- Every day, an average Indian male spends 1.5 hours per day in unpaid domestic work, compared to about five hours by a female.

Arguments in Favour of Household Wage:

¹¹ The Independent. 2021. *Opinion: I founded the Wages for Housework campaign in 1972 – and women are still working for free.* [online] Available at: <<https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/international-womens-day-wages-housework-care-selma-james-a9385351.html>> [Accessed 18 October 2021].

- *More Accurate National Income Accounting*: Domestic labour of women is not accounted for in either the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or the employment metrics. Neglecting to include it would thus mean underestimating GDP of the economy.
- *Makes Woman Autonomous and Controls Domestic Violence*: The wage that the state ought to pay women would make them autonomous of the men on whom they were dependent.
- Most women continue in an abusive relationship because they don't have a way out, as they are financially dependent on their partner.
- *Redefines the Role of Women*: More fundamentally, the very demand for a wage was a repudiation of housework as an expression of women's nature. It was a revolt against the assigned social role of women.
- *Welfare of a large Segment of Population*: According to the Census in 2011, people engaged in household duties have been treated as non-workers, even when 159.9 million women stated that "household work" was their main occupation.
- *Recognition as the first step to Equality*: Recognition of household work is one of the most central processes in empowerment. It gives them a claim to equality within the patriarchal Indian household that only recognises the work done by men. Once recognised as work, this arena of unpaid domestic labour that is dominated almost entirely by women can become one where women can demand some degree of parity in terms of the time and energy expended on it.
- *Time Poverty*: Combining paid work commitments with a mountain of menial, domestic labour at home means poor women are more likely to suffer from 'time poverty'. Time poverty fundamentally undermines women's human rights since it undermines women's agency and ability to make choices. The immense burden of work therefore prevents women from pursuing further education, employment opportunities, raising their skill-level and tending to their own well-being.

Against Household Wage:

- *Increased Responsibility*: Asking men to pay for wives' domestic work could further enhance their sense of entitlement. It may also put the additional onus on women to perform.

- *Strengthen the Position of Men:* Buying domestic labour from wife poses a serious risk of formalising the patriarchal Indian family where the position of men stems from their being “providers” in the relationship.
- *Acceptance and application:* Despite a legal provision, equal inheritance rights continue to be elusive for a majority of women.
- *Burden on Government:* There are still debates on who would pay for the housework done by women, if it is to be done by the State then this will put additional fiscal burden on government finances.

V. HOUSEHOLD LABOUR- SOURCE OF LIVELIHOOD

Undoubtedly, some homemaker’s would put the ‘social dividend’ to their personal use or for their children’s consumption which many would term as ‘wasteful expenditure’. However, to a great extent, it would free women from the continuous cycle of dependency on the male members of the family, empower them and reinforce their individuality, agency and voice.

Whilst some women would consider the grant as a ‘launchpad’ to start a small business from saving and investing in an asset like a sewing machine to make and sell clothes. Still others may consider the sum of money as a ‘cushion’ to address future contingencies.

The homemaker’s grant would enable women to dictate terms and catalyse behavioural changes among the wayward habits of men like consuming alcohol and gambling. Belgian political philosopher Philippe Van Parijs¹² has reasoned that a UBI type grant is bound to benefit women because it offers ‘financial protection’ to those who want to liberate themselves from the ‘tyranny of husbands’ and abusive relationships.

Similar findings were resonated in a series of pilot studies conducted by Self- Employed Women’s Association (SEWA), Ahmedabad in 2009 when it directly transferred cash into the bank accounts of the eldest women members belonging to families under study. The homemaker’s grant would not just expand the women’s material freedoms but make a huge difference to their overall position and role within the family and society.

VI. UNVEILING THE ECONOMIC IDENTITY OF HOUSEHOLD WORK

On 5 January 2021¹³, a three-judge bench of the Supreme Court of India, while deciding on

¹² The Brussels Times. 2021. *Five Questions to philosopher Philippe Van Parijs on basic income and the coronavirus*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.brusselstimes.com/news/magazine/104273/five-questions-to-philosopher-philippe-van-parijs-on-basic-income-and-the-coronavirus/>> [Accessed 18 October 2021].

¹³ Kirti & Anr. Etc. v. Oriental Insurance Company Ltd. CIVIL APPEAL NOS.19-20 of 2021 [Arising out of Special Leave Petition(C) Nos.18728-29 of 2018]

a motor accident case and determining the income of the non-earning victim — a homemaker — observed that the labour, services, and sacrifices of homemakers contribute in a very real way to the economic condition of the family, and the economy of the nation; regardless of the fact that it may have been traditionally excluded from economic analyses.

In unequivocal terms Kamaladevi proclaimed: *“for it is time society realised that every housewife supports herself though she may not scratch at a desk or run a machine, by the social labour she performs and the contribution she makes towards the maintenance of the home and its happiness.”*

VII. REMEDIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There is no denying that the entire burden of domestic house work falls on the shoulders of housewives/homemakers, particularly in middle-class families that cannot afford servants. Responding to a similar reality back in the late 1930s, the authors of the 1940 report titled ‘Women’s Role in Planned Economy’ (WRPE) prepared by a sub-committee for women under the National Planning Committee (NPC)¹⁴ noted, “We feel that this work, which at present receives no recognition either from the State or society, should be recognised as having an economic value and that work in the home should not be considered in any way inferior to the other type of work done outside the home.”

They argue that besides activities like cooking and washing, they also play a pivotal role in creating “a cultural environment in the home for the proper nurture of children” and to some extent, fixing “the standard of life”. Unfortunately, these critical roles that homemakers play aren’t realised to their fullest extent, because they are neither trained nor educated for it.

The standard narrative peddled by a plethora of communities across India is that the man is the “bread-winner”, and thus considered much more important than a homemaker, who “just ends up spending what he brings home”. But what these narratives fail to take into account is the homemaker’s indirect contribution to the family income through her labour.

Without her labour, can the male ‘breadwinner’ function to his highest capabilities? Authors of the WRPE argue that a lack of recognition for this work and a homemaker’s constant dependence on the man for everything she wants reduces her to a slave. “This social degradation has brought into contempt the work of the woman in the home,” they note. Therefore, the report arrives at a conclusion that “unless the home worker is considered as

¹⁴ 2021. *WOMAN’S ROLE IN PLANNED ECONOMY*. [online] Available at: <http://14.139.60.153/bitstream/123456789/8963/1/0038_Woman%27s%20Role%20In%20Planned%20Economy.pdf> [Accessed 18 October 2021].

much a productive worker as the one who is engaged in work outside home, and is given the annas in the same way that the work of those engaged by workers in, say, industrial labour, it will be difficult to raise the dignity of labour in home.”

Unlike the suggestion of actor-politician Kamal Hassan for the provision of a monthly salary to homemakers, the authors of WRPE believe that a woman’s work in home cannot be translated into actual rupees the same way as industrial workers. However, the authors do believe that there are other ways and means of recognising this work.

The report *recommends* three things:

- 1) Woman should have an absolute control over some part of the family income;
- 2) Woman should have a share in the husband’s property, which he cannot will away; and
- 3) The husband should give his wife’s share of the contribution to any social insurance scheme that may be introduced by the State.

They also argued that while it’s difficult to fix work hours for homemakers, it’s imperative they have some time to themselves for their “self-improvement”.

For this provision, they have two more recommendations:

- 1) Labour saving devices may be introduced in the home, which will relieve her of the drudgery of her work; and
- 2) Creches should be established by the State where she can leave her child or children whenever she wishes to be free.

The report goes on to argue that the “home will not be considered to be an exclusive sphere of women’s work.” In cases where both women and men are wage earners, they recommend that both will equally contribute to household expenses and share actual duties of cooking, cleaning, etc. As stated earlier about the lack of training in domestic science, the report recommends that men and women should train in it and that facilities for the same should be made available.

“Man will learn to look upon home-work as something not below his dignity. This will save the man from his present helpless position when the wife is ill or away from home,” it adds.

According to noted scholar Nirmala Banerjee’s 1998 article published in the Economic and Political Weekly (EPW)¹⁵ publication, “The report of the WRPE is worth our notice if only because of its historical relevance; it shows that, even then, Indian women were by no means

¹⁵ Economic and Political Weekly. 2021. Vol. 33, Issue No. 17, 25 Apr, 1998. [online] Available at: <<https://www.epw.in/journal/1998/17>> [Accessed 18 October 2021].

the icons awaiting male hand-outs as has been visualised by several scholars.” She goes onto note, “The WRPE also deserves credit for recognising right at the outset that economic rights for women were contingent on each woman being treated as a separate unit in the economic structure.”

The Nehruvian Era and Woman’s Position, the article talks about how some of the more radical recommendations by the WRPE report got lost in the larger arc of the freedom struggle. This particular recommendation on women’s unpaid labour in the family’s economic activities and in the household lost steam at the 1940 plenary. The report was itself forgotten by history until another scholar of note, Maitreyi Krishnaraj, in 1995 resurrected it from archival sources. Both Banerjee and Krishnaraj argue that the reason why some of the more progressive recommendations lost steam was because these women were “trying to make a very aggressive and unfamiliar individuality for women acceptable in a society which was totally unfamiliar with the idea”. What probably came in the way was “the task of forging a new national identity out of the struggles emerging from a hated colonial rule.” To forge that new identity, there was a need to “glorify its own past traditions” and therefore there was no room for such an idea. “The views expressed by the WRPE in 1939 were not the wild dreams of an individual, but a reflection of the ideas that were in circulation at that time among the politically conscious, and specially among those who had been familiar with international events. The complete disappearance from 1951 onwards of that past in the new planning team, including Nehru himself, suggests more a deliberate reversal of policy positions,” she notes. Nonetheless, these ideas are making a comeback now. Hopefully, this time, the larger public discourse can no longer ignore an idea whose time has probably come.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The ILO law and practice report on domestic work offers a wide range of reasons why domestic work is “undervalued, underpaid, unprotected and poorly regulated” (ILO, 2010). Domestic Work Policy Brief No. 1 (Geneva) Conditions of Work and Employment Programme — Advancing decent work for domestic workers The meaning of value In economic terms, one can distinguish between valuation that is based on the cost of inputs, and valuation that is based on the value or price of the outputs produced. Domestic work, however, constitutes a special case in that the international System of National Accounts (SNA-1993) specifies that by definition the output produced by a domestic worker is equivalent to her wage (including in-kind payments), which is equivalent to her productivity. the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR) has cautioned against

undervaluing domestic work by setting the minimum wage for domestic work equivalent to that for unskilled workers (ILO, 2010, para 63). The CEACR has questioned the classification of domestic work as “unskilled work”, noting the complex tasks and responsibilities assumed by many domestic workers. The care diamond Razavi (2007) introduces the notion of the “care diamond” as a way of structuring thinking around the institutions that can provide care. The four corners of the diamond are the family or household, markets, the public sector and the not-for-profit sector. The concept of the care diamond is potentially useful in highlighting to what extent government considers care work similar to paid domestic work to be important enough to provide these services itself, or to subsidize or fund the provision of such services in some other way. Where government does this, it would suggest that government attaches significant value to the work. Government provision or funding thus becomes an indicator of value.
