

Thirty Successful Experiences of Redistribution, Reduction,
Recognition, Remuneration and Representation in Care Work

Inclusion of the care economy in the national accounts system, Colombia



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Country or location of implementation: Colombia

Instances and/or legal framework responsible for its implementation: National Statistics Administrative Department (DANE)

Specific issue covered and beneficiaries of the action or policy

In 2010, the Colombian Congress passed Law 1413, the purpose of which was to include the care economy, made up of unpaid work in the home, in the National Accounts System to “measure the contribution of women to the economic and social development of the country as a fundamental tool for the definition and implementation of public policies” (López Montaña, 2020, p. 15). It was the first legislation of its kind in the Americas.

The enactment of this law was the first step towards quantifying the economic value of unpaid work in the home, incorporating it into macroeconomic anal-

yses, and governmental and societal decision-making. Adding work in the home to national aggregates does not mean increasing production. It means revealing the amount of hidden labor incorporated in production that remains undisclosed (López Montaña, 2009, p. 7). In this sense, Article 5 of the law states that the National Statistics Administrative Department (DANE in Spanish) and the Ministry of Finance and Public Credit are both responsible for initiating “the process of adapting the procedures and steps necessary to plan, design, and technically, conceptually, and methodologically define the time-use survey and the inclusion of its results in the National Accounts System” (*LAW 1413, 2010*).

This is a policy that stipulates the production of evidence and data on unpaid care work as part of a strategy to recognize its economic value in the country's national accounts.

Table 2. Historical evolution of the number of people affiliated to the TNRH category

YEAR	AFFILIATES – UNPAID WORK IN THE HOME
2015	54,921
2016	197,065
2017	212,033
2018	194,635
2019	235,730

Source: Prepared by the authors based on data available from IESS, n.d.

Results expected from and obtained with the action or policy

The survey has been conducted on three occasions: 2012–2013, 2016–2017, and 2020–2021. The data can be disaggregated by age, socioeconomic level, educational level, family characteristics, regions, etc. The Care Economy Satellite Account was completed in 2016 and published in 2017, while the Expanded Work Matrix was also published as contextual research for the Care Economy Satellite Account, as well as the publication of the Unpaid Domestic and Care Work Simulator, available on the DANE website. The results of this first publication of the Care Economy Satellite Account indicate an economic value of unpaid domestic and care work (TDCNR in Spanish) of 185,722 billion Colombian pesos, which represents between 16.3% and 20% of the GDP, of which women contributed 76.7%. Such economic value is even higher than that of the sector that, until the introduction of this Satellite Account, was in first place: wholesale and retail trade, with an economic value of 162,507 billion Colombian pesos (DANE, 2018, p. 10).

Obstacles and challenges in the implementation of these policies and actions

The story of the inclusion of the care economy in Colombia does not stem from the Beijing mandate, nor from the country's feminist movements. Paradoxically, it originated from the objection of an economist—a Senator at the time—to a government that showed its complete rejection of the right to gender equality in its Social Transformation Bill. This bill highlights the contribution of the care economy to the country's development (the bill was rejected by the

government). In response, a year later, the Senator presented the Care Economy Bill (López Montaña, 2009), which later became Law 1413 of 2010. Colombia undoubtedly took an important step in this area that served as a benchmark for other Latin American countries. (López Montaña, 2020, p. 15).

However, the spirit of the Law has not been fulfilled because unpaid care is still not recognized as a productive sector within the National Accounts in this or any other country in the world. This non-compliance is of great importance because, despite the fact that Law 1413 places a value on this unpaid work, which is not recognized by society, this measurement does not change women's lives, nor does it have a real economic impact. Hence the importance of this sector entering the economy (López Montaña, 2020, p. 16).

The conceptual barriers defended by economic science ignore the unpaid care work economy and significantly underestimate the real production of countries and, indeed, the world. By only considering as part of the economy the activities that move through the market and have a price or receive remuneration, an even greater volume of activities that contribute to the production and well-being of the population are excluded: those that so far do not exist because they are performed within the home. This profound omission ignores the human effort of unpaid work, which is mostly carried out by women and girls around the world, and its contribution to development through members of the family. (López Montaña, 2020, p. 17).

Justification of compliance with the inclusion criteria

This is a concrete action that produces evidence and data on the magnitude and economic value of unpaid care work with the aim of recognizing it and, eventually, achieving its ultimate incorporation into national accounts as part of a country's wealth-generating productive work.

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