

Counting Women's Work and the Care Economy

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EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON POPULATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT,
IN PARTICULAR SUSTAINED AND INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC GROWTH

Women's Work and SDGs



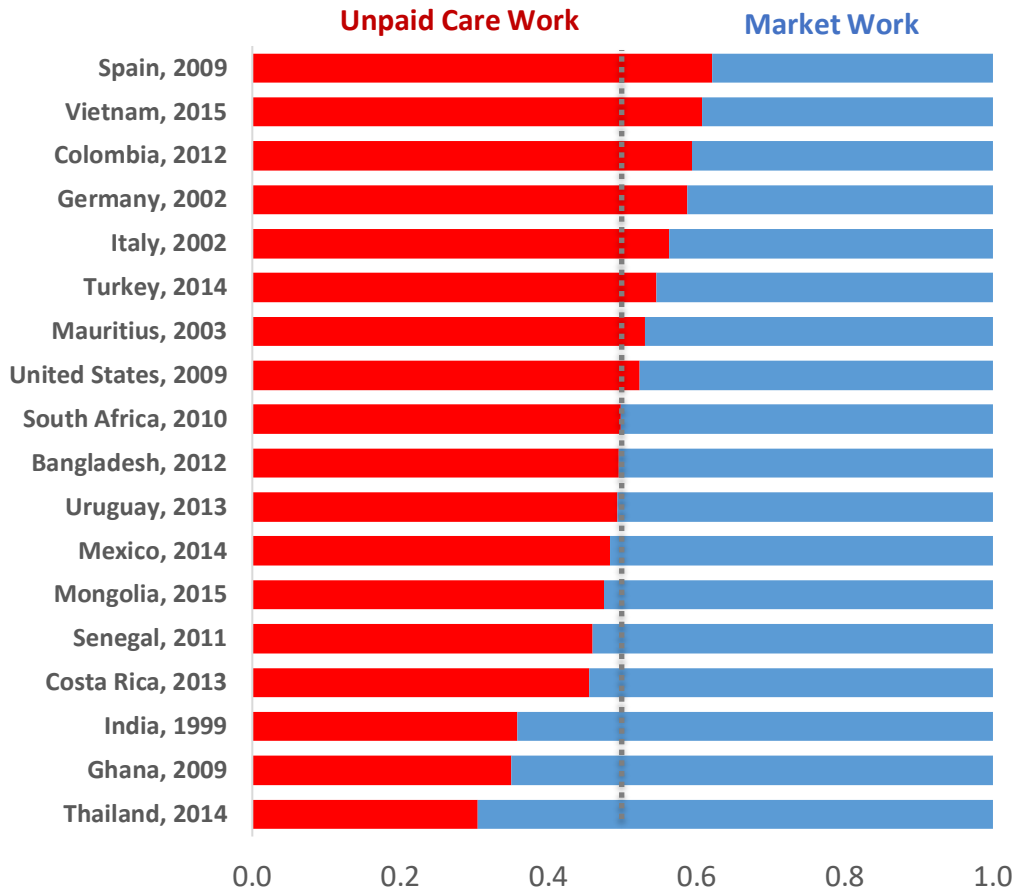
- 5.4 Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate

What have we learned from CWW?

- The size and importance of the care economy
 - It is big
 - Most of it is unpaid
 - Most of the work is done by women
 - Age patterns of care production differ from country to country
 - Unpaid care work creates the future, it is the first building block of human capital
 - Young children are care “expensive”, older people less so and many are net care producers

It is big

Distribution of total work hours

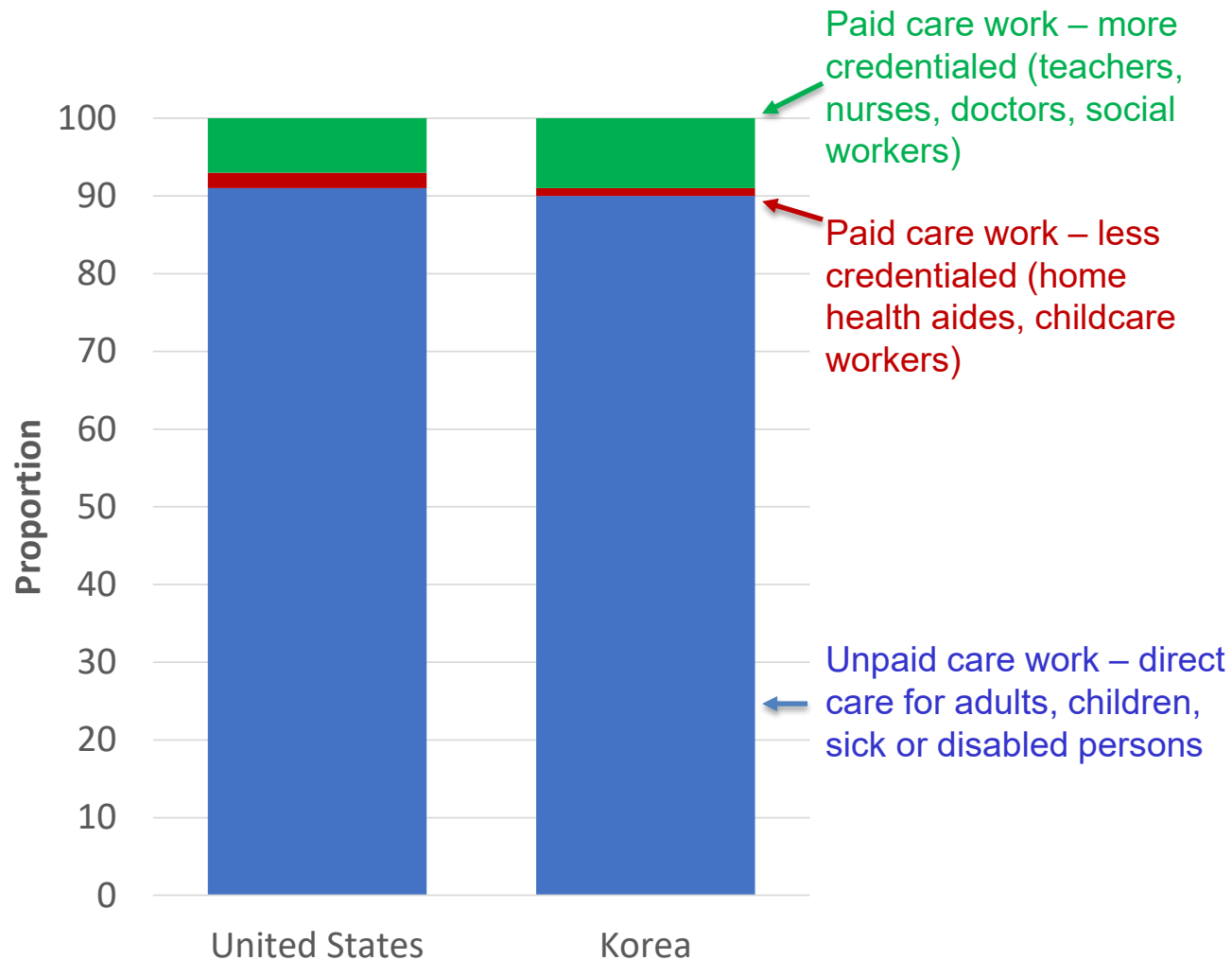


Valuing time at an imputed market wage puts UCW at 12-55% of GDP

Source: Results from national time use surveys, compiled by Counting Women's Work, www.countingwomenswork.org

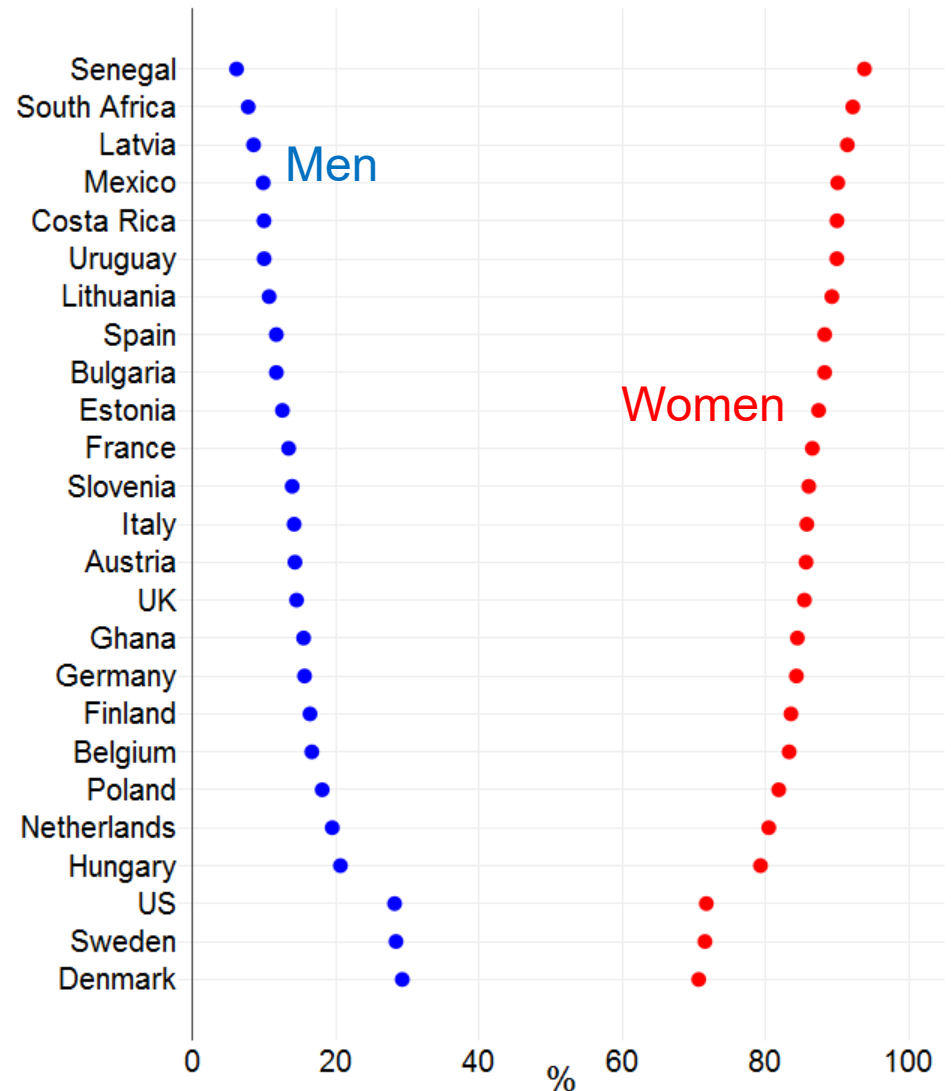
Most of it is unpaid

Care economy
by type
(distribution of
aggregate
hours of direct
care):



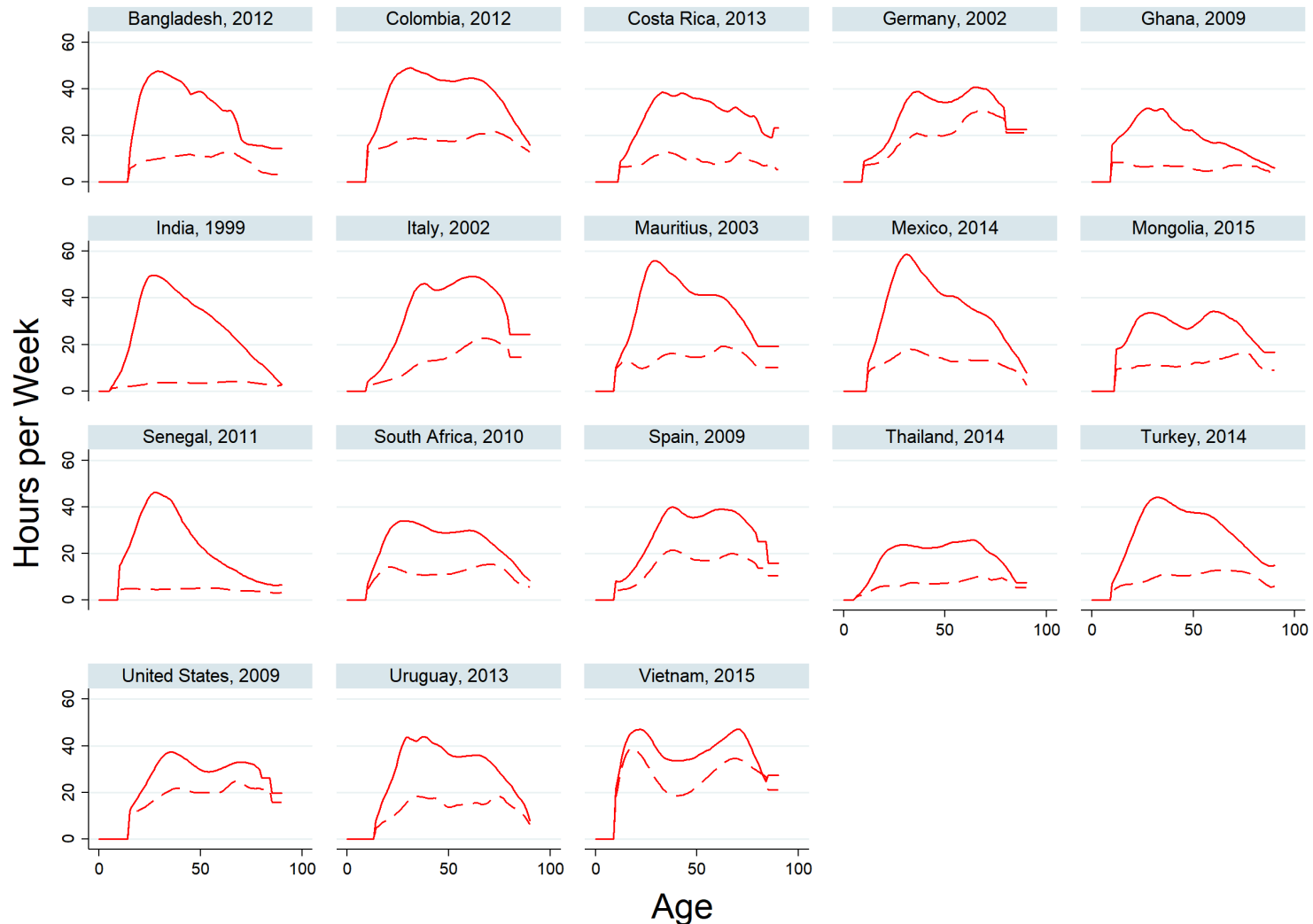
Most of it is done by women

Share of men's and women's time in providing UCW:

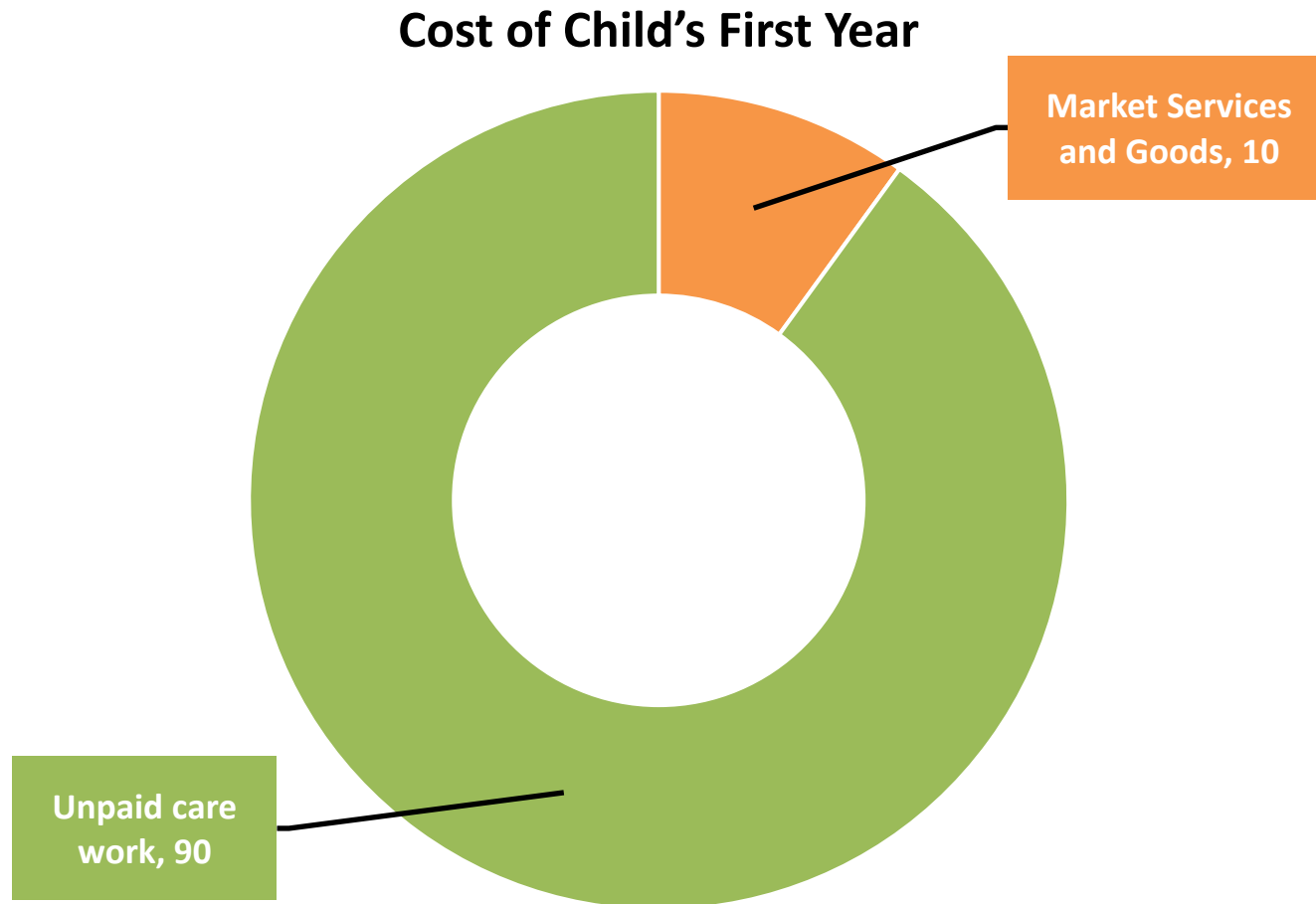


Variability in age patterns of care

Average work hours/week by age, **women (solid)** and **men (dashed)**



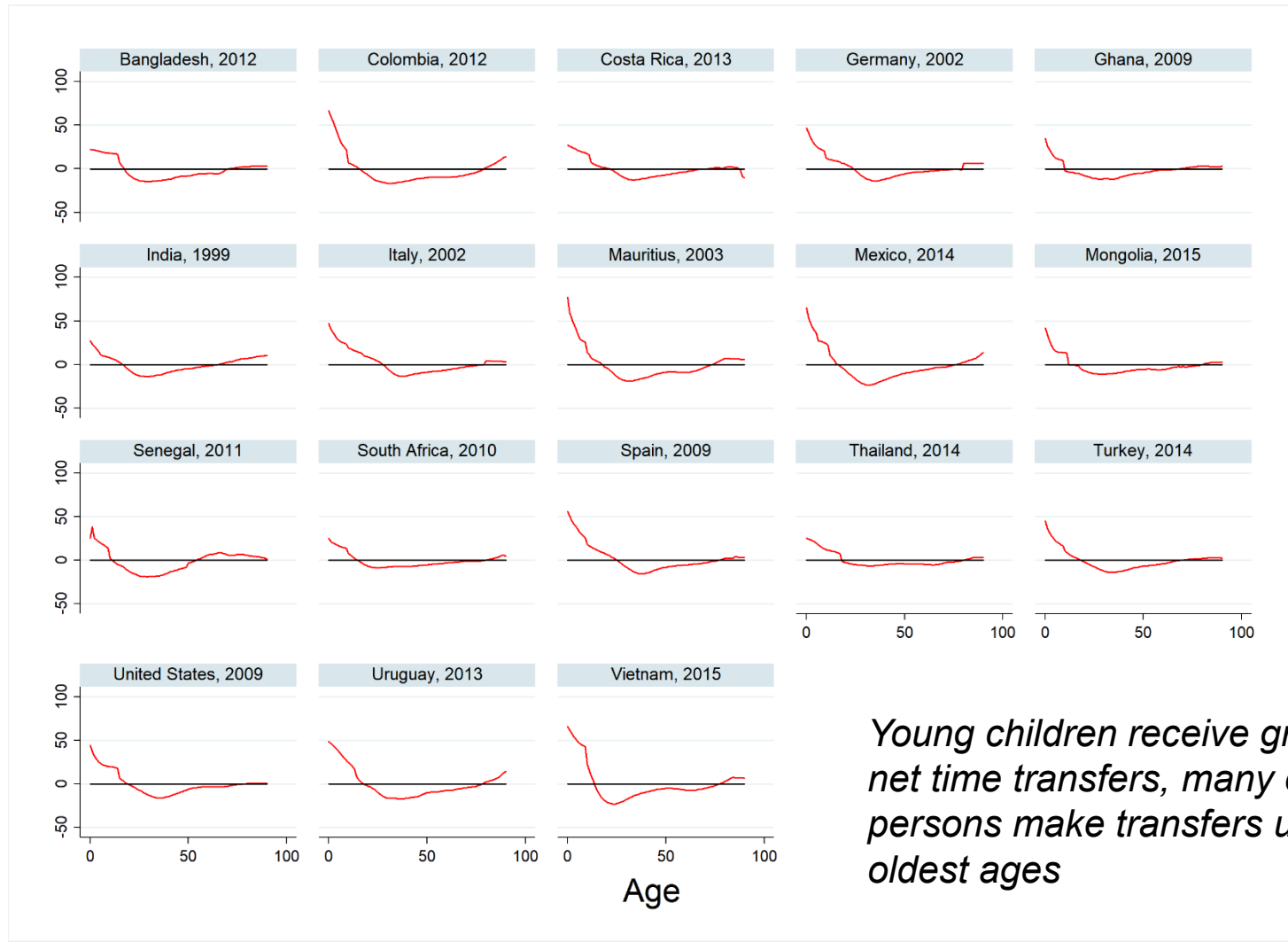
Unpaid Care Work Creates Our Future



- Data are monetary value of consumption during child's first year, averaged over 17 countries participating in the Counting Women's Work project. Unpaid care work valued at replacement cost of average childcare worker.

Who is care “expensive”?

Average hours/week in net UCW time consumed
(consumption less production)



**Why should we care about these
empirical findings?**

What do they mean for policy?

Implications of findings and policy responses

- Unpaid + feminized = policy blindspots
 - Pandemic is example of how we did not plan for impacts on the care economy; economic recovery slowed because care economy still impacted
 - Under-investment in infrastructure
- What to do?
 - Support time use data collection, dissemination
 - Support research on the care economy
 - Embed care in policy documents, tools, plans

Implications of findings and policy responses

- Unpaid care work is a social good, not a “burden”
 - Relative size of inputs to young children stresses importance of care
 - But want to share responsibilities more equitably so women are not disadvantaged
- What to do?
 - Subsidize unpaid care work
 - Invest more in developing the paid care economy
 - Structuring family policy to involve fathers more

Implications of findings and policy responses

- Policies to increase fertility must reckon with the full cost of children
 - Costs of raising children including UCW time
 - Opportunity costs
- What to do?
 - More money and paid care provision
 - Enhance women's ability to raise children and work (e.g. longer school days)
 - Recognize opportunity cost issues (pension credits, labor force re-entry support)