Improving the measurement of women's work: The contribution of recent demographic surveys in francophone Africa

Anne E. Calvès[1] and Agnès Adjamagbo[2]

[1] Sociology Department, University of Montreal, Montreal, Canada, anne.calves@umontreal.ca
[2] Population Environment and Development Laboratory, Aix-Marseille University, Research Institute for Development, agnes.adjamagbo@ird.fr

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic and the associated lockdowns declared by governments around the world have shed some light on the gender inequalities in paid and unpaid work (Farré et al. 2022; Flor et al. 2022). Not only have women been hit harder in the labor market, suffering from greater employment loss than men (ILO, 2021), but there is mounting evidence that the pandemic has exacerbated gender gaps in domestic work and childcare responsibilities within the household (Kabeer et al. 2021; Andrew et al. 2022). Globally, the COVID-19 crisis has highlighted several aspects of women's work, such as their frontline role in health and social care, their involvement in precarious and survival activities in the informal sector, and their double burden of paid and unpaid care and domestic labor. While these are issues that have gained attention with the pandemic, they have been the focus of feminist scholars and activists for decades.

In fact, since the 1970s, the measurement and recognition of the extent of women's work and their contributions to family well-being and economic development have been a matter of academic interest, as well as feminist advocacy. The interrelationships between women's work and demographic processes, especially decisions related to fertility, also started to attract the attention of demographers at that time. From the 1990s onwards, with women's empowerment increasingly becoming a stated priority of governments and global development institutions, efforts have intensified to better capture all aspects of women's work, including unpaid care and domestic activities. Today, employment variables, along with other proxies or measures of women's empowerment included in international surveys, such as the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), are widely used in demographic analysis (Riley, 2017). Despite these efforts, however, large-scale demographic and economic surveys conducted in the Global South, critics argue, still fail to approach work as a gendered concept and continue to make much of women's work invisible (Elson, 2017; Finlay et al. 2019).

In such a context, the purpose of this chapter is two-folded: first, to retrace the long history of the global efforts of feminist scholars and activists to enhance the measurement of women's work, underlining the persisting gaps in data on women's activity, and second, to illustrate how recent data collection initiatives in francophone West Africa, building on the experience of collaborative research conducted by demographers in the region since the 1970s, have attempted to fill some of these gaps.

1. Making women's work visible: Five decades of global feminist efforts

Advocacy to better capture women's work and their contribution to family well-being and economic development is not new. It can be traced to the 1970s, when feminist scholars and activists started to point out the mismeasurement and underestimation of women's activities in official statistics and national surveys. The publication in 1970 of Ester Boserup's book, *Woman's Role in Economic Development*, undoubtedly represents a milestone in the recognition of the need to tackle the invisibility of women's work. Based on empirical studies in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, the economist illustrates

how development policies have ignored Third World women or confined them to their reproductive and domestic roles. In Africa, for instance, although traditional agricultural systems are what she describes as "women's farming systems" par excellence, since the colonial period agricultural modernization policies have largely favored men over women (Boserup, 1970). Subsistence activities, such as unpaid agricultural work and domestic labor, as well as employment in the informal sector of the economy, where women are over-represented, are not only ignored by developers, Boserup and others argue, but they are also hidden by census and national labor data that tend to focus on formal employment (Tinker, 1976; Buvenic et al. 1978; Dixon, 1982).

After its publication, Boserup's book became an essential reference both for the work of academics and for the development programs that would mark the entire United Nations (UN) Decade for women (1976-85) under what is referred to as the women in development (WID) approach. In line with Boserup's work, this perspective, articulated mostly by liberal feminists in the United States, views the lack of integration of women into economic development programs as a central issue. In 1973, following feminist lobbying, the US congress adopted a bill (the *Percy amendment*), which required that programs financed by Agency for International Development (USAID) include some measures to improve women's access to resources and participation to economic development. In 1974, a WID Office was created within the agency, to monitor the progress made in achieving this goal (Rathgeber, 1990). During the first UN conference on Women in Mexico City in 1975, all member states also committed to a better integration of women in development assistance. From the mid-1970s, with the support of bilateral and multilateral international aid agencies as well as private foundations, and thanks to transnational feminist advocacy and lobbying activities, WID programs to such as income-generating and microcredit projects designed to enhance the productive role of women flourished in Africa, as in other parts of the Global South (Moser, 1989). The recognition of the need to make women's work more visible in labor force statistics and gross domestic product (GDP) also started to strengthen among international agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and governments. In 1980, the Program of Action adopted at the 2nd World Conference on Women in Copenhagen made the collection of disaggregated statistics and the development of databases about women one of its objectives. The WID Office started to sponsor time use data collections that recorded detailed information on all activities carried out by individuals in a specific period, to document the extent of women's unpaid household work (Jaquette, 2017). The International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), created in 1976 after the Mexico conference, and the Statistical Office of the UN Secretariat also played a key role in promoting national statistics on women's work (Benerìa, 1992). As pointed out by Goetz (1994:28), generating and analyzing data on women, including women's economic activities, was "one of the main objectives, and an enduring success, of the UN Decade for Women". In a context of rising concerns about rapid population growth in the Third World, demographers were also interested in exploring the relationships between women's labor force participation and fertility at that time (Lloyd, 1992). The World Fertility Surveys (WFSs) conducted from 1974 to 1982

in 62 countries, mostly developing ones, to measure fertility and its determinants, included a series of 17 questions on women's employment explicitly designed to test the widespread idea that economic modernization factors such as increased economic opportunities for women outside the home would reduce fertility (Poirier et al., 1989).

Interest in women's economic activities gained further momentum after the world conference on women held in Nairobi in 1985 and throughout the 1990s. The writings of feminist scholars on the repercussions of the economic crisis and structural adjustment programs (SAPs) implemented across the Global South in the 1980s and 1990s on the living and working conditions of women have multiplied, inaugurating a new field of research (Antrobus, 2007). Analyses illustrate how, in cities, the increased cost of living and rising unemployment among men forced women to multiply "survival" activities in the informal sector of the economy, particularly in Latin America and Africa (Elson, 1989; Beneria and Feldman, 1992; Afshara and Dennis, 1993). Across the Global South, studies show an intensification of the individual as well as collective involvement of women in the survival of impoverished households and communities (Beneria and Feldman, 1992; Moser, 1993). Evaluations also point out the exploitation of women's work induced by a globalized economy and the accelerated relocation of transnational companies in the Global South (Elson, Pearson, 1981). In the 1990s, the new boom in female employment in areas such as data entry and computer programming, female subcontracting, and informal work at home further attracted the attention of researchers. Overall, feminists argue, with women increasingly bearing the burden of household survival, one has witnessed over the years a "feminization of responsibilities and obligations" (Chant, 2008). This "feminization of survival" (Sassen, 2002) extends beyond households and national borders. To cope with poverty and unemployment and meet the increased needs of the care industry in industrialized countries, women from East Asia, Africa and Latin America are migrating in increasing numbers to Western Europe, the Middle East, and North America, to be employed in precarious and socially devalued jobs such as domestic work, childcare, or nursing (Parrenas, 2001; Ehrenreich and Hochschild 2003).

This sustained academic interest in women's work took place in a context of progressive institutionalization of the "gender and development" (GAD) agenda, resulting, in large part, from the extensive advocacy work of feminist activists during the UN conferences that marked the 1990s. Rooted in the writing of socialist, post-colonial and anti-globalization feminists, especially scholars from the global South, the GAD perspective criticizes the dominant WID paradigm for its narrow focus on the provision of resources to women, its Western hegemonic view of women, and its failure to address the fundamental and structural causes of women's subordination (Rathgeber, 1990; Jaquette, 2017). Development initiatives, tenants of the GAD approach argue, should not consider women in isolation to men but rather focus on transforming unequal gender relationships. Development planners should also favor participatory approaches with women in diverse settings defining their own needs and adopt "gender mainstreaming" that integrates gender in all development projects (Jaquette, 2017).

After the 4th World conference on women in Beijing in 1995, the development industry operated a gradual shift from "women" to "gender" and promoting gender equality became stated priority for governments and international donors and development agencies. The population field was no exception, and the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo undoubtedly marked a turn toward "a feminization of population and development issues" (Cleland, 1996). The new approach adopted at the end of the conference placed sexual and reproductive rights and the empowerment of women at the heart of population issues and put an unprecedented emphasis on gender relations as determinants of demographic processes (Halfon, 2007; Calvès, 2017).From the 1990s onwards, UN agencies and international donors further encouraged the collection, production and analysis of gender statistics and gender-disaggregated socioeconomic indicators to monitor progress towards gender equality. Influenced by the work of feminist scholars, especially economists, data collection initiatives to quantitatively capture women's nonmarket and market work also increased greatly. In 1993, the System of National Accounts (SNA) of the United Nations was revised to include subsistence or "primary" activities, primarily undertaken by women, such as water fetching or firewood collection in the calculation of the GDP (Charmes, 2006). Initiatives to theorize and collect data on the gendered dimensions of the informal economy initiated by research groups, UN agencies such as the International Labour Organization (ILO) or the UN Economic Commission for Africa, or advocacy networks such as Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO) also multiplied; (Charmes and Wieringa, 2003; Chant and Pedwell, 2008).

Following a formal recommendation from the Beijing Platform for Action, time use surveys flourished in the Global South after the conference, often with the involvement of feminist scholars (Esquivel et al. 2008). At the end of the 1990s, time use surveys at the national level were conducted for the first time in Africa (Charmes, 2006). Despite a lack of harmonization across countries and other methodological issues, these new data have been very useful in documenting the magnitude of unpaid care work performed by women across the world (Charmes, 2019). The increased availability of time use data in the 2000s also allowed economists and family demographers in industrialized countries to study trends in the division of labor within two-parent households and the relationships between women's unpaid care work and labor force participation in both western and non-western countries Bianchi and Milkie, 2010; Casper, 2019; Chopra and Zambelli, 2017). Changes adopted in 1999 by the DHS, an essential source of demographic data, are also emblematic of the effort to make gender a central variable in demographic analyses (Riley, 2019). In the wake of the Cairo conference, in addition to the indirect measures of women's status such as education and employment, the program decided to introduce direct assessments of gender relations in the questionnaire, such as questions on women's participation in household decision-making, control over financial resources and attitude toward gender norms. Since their introduction into datasets, these empowerment indicators, along with the variables

related to women's labor force participation and earnings, have been widely used by demographers. Empirical research on Africa, for instance, has utilized the DHS questions on women's work to explore the relationships between women's employment and fertility (DeRose, 2002; Boongarts, et al, 2019) contraceptive use (Yaya et al. 2018), child survival (Akinyemi et al. 2018) or intimate partner violence (Tandrayen-Ragoobur, 2020) to cite a few examples.

The increasing availability of data on women's work and especially of time use data has also been useful for feminist activists to further advocate for the global recognition of women's work, particularly the unpaid domestic and care types. Despite the global feminization of the labor force, they argue, there is still a universal "male breadwinner bias" that permeates social policies in both western and non-western countries and a lack of consideration of existing gender imbalances in the distribution of unpaid care within households. Studies have documented that regardless of their level of participation in the labor market, and despite the increase in men's involvement in household work in several countries, globally, women are still responsible for the majority of household chores (such as cleaning, cooking and shopping for groceries) and for the care of family members including children and the elderly. Across the world, time use data illustrate the double burden many women bear and its potential detrimental consequences for themselves and their children in poorer countries (ILO, 2016; Chopra and Zambelli, 2017). In recent years, women's rights advocates have been instrumental in putting the issue of care on the global development agenda. In 2013, in a landmark decision, the International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) adopted a new and broader definition of work that includes unpaid care work (Charmes, 2019). In 2015, "recognizing and valuing unpaid care and domestic work" was defined by United Nations as one of the Sustainable Development Goals for achieving gender equality (UN General Assembly, 2015).

Today, however, despite the high visibility of women's work on the international policy agenda and the improved availability of statistics on all dimensions of women's work, data gaps remain. First, nationally representative time use data are still rare in the Global South. Second, the tendency to only view women's activity through the lens of labor force participation is still strong, especially in large-scale international surveys (Elson, 2017; Razavi, 2012; Charmes, 2019). Not only is unpaid care work ignored by widely used surveys such as the DHS or the World Bank's Living Standards Measurement Survey (LSMS), but they also often underestimate women's paid activities. In fact, based on examples in Africa, researchers demonstrate that the phrasing and administration of the work-related questions in these two surveys prime female respondents to declare that they do not work because they believe the economic activities they perform do not qualify as actual work (Langsen et Salem, 2008; Finlay et al. 2019).. Thus, informal, episodic, and seasonal economic activities or work combined with unpaid household duties carried out by women in several countries remain hidden by the male bias prevailing in the framing of work questions in large demographic or economic surveys. Too often, critics argue, women's labor force participation is treated in isolation from their responsibilities within the family, while market and non-market activities should be

viewed as a continuum rather than a dichotomy (Langsen et Salem, 2008; Finlay et al. 2019). In the same vein, data on women's activity and responsibilities within formal or informal associations and organizations at the community level, also referred to as "community managing work" (Moser, 1991) or "collective provisioning work" (Neysmith, et al. 2012) are rarely considered or measured.

2. Capturing women's work: The contribution of early demographic surveys in francophone West Africa

Women's paid and unpaid work and the gender division of labor within urban households in francophone West Africa have received a fair amount of attention from family demographers in the last decade. Mirroring global trends, the origin of this interest can be traced to the 1970s. While women's work was not the focus of early empirical demographic research in West Africa, several population surveys conducted at that time helped document women's activities in the region and their interrelationships with demographic processes such as migration or fertility. This was the case of Hoe and Wage, an ambitious research project initiated in 1973 by Gregory and Piché at the Department of Demography at the University of Montreal in collaboration with the Volta Center for Scientific Research. The purpose of the project was to trace the history of national and international circular labor migration in Burkina Faso from 1900 to 1973. To do so, the project used a unique national migration survey conducted in 1974-1975 that collected retrospective data on mobility among a nationally representative sample of men and women, along with information on migrants' economic activity at their destination (Coulibaly et al. 1975). Documenting for the first time the colonial and early post-independence migration history of Burkinabè women, the analyses show the role played by female migration within family networks and confirm the importance of women's domestic and agricultural labor in sustaining rural households' production. From a methodological point of view, the experience of the national migration survey also points out the difficulties in collecting data on women's activities and especially when attempting to "draw a line between household work and agricultural work" in rural Burkina Faso [43]. From a conceptual point of view, the empirical results provided strong support for the idea that demographic behaviors in rural Africa, such as circular migration or high fertility, need to be studied within the context of a familial/domestic mode of production, that is, in connection with household strategies, to draw resources from both the agricultural subsistence economy for women and the capitalist market economy for men to ensure household social reproduction (Cordell et al. 1996: 303). Thus, according to this view, women's work in West Africa must also be analyzed as part of the "household's strategies of social reproduction", rather than as a factor of modernization and vector of ideational change (Poirier et al., 1989).

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, several other demographers stressed the crucial role played not only by domestic modes of production, including women's responsibilities in subsistence production, but also cultural and social factors, such as family and kinship structures, as well as conjugal relationships, in explaining persistent high fertility and the

failure of family planning programs in rural West Africa Locoh, 1984; Frank & McNicolls, 1987; Lesthaeghe et al., 1989). As elsewhere, feminist scholars also increasingly pointed out the necessity of taking into account women's subordination and inequal access to production resources, as well as intra-household power relationships, when considering household reproductive strategies in rural Africa (Vock, 1988). The adoption of these macro-structural or "institutional" approaches (McNicoll, 1982) to fertility in rural West Africa had some methodological implications. It meant moving away from large-scale standardized demographic data, such as the WFS or the DHS, to favor case studies, combining small-scale surveys and ethnographic data from in-depth field works to situate fertility behaviors within their relevant social, economic, and cultural contexts (Oppong, 1991). The work carried out by French demographers such as Thérèse Locoh, André Quesnels or Patrice Vimard in rural societies in southeastern Togo and southwestern Côte d'Ivoire provides examples of such focused fieldwork approaches (Locoh, 1984; Quesnel et Vimard, 1988).

If these early demographic surveys on migration and fertility provided some valuable insights on women's subsistence work and the sexual division of labor within rural households in francophone West Africa, the development of retrospective longitudinal surveys starting in the 1990s was an important milestone in capturing women's work in the region. From 1989 onwards, as part of collaborative research projects between French-speaking research institutes and demography departments in Africa, France, and Québec, numerous biographical or event history surveys were performed in West Africa, both in capital cities and at the national level (Calvès and Marcoux, 2004). The first series of collections of life history was carried out in francophone African cities including Bamako in 1992, Abidjan in 1996, Yaoundé in 1996, Antananarivo in 1998, Lomé in 2000, and again in Dakar in 2001 (Antoine et al. 2001). In Dakar and Lomé, individual interviews and focus group discussions were also conducted in addition to the life course surveys (Adjamagbo and al. 2006).To this list of first series of urban surveys should be added two surveys with national coverage administered in 2000, one in Burkina Faso (Poirier and al., 2001), and one in Mali (Marcoux, Gueye, Konaté, 2006), as well as a survey targeting youth and young adults in Ouagadougou in 2010 (Calvès et al. 2011).

In a context of growing rural out-migration and rising poverty due to the economic recession, the adoption of structural adjustment programs and the 1994 devaluation of the Financial Community of Africa (CFA) franc, the overall purpose of the first wave of surveys was to evaluate the impact of the worsening living conditions on the urban integration of rural migrants, as well as on the demographic behaviors and coping strategies of individual city-dwellers and urban families. Even if the focus of the survey differed from one study to the next, the biographical questionnaires used retraced key events in at least three spheres of their respondents' lives: residence/housing, education/employment, and family (union/birth). Prior to completing these survey questions, interviewers generally utilized an "Ageven form" (Antoine et al. 1987), a life history calendar organized in three columns to chronologically report the main events in the three spheres of respondents' lives and the dates on which these events occurred, in reference to each other. In all these retrospective longitudinal surveys, the section of the

questionnaire devoted to the occupational history of men and women collected detailed information on each period of paid and unpaid labor market participation from age 12 or six (depending on the survey) to the date of the survey. Information on respondents' market work included questions related to the sector of activity, the occupational status (for example, self-employed, employee or unpaid family helper), whether the work was occasional or not, the form of payment, the link with the employer, and the level of formality of the job (written contract/pay slip or not).

Thus, the analyses of these event history data have not only made a particularly significant contribution to the study of migration and urban integration in West Africa, but they have also contributed to making several aspects of women's labor force participation in West African cities visible. First, data collected among different generations of city-dwellers show that the deteriorating economic conditions, men's unemployment, and increased poverty, especially during the 1990s, have pushed women to intensify and multiply their economic activities in the informal sector economy (Antoine et al., 2001, Adjamagbo et al. 2006). Qualitative data collected in Dakar and Lomé further suggest that the growing contribution of women to household income often extends well beyond the simple additional contribution to small daily expenses (Adjamagbo et al. 2004). The work and educational survey histories of urban men and women also reveal striking gender inequalities in the labor market. In Dakar, Yaoundé, Antananarivo, and Ouagadougou, women of all generations are still significantly more likely than men to be self-employed or perform family work in the more unstable and less profitable sub-sector of the informal economy (Calvès and Schoumaker, 2004; Zourkaélini and Piché, 2007; Antoine et al. 2001). The life histories of city-dwellers in francophone West African were also very useful in documenting differences over time in the timing and patterns of the transition to market work by old and young generations, as well as among sub-groups of adolescent girls and women, especially according to their socio-economic origins and their migration history (Calvès and Kobiané, 2014).

One of the strengths of life history data is the ability to analyze interactions between different spheres of respondents' lives over time. Some interesting results on the interaction between women's employment and demographic events such as marriage or childbearing emerge from the analysis of the life course data. In Ouagadougou, for example, the results show that access to employment income seems to make the social and economic imperative of marriage less pressing for young urban women, at least in the short term, and young working women tend to delay their first union (Calvès et al. 2016). Marital life is also not incompatible with the pursuit of a professional activity in Sahelian cities and many women in Ouagadougou (Calvès and Kobiané, 2015) and Dakar (Adjamagbo et al, 2006) balance family and paid employment. In Lomé, where the economic activity of women has always been socially valued, this reconciliation is nothing new. Single women are heavily involved in the job market, particularly in informal petty trade, and marriage only interrupts this activity briefly (Adjamagbo and Antoine, 2009). As for the women working as employees in the formal sector of the economy in the

Togolese capital, data suggested that they tend to space out their pregnancies to remain in employment (Beguy, 2009).

By the mid-2000s, data from demographic event history surveys had helped document women's changing experience of labor force participation in francophone West Africa and explore the potential interactions between occupational history and marital and childbearing trajectories. Although the work module of these surveys was better suited to capturing informal, episodic, and seasonal economic activities, compared to large-scale surveys such as the DHS, it still focused on women's labor force participation and treated employment in isolation from unpaid care and household work and responsibilities, rather than conceptualizing it as a continuum. Education surveys focusing on children and adolescents contributed to showing the disproportional share of domestic chores performed by schoolgirls compared to schoolboys in the urban West African households, and how this heavy domestic workload, including daily tasks such as water fetching, house cleaning and cooking, negatively impacts their schooling trajectories (Zoungrana et al. 1998; Marcoux, 2016). As in other parts of the world, time use and ethnographic data also increasingly illustrate the heavy double burden carried by working women in francophone African cities, even among educated ones working in the formal sector of the urban economy (Badini-Kinda, 2010; Hererra et Torelli, 2013). The 1-2-3 employment surveys series conducted in 2001/2002 in seven economic capitals in francophone West Africa, for instance, included an additional time use module where, based on an activity list, household members were asked to recall the weekly time spent on selected activities including domestic work and caring for children, gathering wood, fetching water and shopping, working in main and second jobs, providing voluntary community services, and studying. The results demonstrate that, unlike in other regions of the world, women in West African cities do not "specialize" in domestic activities while their husbands work for pay, but instead participate in both market and domestic work. In fact, women in francophone African cities account for a significant percentage of household hours spent working in the labor market (40% on average) while undertaking the very large majority of the household domestic work at the same time (Hererra et Torelli, 2013).

3. Women's unpaid household and care work and contributions: The focus of recent surveys in francophone West Africa

Building on the efforts of employment surveys to produce data on the intra-household division of labor in the region, from 2012 to 2022, three collaborative demographic research projects were developed in four francophone West African capitals, including Cotonou, Lomé, Ouagadougou, and Dakar. While the focus and the format of these projects sightly differed, all three of them were interested in capturing both women's market and non-market work and responsibilities within the context of households' gender relationships, family dynamics and domestic organization. The objectives were also to assess women's strategies for combining market work and domestic and care responsibilities and produce quantitative measures of women's

current contributions to family well-being. The first of these projects was a comparative multidisciplinary research program initiated in 2012 by the French Laboratoire population, environnement et développement (LPED) in collaboration with four West African demographic institutions[i].The data collected combined qualitative interviews and quantitative data from a survey entitled "*Activité économique, partage des ressources et prise en charge des dépenses au sein des Ménages urbains*" (AEMU), conducted in three West African cities (Cotonou, Lomé and Ouagadougou). The survey included a household questionnaire as well as an individual one administered to both men and women in each city. The second survey, "Enquête Femmes et Organisation Travail – Famille à Dakar" (FORTE) was performed in Dakar in 2018, as part of a larger collaborative research program[ii]. FORTE's objectives and structure were very similar to those of AEMU, with a focus on highly educated women. Initiated by University of Montreal and two African research institutes[iii], the last of the three surveys was a longitudinal retrospective survey, entitled "*Travail au Féminin*" (TAF), which was carried out in Ouagadougou in 2019/2020 and in Lomé in 2021/2022. The purpose of the AEMU, FORTE and TAF surveys was not only to examine the intra-household division of labor, but also to explore the interrelationships between women's work (both market and domestic) and family structure and dynamics. Thus, in addition to the modules on work and the household division of labor, each survey questionnaire includes questions on union and marriage, in addition to childbearing behaviors, as well as the socio-demographic characteristics of households and individuals (the woman and her husband/partner). Table 1 presents selected dimensions considered and measured by AEMU, FORTE and TAF to capture women's work and responsibilities outside and within their households, as well as their contributions to family well-being.

Table 1. Selected dimensions of women's work measured by the AEMU, FORTE and TAF questionnaires

Sphere of work/responsibilities	Selected dimensions measured
Market work	Type and sector of activity
	Occupational status and category, relationship to employer, employer type
	Level of formalization and protection of job (registered, account keeping, pay slip, formal contract)
	Job quality: level, type, and regularity of income, public/private insurance, retirement funds, social security, promotion
	Work location, commuting time and means of transport to work, job-related monthly travels
	Level of job satisfaction

Household domestic and care work	Household chores (meal preparation, household repairs, cleaning, washing dishes, doing laundry, fetching water, gardening) Childcare (taking children to school and picking them up, showering and bathing them, supervision of homework, care when sick) Help with domestic chores and/or childcare services and use of domestic and or childcare services Recruitment, management and working conditions of domestic staff Provision of advice/mediation in case of family or community conflicts Perceived difficulties in combining market economic activities and domestic responsibilities (most draining domestic chores, feeling of stress or exhaustion associated with workload)
Voluntary collective/community work	Participation in formal and informal associations/groups/organizations (professional, neighborhood, community, religious, rotating saving and credits associations): average weekly time spent, responsibilities within the association
Contribution to household expenses and family support	Recurrent household expenses: water, electricity, gas, coal, rent, food, health costs, daily travel costs, school fees, children's clothing and health expenses, professional services (maid, waste collection service, others) Major household expenses: furniture, car, motorbike, piece of land, house construction, household appliances Contributions to expenses related to community/extended family events (marriages, baptisms, religious celebrations) Financial support to elderly parents, in-laws, siblings, cousins, adult children, other relatives

In all three questionnaires, the section on individual market work (both paid and unpaid) is more detailed than the typical occupational section used in previous demographic surveys in francophone West African cities. Besides questions regarding activity type, occupational status and category, several questions were asked to assess the level of informality of job and sector of employment, as well as job quality (level and regularity of earnings, health insurance, social security, and promotion for formal employees). Information regarding job location, commuting time and means of transport to work as well as job-related monthly travel was also collected. The TAF questionnaire also included a subjective question on job satisfaction. To assess the division of labor within the household and the extent of women's unpaid domestic and care work, the three questionnaires used activity list questions that have been proven superior to keyword questions in measuring women's work (Langsten and Salen, 2008). The first activity list refers to household chores, such as cleaning, preparing meals, washing dishes, doing laundry, grocery shopping, water fetching, gardening and household repairs. The AEMU household questionnaire recorded who in the household was usually responsible for each activity. In the TAF individual questionnaire, for each chore listed, the female respondent was asked whether she had done the chore the previous week, and if yes how many hours she spent doing it, and if not who was mainly responsible for it. The second list discussed childcare for children under 12 residing in the household and included activities such as taking children to school and collecting them, supervising their homework, and showering and bathing them, as well as taking care of them when sick. The surveys also tried to capture whether women were helped in their domestic and care work. In the FORTE survey, specific questions were asked about the recruitment and payment of domestic workers as well as about their working conditions. In the TAF survey, for each activity women were involved in, they were asked whether someone else was also responsible for the activity, and if yes, who that person was. All questionnaires inquired about the use of paid domestic and childcare services.

Additionally, women interviewed in the TAF survey in Ouagadougou and Lomé were asked how often they were consulted for advice within the family or community and for mediation in case of family conflicts. They were also questioned on the potential difficulties they faced in combining economic activities and domestic responsibilities and whether they ever felt any stress or exhaustion associated with the workload outside or at home. Besides market and household work, the TAF survey also tried to capture women's community work and responsibilities. The questionnaire included a module on the respondent's history of involvement in voluntary associations or groups since age 15, with questions to estimate the level of women's involvement in each association (time spent, type of responsibilities). Each survey, through its individual or household questionnaire, also measured women's contribution to household expenses, distinguishing between recurrent ones (food, water and rent, as well as energy bills, health costs, daily travel costs, school fees, children's clothing and health expenses and professional services for cleaning, waste management or other chores) and major household expenses (furniture, car, motorbike, piece of land, house construction and household appliances). Women's financial contribution outside the household was also

estimated with questions regarding their yearly participation in expenses related to community/extended family events (marriages, baptisms, religious celebrations), as well as the level of financial support they provided to immediate and extended family members.

Although these survey data, especially the most recent ones, have not yet been fully explored, the first analyses provide valuable insight into women's work. First, data confirm the high female labor force participation in francophone West African cities, with working women generally self-employed in the informal sector of the economy (in petty trade, for most of them), declaring rather low incomes (Kpadonou, 2019). Data further show that however modest it may be, women's income allows them to participate in a substantial way in the payment of household expenses and in meeting basic household consumption needs (Gnoumou Thiombiano, 2018; Adjamagbo et al. 2016). In Cotonou, Ouagadougou and Lomé, food, water, coal (or gas), medical care for children and school fees were expenditure items that women declared that they paid on a regular basis, fully or partially. Data also confirm that men in the four cities are still performing very few domestic chores. In Dakar and Lomé, the core of domestic work, including time-consuming, repetitive, and tedious chores (preparing meals, washing dishes, doing laundry and cleaning), remains almost exclusively female work and men's involvement is often limited to children's educational support (the supervision of homework or driving children to school) (Moguérou et al. 2018). Despite some timid transformations among the younger generation of highly educated men, the division of labor between women and men within households overall remains highly unbalanced (Gnoumou Thiombiano, 2018; Moguérou, 2019). Furthermore, AEMU data demonstrate that in Cotonou and Lomé, when controlling for the generation the men belong to, the husband's involvement in household work tends to further decrease over the couple's life cycle, as the pressure to care for young children diminishes (Kpadonou et al. 2019). In these two cities, men's participation in domestic work, particularly in the preparation of meals, depends on their professional activity. In Ouagadougou, qualitative data suggest domestic help has become scarce and the day of active women, who generally "resigned themselves" to the lack of involvement of their husbands in household domestic and care work, is a real "obstacle course" [71]. In fact, more than a third of economically active women interviewed by the TAF survey in Ouagadougou (36%) and more than a quarter (26%) of their counterparts in Lomé declared feeling "often" or "very often" depleted by their daily workload. In Cotonou, qualitative data further posit that women's ability to withstand the stress of combining market work and household responsibilities depends on their educational and financial capital as well as their ability to mobilize a social network. Some of the more privileged women may even choose to divorce to pursue their professional ambitions (Adjamagbo, 2020).

Despite the contribution of recent data collection in West African cities in improving the measurement of women's work and responsibilities, some important work dimensions are still missing from family demography surveys in the region. First, the measurement of women's care of family members should be expanded beyond childcare to include indicators of women's involvement in the care of elderly parents, as well as

relatives who are ill or living with disabilities. Indicators should measure the provision of regular care to any vulnerable person, with or without family ties. Second, capturing the extent of women's emotional workload associated with daily management of family responsibilities, as well as the physical and psychological consequences of the heavy burden of paid and unpaid work both for women and their family require further attention. Third, as revealed by the recent Covid-19 crisis, women's work and care can be crucial to the survival of the family in time of emergency. Survey data on women's individual and collective activities to cope with health crisis or environmental disasters such as drought episodes, inflow of environmental refugees, sudden depletion of natural resources, disease outbreaks, or more generally, to deal with family traumatic events (death, illness, accident, employment loss) could also be useful in documenting women's contribution to family and community survival in time of hardships. Finally, the potential impact of the exponential growth in the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) over the last decades in Africa on women's work, needs further investigation. Survey data on ICT use, especially through mobile phone, along with indicators of paid and unpaid work could help assess the impact of ICTs not only on women's labor force participation, but also on domestic and care responsibilities, including "kin work" at home and abroad (Bakuri, and Amoabeng 2023) as well as community and social activities.

Conclusions

Since the 1970s, feminist scholars and activists have constantly pointed out the need to recognize and tackle the mismeasurement of women's activities and the underestimation of their contribution to family well-being and economic development. From their early research on women's agricultural subsistence activities, domestic labor, and informal sector work around the world, as well as the damaging effects of colonial and post-colonial agricultural policies, to the examinations of local, national and global survival strategies developed by women in the context of the 1980s and 1990s economic crisis and neo-liberal reforms, and the recent analysis of persisting gender inequality in household and unpaid care work, feminist scholars, especially economists, have tried to make all aspects of women's work visible. Their longstanding efforts have been instrumental in promoting the collection and analysis of time use data, in enhancing female work indicators in employment surveys, and in revising international guidelines to progressively include women's non-market work in national accounts and official statistics. Over the last five decades, demographers have also been interested in capturing women's work and exploring the interactions between work and demographic processes. In francophone West Africa, for instance, throughout the 1970s and 1980s, several demographers, based on focused case studies, stressed the crucial role played by domestic modes of production, including women's responsibility in subsistence production, in explaining gendered patterns of migration or persistent high fertility. From the 1990s onwards, the adoption of the life course approach by numerous collaborative research teams, and the production of event history survey data in francophone West

Africa, was another milestone in the analysis of women's work in the region. The retrospective occupational, residential, and familial history data collected by these surveys uniquely documented the changing employment experience of generations of women, the persisting gender inequalities on the urban labor market, and the heterogeneity of work experiences among sub-groups of female city-dwellers. They have also allowed for exploring the interactions between women's employment and demographic events, such as marriage or childbearing, over time. Despite these contributions, however, these survey data, like most data on the topic in and outside Africa, still focus on women's market work and treat the labor force participation of women in isolation from their responsibilities within the family. Recent demographic surveys conducted in francophone West Africa have attempted to fill these data gaps and have collected, in addition to classic demographic data on family dynamics, statistics on women's market work, non-market domestic and care responsibilities, and community activities as well as their current contributions to household expenses and family support.

These new data provide promising analysis opportunities that could help inform the design and implementation of policies and programs promoting women's work in the region. In fact, today, the promotion of "decent work" is at the top of the agenda for African governments, as well as regional and international development institutions. Female entrepreneurship, in particular, occupies a prominent place in the narrative on Africa's future. In a "smart economics" approach to women's work, which sees investing in women essentially as a way to spur economic growth, initiatives encouraging women's entrepreneurship that have flourished on the continent in the last decade have focused on the provision of technical training or finance to help women develop their businesses. They tend to ignore crucial structural issues such as the inequal division of labor and power relationships within households that contribute to the reproduction of gender inequalities, including inequalities in the labor market. In such a context, the production, analysis, and diffusion by feminist scholars, including demographers, of both qualitative and quantitative data on all aspects of women's work, including unpaid care and household responsibilities, remain as critical today as they were 50 years ago.

References

Adjamagbo A, (2020). Femmes africaines et vulnérabilité ; la situation est-elle en train de changer? In: Adjamagbo A, Gastineau B, Golaz V, Ouattara F, éds. *La vulnérabilité à l'encontre des idées reçues.* Marseille: Les impromptus du LPED; 6 : p. 35-51.

Adjamagbo A, Antoine P, Dial FB. (2004) Le dilemme des Dakaroises: entre travailler et «bien travailler». In Diop MC, éditeur. Gouverner le Sénégal : entre ajustement structurel et développement durable. Paris: karthala;.p. 247-272.

Adjamagbo A, Antoine P, Beguy D, Dial FB (2006). Comment les femmes concilient-elles mariage et travail à Dakar et à Lomé? Working Papers 18p

Adjamagbo A, Gastineau B, Kpadonou N. (2016). Travail-famille: un défi pour les femmes à Cotonou. *Recherches féministes*. 29(2): 17-41

Antoine P, Razafindrakoto M, Roubaud F. (2001) Contraints de rester jeunes? Évolution de l'insertion dans trois capitales africaines: Dakar, Yaoundé, Antananarivo. *Autrepart*. 2: 17-36.

Antoine P, Bocquier P, Marcoux R, Piché V. (2010) L'expérience des enquêtes biographiques en Afrique. in B. Schoumaker B. et Tabutin D, eds. *Les systèmes d'information en démographie et en sciences sociales : nouvelles questions*. Presses universitaires de Louvain.

Antoine P, Bry X, Diouf PD. (1987) La fiche «Ageven» : un outil pour la collecte des données rétrospectives. *Bulletin de liaison STATECO.;* 49: p. 33-52.

Akinyemi JO, Solanke BL, Odimegwu CO. (2018) Maternal employment and child survival during the era of sustainable development goals: Insights from proportional hazards modelling of Nigeria birth history data. *Annals of global health*.; 84(1): 15-30.

Antrobus P. (2008) *The global women's movement: Origins, issues and strategies.* Bloomsbury Publishing; 197 p.

Afshar H, Dennis C (2016) *Women and adjustment policies in the third world*. 2e éd. London: MacMillan;271 p.

Bakuri, A. Z., & Amoabeng, D. (2023). Doing kin work among Ghanaians home and abroad: A paradigm shift to ICT. *Family Relations*.

Beguy D. (2009) The impact of female employment on fertility in Dakar (Senegal) and Lome (Togo). *Demographic Research.* 2009; 20: 97-128.

Benerìa L. (1992) Accounting for women's work: The progress of two decades. *World development*.; 20(11): 1547-1560.

Benerìa L, Feldman S. (1992) *Unequal Burden: Economic Crisis, Persistent Poverty and Women's Work*. Westview Press; 278 p.

Bianchi SM, Milkie MA. (2010) Work and family research in the first decade of the 21st century. *Journal of marriage and family.* 72(3): 705-725.

Bongaarts J, Blanc AK, McCarthy JK. (2019) The links between women's employment and children at home: Variations in low- and middle-income countries by world region. *Population Studies*. 73(2): 149-163.

Boserup E. (1970) *Woman's Role in Economic Development*. London: George Allen and Unwin; 283 p.

Calvès AE. (2009) Empowerment: The History of a Key Concept in Contemporary Development Discourse. *Revue Tiers Monde*. 4(200): 735-749.
Calvès AE. (2016) First union formation in urban Burkina Faso: Competing relationship transitions to marriage or cohabitation. *Demographic Research*.34: 421-450.
Calvès AE, Schoumaker B.(2004) Deteriorating economic context and changing patterns of youth employment in urban Burkina Faso: 1980–2000. *World Development.* 32(8):1341–1354.
Calvès AE, Kobiané J. (2014) Genre et nouvelles dynamiques d'insertion professionnelle chez les jeunes à Ouagadougou. *Autrepart*. 3: 33-56.
Calvès AE, Kobiané JF, Martel E. (2007) Changing transition to adulthood in urban Burkina Faso. *Journal of comparative family studies.* 38(2): 265-283.
Calvès AE, Marcoux R. (2004) Réponses des populations à la crise en Afrique francophone: l'éclairage des enquêtes biographiques récentes. *Cahiers québécois de démographie*. 33(2): 161-165.
Casper LM (2019). Family Demography, chapter 3. In: Poston DL, editor. *Handbook of Population.* Springer, p. 79-105.
Chant S. (2008) The 'Feminisation of Poverty' and the 'Feminisation' of Anti-Poverty Programmes: Room for Revision? *The Journal of Development Studies*. 44(2): 165-197.
Chant S, Pedwell C. (2008) *Women, gender and the informal economy: An assessment of ILO research and suggested ways forward*. International Labour Organization; 64 p.
Charmes J. (2006) A review of empirical evidence on time use in Africa from UN-sponsored surveys. In: Blackden CM, Wodon Q, editors. *Gender, time use, and poverty in sub-Saharan Africa*. Washington DC: The World Bank;. p. 39-72.
Charmes J. (2019) *The Unpaid Care Work and the Labour Market. An analysis of time use data based on the latest World Compilation of Time-use Surveys.* Geneva: International Labour Office. 161 p.
Charmes J, Wieringa S. (2003) Measuring Women's Empowerment: An assessment of the Gender-related Development Index and the Gender Empowerment Measure. *Journal of Human Development*; 4(3): 419-435.
Chopra D, Zambelli E. (2017) *No time to rest: Women's lived experiences of balancing paid work and unpaid care work*. Brighton: Institute of Development Studies;. 60 p.
Cleland J. (1996) ICPD and the feminization of population and development issues. *Health Transition Review.* 6(1): 107-110.
Cordell D, Gregory JW, Piche V, editors. (1996) *Hoe and Wage: A Social History of a Circular Migration System in West Africa*. New York: Routledge; 400 p.
Derose L. (2002) Continuity of women's work, breastfeeding, and fertility in Ghana in the 1980s. *Population Studies.* 56(2): 167-179.
Ehrenreich B, Hochschild AR, (2002) *Global Woman. Nannies, Maids and Sex Workers in the New Economy*. Metropolitan Book,336 p.
Elson D. (1989). The Impact of Structural Adjustment on Women In: Onimode B, edi. *The IMF, the World Bank, and African Deb*t. New York: Zedbooks; p. 56-74.
Elson D. (2017) Recognize, reduce, and redistribute unpaid care work: how to close the gender gap. *New Labor Forum*. 26(2): 52-61.

Elson D, Pearson R. (1987) Nimble Fingers Make Cheap Workers: An Analysis of Women's Employment in Third World Export Manufacturing. *Feminist Review*. 7: 87-107.
Esquivel V, Budlender D, Folbre N, Hirway I. (2008) Explorations: Time-use surveys in the south. *Feminist Economics*. 14(3): 107-152.
Finlay JE, Efevbera Y, Ndikubagenzi J, Karra M, Canning D. (2019) Reframing the measurement of women's work in the Sub-Saharan African context. Work, Employment and Society.; 33(3): 518-528.
Frank O, McNicoll G.(1987) An interpretation of fertility and population policy in Kenya. *Population and development review.* 209-243.
Goetz AM. (1994) *From feminist knowledge to data for development: the bureaucratic management of information on women and development*. IDS bulletin.; 25(2): 27-36.
Gnoumou Thiombiano B.(2018) Le travail et la famille en milieu urbain. Un défi pour les femmes à Ouagadougou. In: Calvès AE, Dial FB, Marcoux M, éds. *Nouvelles dynamiques familiales en Afrique*. Presses de l'Université du Québec. p.155-181.
Gregory JW, Piché V.(1985) Mode de production et régime démographique. *Canadian Journal of African Studies*. 19(1): 73-79.
Halfon SE. (2007) The Cairo consensus: demographic surveys, women's empowerment, and regime change in population policy. Plymouth: Lexington Books; 261p.
International Labour Office. *Women at work: trends 2016*.
Herrera J, Torelli C. (2013) Domestic work and employment in Africa: What is the tradeoff for women? In: De Vreyer P, Roubaud F, éditeurs. *Urban Labor Markets in Sub-Saharan Africa.* Washington DC: World Bank Publications. p. 221-249.
International Labour Organisation. (2021). *An Uneven and Gender-Unequal COVID-19 Recovery: Update on Gender and Employment Trends Geneva*: ILO; p. 16.
Jaquette JS. (2017) Women/gender and development: the growing gap between theory and practice. *Studies in Comparative International Development*.; 52(2): 242-260.
Kabeer N, Razavi S, Van der Meulen Rodgers Y. (2021) Feminist Economic Perspectives on the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Feminist Economics*; 27:1-2, 1-29.
Kpadonou N. (2019) *Travail-famille: conciliation des rôles économiques et domestiques dans trois capitales d'Afrique de l'Ouest:* Presses universitaires de Louvain 299 p.
Kpadonou N, Adjamagbo A, Gastineau B, ToudekA MR. (2016) Cycle de vie des couples et partage des tâches domestiques au sein des couples à Cotonou et Lomé. In: Pennec S, Girard C, Sanderson JP, Eds. *Trajectoires et âges de la vie*. Paris: AIDELF; 14 p.
Langsten RS. & Salen,R. (2008) Two approaches to measuring women's work in developing countries: A comparison of survey data from Egypt. *Population and Development Review*. 34(2): 283-305.
Lloyd CB. (1991) The contribution of the World Fertility Surveys to an understanding of the relationship between women's work and fertility. *Studies in family planning*; 22(3): 144-161.
Locoh T. (1984) *Fécondité et famille en Afrique de l'Ouest.* Paris : INED. 182 p.
Lesthaeghe RJ. (1989) *Reproduction and Social Organization in Sub-Saharan Africa*. University of California Press; 556 p.
McNicoll G. (1980) Institutional determinants of fertility change. *Population and Development Review*. 6(3): 441-462.

Marcoux R. Le travail des enfants au Mali (2016). Tentative de mesure et inégalités de genre. *Revue de droit comparé du travail et de la sécurité sociale*. 2015(2): 84-90.
Moguérou L, Wayack-Pambè M, Awissi M. (2018) Les femmes chefs de ménage célibataires à Dakar et à Ouagadougou. Matérialité et vécu d'une situation atypique. In: Calvès AE, Dial FB, Marcoux M, eds. *Nouvelles dynamiques familiales en Afrique.* Québec: Presses de l'Université du Québec, p.93-118.
Moguérou L, Vampo C, Kpadonou N. Adjamagbo A. (2019) Les hommes au travail domestique en Afrique de l'Ouest. *Cahiers du Genre*; 67: 97-119.
Moser CO.(1889) Gender planning in the Third World: meeting practical and strategic gender needs. *World development*. 17(11): 1799-1825.
Neysmith S, Baker-Collins S, Reitsma-Street M. (2012) Beyond caring labour to provisioning work. Univ. of Toronto Press;. 208 p.
Oppong C. (1991) *Relationships between women's work and demographic behaviour: some research evidence in West Africa.* International Labour Organisation; 63 p.
Pareñas RS. (2001) *Servants of Globalization: Women, Migration, and Domestic.* Palo Alto: Stanford University Press; 309 p.
Poirier J, Piché V, Neill G. (1989) Travail des femmes et fécondité dans les pays en développement: que nous a appris l'Enquête mondiale de la fécondité? *Cahiers québécois de démographie*. 18(1): 159–184
Poirier J, Piché V, Le Jeune G, Dabiré B, Wane HR. (2001) Projet d'étude des stratégies de reproduction des populations sahéliennes à partir de l'enquête «Dynamique migratoire, insertion urbaine et environnement au Burkina Faso». *Cahiers québécois de démographie.* 30(2): 289-309.
Quesnel A, Vimard P. (1988) *Dynamique de population en économie de plantation. Le plateau de Dayes au Sud-ouest du Togo*. Paris: ORSTOM; 505 p.
Rathgeber, E. M. (1990) "WID, WAD, GAD: Trends in research and practice." *The journal of developing areas*. 24(4):489-502.
Razavi, S. (2011) Rethinking care in a development context: an introduction. *Development and Change*. 42(4): 873-903.
Riley NE. Demography of Gender (2019) Chapter 4. In *Handbook of population*. Springer pp. 107-142.
Tandrayen-Ragoobur V. (2020) Intimate partner violence and women's labour force participation in Sub Saharan Africa. Community, *Work & Family.* 23(1): 19-43.
United Nations General Assembly 2015. *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.*
Vock J. Demographic Theories and Women's Reproductive Labour (2019). In: Stichter S and Parpart J, eds, *Patriarchy and Class : African Women in the Home and Workforce.* London: Westview Press; p. 81-96.
Yaya S, Uthman OA, Ekholuenetale M, Bishwajit G. (2018) Women empowerment as an enabling factor of contraceptive use in sub-Saharan Africa: a multilevel analysis of cross-sectional surveys of 32 countries. *Reproductive health.;* 15(1): 1-12.
Zourkaléini Y, Piché V. (2007) Economic integration in a West-African urban labour market: Does migration matter? The case of Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. *Demographic Research*; 17: 497-540.