



Making Care Visible:  
Influencing Story on Policy Change  
on Unpaid Care Work

# *Stories of Influence*

March 2015

**Front cover**

A mother cooking while carrying her son.

Photograph by Mrs Saliyah in Bekasi District, West Java Province, 2013

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# 1 Introduction

Unpaid care work, defined here as meeting the material, developmental, emotional and spiritual needs of other people through direct and indirect personal relationships, is relevant to almost all aspects of gender equality and is directly linked to the economic empowerment of women and girls. Indeed, care is a cross-cutting issue with relevance to multiple areas of development including human rights, education, decent work, social protection, health, nutrition, and economic growth. While there is a large and robust body of evidence, particularly from feminist economists, about the extent of unpaid care work that women and girls do, and its contributions to both the economy and human development outcomes, there is a reluctance to engage with care issues, and specifically to use the evidence to

inform public policy.

“As part of our work, we set about exploring the political economy conditions under which policy actors recognise or ignore the significance of unpaid care.”

As unpaid care work was seen as falling through the cracks, the unpaid care strand has been working with partners in South and Southeast Asia and in international civil society and policy spaces to raise the visibility of women's unpaid care work as a key

issue for development policy and practice. As part of our work, we set about exploring the political economy conditions under which policy actors recognise or ignore the significance of unpaid care - where, why, when and how unpaid care concerns become more visible on domestic policy agendas. Our process of influencing is informed by a feminist political economy approach to understand the processes and factors involved in gaining greater visibility for unpaid care concerns in national policy agendas. This requires looking not just at institutions, interests, actors and incentives, but also at the interactions between gendered ideas, discourses and actors involved in the construction, implementation and evaluation of policy. Through this, we found out that making care visible in public policy is not a linear process, but it is rather iterative. Furthermore, we realise that it is not about evidence, but about politics. The lessons are about the context and the importance of politics, actors and networks.

In terms of our approach to change, we are trying to influence development policy discourse, in the first instance in select global development organisations and government, policy research arenas and relevant civil society organisations, focusing on two countries (Bangladesh and Indonesia). We aimed to do this through a 'discourse saturation' strategy that would seek out and exploit opportunities to introduce the significance of unpaid care into global development organisations' policy statements and programme documentation. Through this we wanted to create space for debate and dissemination about the policy significance of unpaid care; explore the possible 'policy asks' at the global and two national levels, that might arise from the debate stimulated about the neglect of care by development policy; provide guidance and advice for feminists working in global development agencies on political strategies to make care more visible; and engage in movement building through participating and contributing to global networks engaging with the issue. In this report, we track the processes taken with our three partners - a research centre based at the BRAC Institute of Governance and Development, BRAC University; SMERU Research Institute, Indonesia; and ActionAid International (AAI) - to raise the policy visibility of women's care work within social protection and poverty reduction strategies.

For the Bangladesh case, we explore the experiences of a group of feminist academics, based at the Centre for Gender and Social Transformation (CGST), a research centre based at the BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD), which engaged with policy makers to incorporate unpaid care work into various national policy agendas in Bangladesh during 2012/13. Specifically, we explore the experiences of advocating two 'policy asks' in Bangladesh. The first policy case is that of advocating for inclusion of unpaid care in the National Action Plan (NAP) for women developed by the Ministry of Women's and Children's Affairs (MOWCA). The second policy case is on working with the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) to develop a module on capturing time spent on unpaid care by women and men in the labour force participation survey for Bangladesh.

For the Indonesia case, SMERU Research Institute reveals the ways in which it used its strength as a think tank to conduct policy consultations at the national and global levels to make care visible. At the national level, the Indonesia case specifically looks at making care visible in spaces such as the 2015-2019 National Medium Term Development Plan (RPJMN), Komnas Perempuan (the National Commission on Violence against Women), a regional conference organised by SMERU in collaboration with the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) and a Bappenas held 'Child Poverty and Social Protection Conference'. At the international level, SMERU were invited to spaces such as the IRF post 2015 summary and the 2014 Organization for Economic Cooperation Development (OECD) Forum in Paris.

Through our work, we have generated and disseminated a growing body of evidence of the under-recognition of unpaid care work in public policy and how it is affected by increased global economic volatility in Bangladesh, Indonesia and around the world. This evidence has enabled us to deepen our engagement with policymakers and civil society both nationally and globally, taking lessons and advocacy to strategic international and domestic policy arenas. As a direct result of our work in Bangladesh and Indonesia, unpaid care work has been included within high level public policy planning activities. In both countries, the response to these efforts has highlighted the appetite among engaged pro-gender equality policymakers and practitioners for modes of engagement and research outputs tailored to

improving the gender-sensitivity of policies and practice through recognition of unpaid care work. Through our partnerships, we were able to score some notable successes in raising the visibility of unpaid care work, as well as building partnerships and developing forward-looking activities to ensure that the programme leaves an institutional legacy. We have also strengthened our relationships with international organisations (UN Women, AAI, Oxfam, WFP and BRAC International) and continued to extend our network of interest in raising the visibility of care to new researchers and practitioners. A research project on unpaid care and its links with economic empowerment of women and girls has emerged from this work, and has been recently funded by GrOW (IDRC-DFID-Hewlett Foundation).

Following this brief introduction, the second section gives a background highlighting the problem, context and rationale/objectives. The third section explains our activities and approaches, and explains with whom and how we approached the GPS programme themes of challenging stereotypes and narratives, understanding structures of constraint and influence, as well as linking across movements. The fourth section highlights the changes/results achieved, with the fifth section exploring pivotal moments in our journey. The sixth section considers the various types of influence and how we see it working in the future. The seventh and concluding section looks at what worked and did not work in making care visible, describing what we learned and what we would do differently.

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## 2 Background

The idea for the Unpaid Care Work strand of the GPS project originated with the Pathways of Women's Empowerment Consortium of which BRAC University and IDS were members and building on the Agenda for Change brief, written by Marzia Fontana and Rosalind Eyben in 2008. Additionally, our ideas and approach were influenced by UNRISD's work on the care economy and the links IDS had had with UNRISD through Rosalind Eyben being a member of the UNRISD Board. Rosalind Eyben was on the Action Aid UK Board and proposed a collaboration in early January 2012 between IDS and AAI in relation to our shared concerns about how to make care a central issue in development policy agendas. AAI, in particular, was seen as an ideal partner to collaborate with, because AAI was the only INGO at the start of the project that has included care in its strategic objectives.

### 2.1 Why Bangladesh and Indonesia?

With a strong interest in the civil society of South and Southeast Asia, IDS reached out to BIGD and SMERU in Indonesia and Bangladesh. This initial connection was then followed up with personal links between IDS and researchers from both institutes. The Centre for Gender

and Social transformation (CGST) researchers involved in promoting unpaid care in policy circles had an established track record for conducting academic work and also had experience in engaging with government ministries. CGST was established following the completion of two large research programme consortia: one on women's empowerment and the other on citizenship; whose South Asia hubs were based at BRAC University. The researchers employed at these hubs had backgrounds in demography, sociology, economics, development studies and anthropology. CGST has five core staff (researchers) and ten associates who work on different projects. The researchers have worked on issues related to labour force participation, livelihoods, women's inclusion in formal politics, women's collective action, gender norms and other issues. All of these research projects are closely linked to the issue of unpaid care work. Hence, the Centre decided to focus on unpaid care when approached by IDS, as it was a natural extension of the work it was already engaged in.

In Indonesia, raising the issue of care, commonly thought of as a domestic matter, through policy discussions is essential. This has been one of the considerations that encouraged the SMERU Research Institute to conduct a study on unpaid care work in Indonesia.

“We were also interested in understanding resistance – in terms of “who” is resisting – and how different interactions can lead to the visibility or invisibility of care.”

## 3 What Was Done, With Whom and How We Approached the Programme Themes

Our priority issue was the ‘policy invisibility of unpaid care that is disproportionately carried out by women, with a need to be accounted for in social and economic policy to reduce gender inequality’. It was envisaged as a reflective action process and not as pure research. We also took a political economy approach using the policy process literature to understand the context, actors and interests involved and to also explain how bargaining takes place, how power plays out, and what discourses are involved in making care visible/invisible. We were also interested in understanding resistance – in terms of “who” is resisting – and how different interactions can lead to the visibility or invisibility of care.

We were also looking at the micro politics, the national action plan and the relationship with the national level, for example, the women's ministry in Bangladesh. As such, we were interested in how politics and micro politics inform evidence on how allies and opponents operate and were ultimately focused on finding windows of opportunity through which care could be made visible. Rosalind developed a four-pronged framework - naming, framing, claiming and programming – which we decided to use to ‘do’ the work and also learn from what we were doing. Therefore, it was not about finding ‘more evidence’ for us, but instead, about learning how things actually work.

While most of us approached people we knew, the impetus also came from AAI (our global partner) because they were one of the only international organisations that integrated care into their strategy. Fostering partnerships with people and organisations we already knew was one of our first strategies. It was through this collaborative work to raise the policy visibility of unpaid care work that we approached the three themes of the programme. This was done in the following ways.

### 3.1 Challenging Norms and Stereotypes

In the first area of **challenging norms and stereotypes** in making care visible, we adopted a ‘discourse saturation’ strategy, seeking out and exploiting opportunities to introduce the significance of unpaid care into global development discourse wherever possible. We highlighted the significance or neglect of care in aid organisational documents reviewed as part of our regular work; brought considerations of care to programmatic evaluations and reviews of aid programmes and projects; raised the issues in meetings and conferences at which target audiences were present; and published papers and blogs in which care was connected to a wide range of development issues and practices.

This was done partly on the basis of the recognition that a key strength of IDS is its capacity to translate and disseminate high quality academic research into accessible, widely read formats, and in particular, on cutting edge issues, which have yet to be universally accepted or mainstreamed. We have also continued to use our work in order to raise the profile of unpaid care work with other partner organisations through, for example, interaction with bilateral aid agencies such as AusAid and DfID, multilateral agencies such as the FAO, WFP and the World Bank, international NGOs such as BRAC International, and relevant research and data organisations such as the opinion polling group Gallup. We also raised issues of care in relation to government programmes and with government officials in various fora. These are all examples of our saturation strategy.

“Fostering partnerships with people and organisations we already knew was one of our first strategies.”

► Background, Strategies and Activities.



Within both Bangladesh and Indonesia, activities and outputs have focused on raising the profile of unpaid care work in strategic high-level policy spaces. Unpaid care work in Bangladesh and Indonesia has been included within high-level national public policy planning activities as a direct result of our research, engagement and advocacy work; without these activities, the issue is unlikely to have been addressed. In both countries, the response to these efforts has highlighted the appetite among engaged pro-gender equality policy-makers and practitioners for modes of engagement and research outputs tailored to

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improving the gender-sensitivity of policies and practice through recognition of unpaid care work.

In **Indonesia**, SMERU has been invited to expert group meetings by the National Development Planning Agency of Indonesia (Bappenas) for the preparation of a background study on gender equality. The background study was prepared to support the

development of the 2015-2019 National Medium Term Development Plan (RPJMN). SMERU specifically talked about how taking unpaid care work into account could better and more effectively support gender-sensitivity in economic development planning. RPJMN is an important planning document, because it is used as the basis for all ministries and other government agencies at both national and sub national levels to formulate their working plans, namely Strategic Plans (Renstra KL) of the ministries and the agencies, and the Regional Medium Term Development Plan (RPJMD) of sub national government. RPJMN also serves as the basis for the formulation of the

**Box 1** Bangladesh National Action Plan for Women and including Unpaid Care: Policy Influencing Process in Broadstrokes

**Background:** The National Action Plan (NAP) was developed by the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (MOWCA) in consultation with members of civil society organisations and with the assistance of UN Women. The objective of the NAP was to lay out a roadmap for operationalising the National Women's Development Policy. The National Women's Development Policy was formulated in 1997 by MOWCA in consultation with civil society organisations and was based on the Beijing Platform for Action (PFA). The Policy was revised in 2004, 2008, and 2010. It was contested by the religious right parties and some of the *ulema* (religious scholars) because of its provisions on property rights, recommendation of strong actions against those performing child marriage [child marriage has been legally banned since 1974] and state patronage for women's participation in the performing arts (Hassan and Nazneen 2010; Nazneen and Huq 2011). In 2011, the Awami League (AL) which dominated parliament endorsed the policy and the ministry was asked to develop the NAP.

**Actors:** The Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs engaged a team of consultants, who were asked to collate opinions from civil society actors. The lead consultant was given an open brief. The lead consultant approached the CGST researchers for a meeting on the NAP. As she had an open brief there was an opportunity to incorporate new issues that were not initially on the agenda. The CGST researcher (Maheen Sultan) took the opportunity to raise the issue of 'unpaid care' and how this should be included into the NAP. This discussion with the lead consultant took place right after CGST had organised a workshop in June 2012 with feminist activists and academics to gauge the policy needs around unpaid care and identify ways for highlighting the issue. Maheen spotted this as an opportunity to raise the agenda in a policy forum. The documents prepared for the June workshop created a base for framing and showing that there was a constituency that viewed this as a key issue. There was no resistance from the consultant team, particularly because they were well versed on issues related to GAD and could grasp the importance of this particular issue.

Annual Government Working Plan (RKP) and the Draft of the National Budget (RAPBN). The current development plan (RPJMN 2010-2014) ends in 2014. The next RPJMN (2015-2019) is still in process and the final draft is expected to be ready in January 2015 to be implemented by the new president. Based on the latest update from Bappenas, they have been in a process of public hearing, and gathering inputs from academics, civil societies, as well as from politicians for the development of the RPJMN's technocratic plan, the process of which ended in August 2014. The Bappenas started drafting the RPJMN in November

**Framing:** It was decided by Maheen and the lead consultant that the issue would be framed by linking it to other critical areas of concern of the NWDP in a broad manner to demonstrate its relevance. So, the issue was linked to women's participation in the workforce and the need for child/elderly/disabled care; girl's ability to participate in school and continuing education without the burden of care; the need for state service provisioning in water, sanitation, transportation and other sectors; support for technological innovations that reduced the burden of care etc. This framing that showed the relationship between care and how it affected women's ability to participate as agents and also the emphasis on state's capacity to deliver services to women resonated well with the other civil society groups and the ministry as the relevance of the issue was made clear by the framing.

**Strategy and Resource:** Maheen was asked by the lead consultant to act as the person who raised and presented the care issue (other than the consultant) at committee meetings at the ministry to give it legitimacy (i.e. coming from within the women's movement). Also other civil society actors were focused on various issues such as political empowerment, economic participation and did not want to take on board the burden of presenting another policy concern. Surprisingly, in the consultation meetings there was no resistance to unpaid care being included into the action plan. Maheen's credentials as a long term feminist activist added weight to this issue. Also she was accepted as a legitimate actor by others actors who were present at these meetings, including the government actors, as she knew them personally through work. This demonstrates the importance of legitimacy, previous track records and personal relations.

**Nature of Policy Space:** Given that it was mainly women's rights activists who were present at the consultations and that the Minister herself had a background in women's movements the usual confusion around unpaid care [it is not translatable in Bangla and raises concerns about whether women want money in return for housework] did not arise at these meetings. The Women's Ministry had previously worked on daycare provision and so were familiar with some of the needs being raised through this issue. This was also used as a precedence to argue the case for addressing unpaid care. Broader framing of the issue also helped to create space and

appeal. The policy space also had a conducive environment, as the actors present were aware about the relevance of the issue and women's care needs. The boarder political context was also conducive.

**Policy Context:** As the Prime Minister wanted the NAP to be framed as quickly as possible there was little resistance from the ruling party and within the Ministry (Bangladesh has a very powerful executive and support from the PMO carries weight within the state agencies).

The draft plan with the paragraph on unpaid care was accepted by the drafting committee and the ministry. However the lack of resistance at the drafting committee meetings and also from the ministry should not be interpreted as smooth sailing. Lack of resistance may have come from the fact that, other actors were just as eager to get their own agenda passed and since this issue complemented and did not block their agenda they did not resist. Secondly, the NAP process did not discuss budgetary concerns. If it had, there may have been resistance from other actors as it would mean resources being diverted from their issue. The state agencies may have resisted as the government plans for providing state sponsored care services would have to be justified to the Ministry of Finance.

**Outcome:** The impact of getting the paragraph on unpaid care into the NAP is difficult to gauge. On the one hand, unpaid care had fallen through the crack and this inclusion creates a strong reference point for those who want to move forward with the agenda. The National Women's Development Policy and the NAP are considered as key policy achievements by those who work on women's rights, partly because it captures their aspirations. It is also an important document because the action plan and policy gains were made through a head-on struggle with the religious right, where the state had come out strongly in favour of women. Inclusion in this policy carries weight. Also it is a key document that all government actors and ministries will have to take into account when developing their plans. However, as the discussion about budget and other concerns are yet to be detailed, there is a risk that being included within the policy may not have a real impact on the ground. Also that work around care may continue on a piecemeal basis in service delivery.

2014.<sup>1</sup> In mid-2013, Bappenas started preparation for the development of the 2015-2019 RPJMN. SMERU was invited to present their work on unpaid care in a series of expert group meetings organised by Bappenas for a background study on gender equality that Bappenas was preparing to support the development of the 2015-2019 RPJMN. SMERU continues to participate in consultations around these issues, and has presented findings from the work on women's unpaid care to this high-level planning group.

<sup>1</sup> [http://bappenas.go.id/files/5713/9295/0477/5\\_Wamen\\_PPN.pdf](http://bappenas.go.id/files/5713/9295/0477/5_Wamen_PPN.pdf)

Similarly in **Bangladesh**, high-level engagements have enabled the inclusion of unpaid care work within the National Action Plan for the Women's Development Policy (see Box 1 above) through participating in the government consultation process for developing the action plan.

Work that has challenged norms and addressed stereotypes has included presentations in **Indonesia** about gender and care in social protection at UNICEF Indonesia to representatives from the Gol, UN Gender Task Force (UNICEF, UN Women, UNFPA, ILO, WHO, UNAID, etc), relevant ministries,



and civil society (December 2012) – Gender Awareness Update Forum,<sup>2</sup> about care in relation to children’s rights to the UNICEF conference in Indonesia – children’s contribution to care work in the household<sup>3</sup> and parental migration and working children<sup>4</sup> (September 2013) and in a seminar series in partnership with the Australian National University, a presentation that discussed, among other things, the impacts on care of food price volatility<sup>5</sup> to researchers and policy-makers (May 2013).

In our national level work, we also explored statistics and alternative data collection methods that can be used to improve data analysis to increase the visibility of care work. In both Bangladesh and Indonesia, efforts continue to engage national statistical agencies to take unpaid care work into account in their household survey design and overall statistical data collection strategy.

In **Indonesia**, SMERU has succeeded in engaging with Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS), the national statistics agency, to raise their interest in including unpaid care work in their official systems. In **Bangladesh**, discussions have been on-going with the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) focusing on how to analyse, interpret and institutionalise lessons from the recent pilot on including unpaid care work in official statistics (see Box 2 right).

Our planning activities to challenge stereotypes and embed recognition of care in public policy and development discourse were built on lessons learned to successfully raise the policy visibility of unpaid care work. The use of audio-visual strategies, for example, was used in Bangladesh in the form of

“Different art forms can play a critical role in addressing gender bias and initiating a social change process.”

a photo exhibition – Bhino Rupe Purush (or Caring Men Images) – which was organised to depict care work done at home by men.

As part of the photo documentation initiative, a workshop entitled ‘Masculinities, Care Work

and Art’ was held at the BRAC Centre for Development Management Savar, Dhaka, from 18 to 19 April 2014. The aim of the workshop was to introduce participants to concepts around

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.rahima.or.id/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=994:gender-awareness-update&catid=1:berita&Itemid=18](http://www.rahima.or.id/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=994:gender-awareness-update&catid=1:berita&Itemid=18)

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.smeru.or.id/report/other/cpsp/Ppt%20Day%202/Theme2%20Pawon2/Rachma\\_ppt\\_english.pdf](http://www.smeru.or.id/report/other/cpsp/Ppt%20Day%202/Theme2%20Pawon2/Rachma_ppt_english.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.smeru.or.id/report/other/cpsp/Ppt%20Day%202/Theme3%20Kalasan1/Niken\\_ppt\\_english.pdf](http://www.smeru.or.id/report/other/cpsp/Ppt%20Day%202/Theme3%20Kalasan1/Niken_ppt_english.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> [https://crawford.anu.edu.au/acde/ip/pem/seminars\\_2013.php](https://crawford.anu.edu.au/acde/ip/pem/seminars_2013.php)

## Box 2 Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics: Assisting in including a Module on Unpaid Care in the Labour Force Survey in Broadstrokes

**Background:** Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) had conducted a pilot time use survey on 4000 households on care work in 2011. This included both unpaid care within the home and also voluntary work within the community. The organisation was preparing to include a separate module on time use into the labour force survey. BBS had previously conducted time use studies in the 1970s, so there was precedence of BBS engaging with the issue of unpaid care. However the term unpaid care was not used then. The discussion on time use at that time came up in the context of changing the system of national accounts to capture women’s labour use patterns. In 2011, there were some small savings available from remaining funds which the BBS decided to use for the pilot on time use. What BBS needed was technical help and also outside allies to demonstrate the need for such data.

**Actors:** After CGST started working on the Sida funded project, BBS was one of the organisations that the CGST researchers [Maheen Sultan and Sohela Nazneen] contacted to start an initial conversation around unpaid care. The objective was to scope what kind of data and studies existed on unpaid care and also to create an alliance for knowledge generation. BBS was invited to the initial workshop with feminist academics CGST had organised in June 2012. Before the workshop, the CGST researchers [Sohela and Maheen] went to BBS to personally meet the people who worked in the labour division. The discussion at this meeting centred on briefing them about the Sida funded project but the CGST researchers also expressed an interest in collaborating with BBS. It was at this informal meeting, that the director and deputy director of the labour division explained that they had already conducted a pilot study and that they required technical help. After the meeting the CGST researchers [Maheen and Sohela] briefed Simeen Mahmud of CGST who had a strong relationship with BBS and had worked with the BBS researchers whom Maheen and Sohela had met. Simeen also knew the Director General of BBS, who was a former classmate at university, this later created scope for pushing the agenda for developing a separate module and space for collaboration. The DG herself was interested in

women’s labour force participation and well aware about the issue of unpaid care which created a willingness to engage from the top.

**Strategy for engagement and resources:** The process of engagement was slow and formal given that CGST was dealing with a government agency. It was decided that CGST would have a formal MOU with BBS which would allow CGST to access BBS data and also to advise them on technical issues. However, bureaucratic hurdles had stalled the process. The CGST researcher [Simeen Mahmud] used her personal relationship with the director general to present CGST’s case to BBS. The CGST researcher pointed out that BBS stood to gain from the alliance as CGST would provide technical support for free. CGST also brought to the table a group of researchers with a long experience of using statistical data and who were networked with the scholarly community both at the international and national levels. CGST stressed that a collaboration with them would add value as the involvement of an outside agency would ensure transparency and quality of data collection and interpretation. CGST also threatened to pull out of the partnership, reminding BBS that it could buy the data set and work independently. This dual strategy – illustrating the mutual gains and also demonstrating that CGST had alternatives helped to expedite the signing of the MOU. For BBS, an alliance with CGST also allowed them to demonstrate the demand for work in this particular area, which was another impetus behind their willingness to collaborate.

CGST’s collaboration with Actionaid on an EU funded project that used time diaries for collecting data from extreme poor households required consulting the BBS researchers. This created scope and understanding between both teams and a relationship of trust. The collaboration with Actionaid and resulting links with BBS illustrate the contingent nature of policy influencing and the importance of building relationships. The Actionaid work came through for CGST after its researchers met the AAI Co-ordinator on Care at a Sida funded workshop on unpaid care.

CGST had to be careful in framing the project goals and also the term ‘unpaid care’. BBS was familiar with the term ‘reproductive work’ and also how difficult it is to capture women’s reproductive responsibilities in the systems of

national accounts. CGST used this as a starting point and held informal discussions with BBS on this issue. CGST also invited BBS to all subsequent activities of the Sida funded project, i.e. the project inception workshop in 2012; the national workshop in 2013 that presented the literature review of existing studies on unpaid care, and also referred journalists and others who were in touch with CGST on this issue to contact BBS. All of these held BBS’ interest in collaborating with CGST.

**Nature of Policy Space:** The policy environment that CGST had entered at BBS was also a research environment. It required mainly dealing with researchers who had worked on labour market participation and other social issues for a long time. There was little confusion and resistance from them in working on this issue. As there was support from the top (i.e. from the director general of BBS who wanted to include the separate module on unpaid care and who had an interest in advancing women’s rights concerns) CGST faced little resistance. As a government agency it did have some difficulties in expediting the process for module development or agreements on data use. However, in order to show the relevance of their work, BBS needed to demonstrate that research organisations outside the government were interested in their work on this issue. Collaboration with CGST allowed BBS to demonstrate demand and a constituency. CGST’s reputation as a university based research centre engaged in international research and advocacy work helped in this regard as it carried weight as a constituent.

**Policy Context:** Given that women’s economic empowerment and gains in social sectors are being highlighted as achievements of the state, there is a conducive environment for focusing on women’s needs when it comes to unpaid care. Also given changes in demography (increased migration to urban areas, large numbers of elderly who need care by 2035, increased numbers of nuclear families where extended family support for care reduces) the policy context is ripe for raising these concerns.

**Outcome:** CGST is currently involved in analysing data sets for the labour force survey. What happens with the results is yet to be seen, especially as there would be many issues related to labour policy and not just issues linked to unpaid care.

masculinities and care work and explore with them how different art forms can play a critical role in addressing gender bias and initiating a social change process. The workshop was organised by the CGST. There were 24 participants from diverse academic and professional backgrounds and from different parts of the country. Following the workshop, participants carried out different activities to capture different images and stories of men performing unpaid care work. There was a follow-up workshop in June to screen the photos and also discuss the texts and screening processes. Selected images were

displayed in a photo exhibition titled ‘Bhinno Rupe Purush’ in August 2014 and showcased 22 stories, containing over 90 photos and 2 video installations in total.<sup>6</sup>

To learn about the wider community’s perception of unpaid care work, SMERU has conducted a series of participatory photography activities in the research areas of SMERU’s Food Price Volatility Study. Equipped with pocket cameras, research respondents were asked to capture any household

<sup>6</sup> <http://interactions.eldis.org/unpaid-care-work/country-profiles/bangladesh/news-and-updates>

activities that, according to them, reflected the idea of unpaid care work. Over the page are some of the photos taken by the respondents in 2012.



◀ Masculinities, Care Work and Art Workshop.



### Unpaid Care Work from the Perspective of Villagers in Bekasi and Cianjur, West Java, Indonesia

► A girl doing the ironing in Bekasi District, West Java Province, 2013.



Mr Agung

► (left) A woman doing her laundry in Cianjur District, West Java Province, 2013.



Mrs Yenti

► (right) A man cleaning the floor in Cianjur District, West Java Province, 2013.



Mrs Yenti

In addition to the photography activity, SMERU also engaged in producing a short video on unpaid care work. The video shows what women and men, adults and children, families and communities think of unpaid care work and the close relationship between unpaid care work and people's wellbeing. The target audience of the video is local governments, NGOs and the wider community. It is expected that the video could be used by both SMERU and the target audience

to discuss issues of unpaid care work with those in their networks to support the notion of the importance of including unpaid care work in development discussions.

In our International level work, one of our activities included a Global Advocacy workshop on care in October 2013, organised in collaboration with AAI and Oxfam GB. This included a launch of the UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights Report on Unpaid Care Work

and Women's Human Rights and the launch of an animation produced by IDS on the subject of unpaid care, which highlighted some of the key issues raised in the report, and also gave a practical picture of some solutions that could be initiated in order to recognise care, reduce the drudgery associated with this, and redistribute it amongst families, and from families to the state.<sup>7</sup>

As part of our work, we aimed to *push at norms and gendered role constructions to critically work against the processes that render care invisible in policies and programmes*. To this end, we have a forthcoming journal article, 'Policy Advocacy for Women's Unpaid Care Work: Comparing Approaches and Strategies in Nepal and Nigeria', for *Gender and Development's* special issue on care. We are also tracking the process of making unpaid care visible in policies through sharing blogs, videos, policy briefs and photographs on IDS Interactions website.

We have also produced a working paper, 'The Hegemony Cracked: The Power Guide to Getting Care onto the Development Agenda'<sup>8</sup> and a policy brief, 'Getting Unpaid Care Onto Development Agendas'<sup>9</sup> that provide *guidance and advice on political strategies to make care more visible in international development agencies*. A second working paper, on unpaid care work in Bangladesh, has also been produced. We have had some success in orienting policy and practice debates about social protection to pay more attention to unpaid care work through the following: participating in e-discussions to raise the visibility of care in relation to issues and debates that are more usually care-blind; moderating a session on actions to recognise, reduce and redistribute rural women's unpaid care work as part of UN Women's Thematic Webinar Series on Women's Economic Empowerment; and attending Women for Women International policy conference with the EBRD on Bridging the Gap – The Gender Impact of the Rule of Law and its Application.<sup>10</sup> We have also been invited to speak about unpaid care work in different spaces including a talk on emerging concerns in gender equality and care work fields and the gaps of public policy in addressing care issues, at the United Nations Research Institute

for Social Development event on New Directions in Social Policy;<sup>11</sup> a presentation at the Clean Cooking Conference organised by the World Health Organisation, Britain's Department for International Development and the Global Alliances for Clean CookStoves to present on the impacts of cooking with solid fuels on the health, safety and economic opportunities of women and girls.<sup>12</sup> In December, we were at the 2014 International Colloquium 'Childhood in Feminine: Girls' which took place from Tuesday 2 December to Thursday 4 December at the University of Barcelona, Spain. The keynote speech was on 'Unpaid Care Work and Girl's Economic Empowerment'.

Finally, a series of posts on IDS' Participation, Power and Social Change Blog sought to direct attention to the importance of unpaid care work in public policy, crisis coping and response and in relation to women's empowerment. These were: 'The Good Wife of Development', 'Time for a wider conversation about life in a time of food price volatility', 'I'm (still) hungry, mum: the return of care', 'Getting Care onto Development Agendas: How is IDS doing?' and 'What keeps unpaid care off development agendas?'.<sup>13</sup> Our blogs on care have achieved an impressive and rising hit rate (total hits of over 2,500 to date) indicating that an audience for issues relating to unpaid care work is being built, filling a gap in development discourse.

In Indonesia, SMERU highlighted unpaid care work in its regular publication – SMERU newsletter, in its edition about 'Women's Empowerment and Poverty Reduction Programs'.<sup>14</sup> Through the field article titled 'The Significance of Unpaid Care Work', SMERU tried to provide evidence of

“We have had some success in orienting policy and practice debates about social protection to pay more attention to unpaid care work.”

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VVUW858gQHoE>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.ids.ac.uk/publication/the-hegemony-cracked-the-power-guide-to-getting-care-onto-the-development-agenda>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.ids.ac.uk/publication/getting-unpaid-care-onto-development-agendas>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.developmentpathways.co.uk/resource-centre/blog/post/76-dangerous-habits-of-thought-why-i-fear-graduation-and-resilience->

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.unrisd.org/80256B3C005BD6AB/search/8F2C57F7A9936CE5C1257C9E0054EE76?OpenDocument=>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-hosts-international-conference-on-clean-cooking>

<sup>13</sup> <http://participationpower.wordpress.com/2013/09/16/the-good-wife-of-development/>; <http://participationpower.wordpress.com/2013/05/31/time-for-a-wider-conversation-about-life-in-a-time-of-food-price-volatility/>; <http://participationpower.wordpress.com/2013/03/07/im-still-hungry-mum-the-return-of-care/>; <http://participationpower.wordpress.com/2013/03/07/getting-care-onto-development-agendas-how-is-ids-doing/>; <http://participationpower.wordpress.com/2012/10/26/what-keeps-unpaid-care-off-development-agendas/>

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.smeru.or.id/newslet/2013/news34.pdf>



how unpaid care work contributes to household wellbeing and why overlooking this issue may hamper government efforts to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment.

### 3.2 Understanding Structures of Constraint and for Influencing

In the second area of **understanding structures of constraint and for influencing** change, we aimed to *work across disciplinary boundaries – with feminist economists and with pro-feminist men in delineating*

“We aimed to work across disciplinary boundaries – with feminist economists and with pro-feminist men in delineating the links between unpaid care and other sectors.”

*the links between unpaid care and other sectors. We started conversations with the Masculinities stream to understand the role of men in making care visible to policy makers. We also started developing a training curriculum on economic alternatives to unpaid care with five modules for facilitators and national moderators on how to integrate care*

into programming. We are also conducting and facilitating qualitative and quantitative research in the two project countries in order to gather and analyse data at community and national levels on unpaid care.

Under the strand of the care economy, in **Bangladesh**, CGST organised a workshop in September 2013 in Dhaka to bring together Bangladeshi activists, researchers and policymakers to continue the discussion about the relative invisibility of unpaid care and how to tackle this. The workshop involved presentations of findings of a literature review of unpaid care work in Bangladesh and brought together an unusual combination of officials from the Government (Statistics, Social Welfare and Women's ministries/Agencies), national and international NGOs and civil society organisations, and researchers and activists. The workshop concluded with a series of commitments and undertakings by each participant to identify and include unpaid care work in their work and activities.

Similarly in **Indonesia**, in November 2012, SMERU organised a workshop for policymakers and practitioners identified through the Year 1 stakeholder mapping and key informant interviews about the constraints and opportunity windows in relation to policy influence around care (one of the civil society groups involved produced a report

about the workshop for their website).<sup>15</sup> Again, the uptake of ideas and follow-up after the workshop has been successful, such that a representative from the influential Planning Ministry (BAPPENAS) joined the global network for further discussions in London in October 2014.

SMERU was also invited to attend a workshop organised by Komnas Perempuan (the National Commission on Violence against Women) for the preparation of the institution's strategic plans (Renstra). This was seen by SMERU as an excellent opportunity to “introduce” the issue of unpaid care work to the institution, considering it as an independent national institution established by the Government of Indonesia that promotes women's human rights in Indonesia.

In September 2013, SMERU held a ‘Child Poverty and Social Protection Conference’ in collaboration with the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) and Bappenas. This was a regional level conference with participants from Indonesia and other UNICEF Asia Pacific region's countries. As part of SMERU's efforts in raising the issue of unpaid care work, researchers from the SMERU unpaid care work team gave a presentation on ‘Recognising Children's Contribution to Care Work at the Household: the Potential Role of Social Protection in Maintaining Child's Rights and Wellbeing’. Besides, the other research team in SMERU conducting research on children impacted by migration, they presented their piece of work that related to unpaid care work, ‘Parental Migration and the Incidence of Working Children: Evidence from Indonesia’.

At the global level, SMERU was invited to provide input to the IRF post 2015 summary (of four Post 2015 proposals submitted by the Sustainable Development and Solution Network (SDSN), UN Global Compact, CGI and KDI, and a High Level Panel of Eminent Persons), in particular for the Goal Area of Gender. They incorporated unpaid care work as one of their inputs for the proposal. Another crucial space came from the Organization for Economic Cooperation Development (OECD). SMERU was invited to participate in the 2014 OECD Forum in Paris from 5-6 May 2014. SMERU staff were asked to send three participation proposals that highlighted their work on specific issues that related to the forum themes. They sent proposals on poverty, inequality, and unpaid care work. The proposal on unpaid care work was sent

<sup>15</sup> [http://www.rahima.or.id/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=991:care-work-di-indonesia-sebuah-kajian-awal&catid=1:berita&Itemid=18](http://www.rahima.or.id/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=991:care-work-di-indonesia-sebuah-kajian-awal&catid=1:berita&Itemid=18)

to meet the forum theme on ageing (‘new age’). Of all three proposals, the one focused on unpaid care work was chosen at the forum, in which the OECD would carry out and support our views on the issue of informal and unpaid care work and the centrality of women in taking care, especially of older people, through a participatory debate at the IdeaFactory Session on Ageing. SMERU's attendance at the OECD Forum also served as ‘the opening’ for our future collaboration with the OECD as one of its knowledge partners in non-member countries. OECD has five knowledge partners in five non-member countries: Indonesia, South Africa, Russia, Brazil, and India.

In recognition of the need expressed by policymakers and practitioners for tailored analyses of the conditions and constraints shaping unpaid care work in each country, both country partners have undertaken small amounts of strategic new primary research. The Bangladesh partner CGST has been involved in primary field research on unpaid care work with ActionAid, and the Indonesia partner SMERU is similarly building off of on-going research with Oxfam GB and IDS on global economic volatility to extend the primary research and data collection activities on unpaid care work.

### 3.3 Strengthening Alliances and Networks

In the area of **strengthening alliances and networks**, we aimed to *build networks at both national and global levels to raise the profile of unpaid care work and link civil society partners in Bangladesh and Indonesia with global civil society actors*. In May 2013, team members participated in the expert meeting of the UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights in Geneva, where we shared our learning about what is working to raise the visibility of care on development policy agendas. Considerable effort has gone into supporting the development of thinking about the human rights of unpaid care workers through, for example, submissions to and reviews of the report, and in co-organising a launch for the report in London with our partners from ActionAid. In Indonesia and Bangladesh, the country teams are connecting to the domestic workers' rights and other labour movements, and in Indonesia, there are also connections being built with child rights activists, for example, around issues of migration. Through the Sida GPS Symposium ‘Undressing Patriarchy’, we have also started to build stronger links with the international pro-feminist men's movement.

At the 58th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women in New York in 2014, IDS was invited to participate in two side events dedicated solely to making unpaid care work visible in a post-MDG world and also invited to a third event, which recognised unpaid care work as a cross cutting issue for challenging stereotypes and building new alliances to address gender inequality post-2015.<sup>16</sup>

The first event: ‘Unpaid care work, poverty and human rights’ was hosted by the Permanent Missions of Finland and Uruguay in collaboration with UN Women and the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights. It focused on the impact of unpaid care work on women's rights to education, employment, decent work, political participation and leisure. The second meeting, ‘Making Unpaid Care Work Count in the Post-2015 Framework’, which was co-organised by AAI, Centre for Women's Global Leadership, IDS and the UN Special Rapporteur

“Considerable effort has gone into supporting the development of thinking about the human rights of unpaid care workers.”

on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights, was an opportunity to discuss why unpaid care work is so critical to women's human rights and gender equality.<sup>17</sup> The third was Myth and Reality: New Alliances to Challenge Stereotypes and Build Gender Equality Beyond 2015.<sup>18</sup>

In addition, we did the following: (i) built up a network of alliances from the Global Advocacy Care Workshop of October; (ii) built partnerships with national governments and other national and global civil society actors to advocate for policy change based on demands that emerge at local level and (iii) developed partnerships with other global actors.

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.unwomen.org/co/csw/csw58-2014>

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.ids.ac.uk/events/making-unpaid-care-work-count-in-the-post-2015-framework>

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.ids.ac.uk/events/myth-and-reality-new-alliances-to-challenge-stereotypes-and-build-gender-equality-beyond-2015>



## 4 Changes/ Results Achieved

Through our various activities, we have initiated discussions on an evaluation framework for understanding processes for increasing the visibility of unpaid care in policy agendas and also developed conceptual clarity regarding links between unpaid care work and women's economic empowerment. In choosing to shout about care from the rooftops, we've also been pretty successful in making care visible and bringing it back up again.

Other notable changes that have been achieved include: getting care onto the NAP in Bangladesh; the building of global networks and the acknowledgement of IDS and partners in the area of unpaid care work; creating spaces where people have come together, organising a number of international meetings on unpaid care work, and finally being invited to two meetings at the CSW. In addition, made possible by the efforts of various actors – IDS, AAI, Oxfam GB, the UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights

recent report,<sup>19</sup> as well as a host of practitioners, researchers and activists<sup>20</sup> – the CSW's Agreed Conclusions<sup>21</sup> explicitly recognises unpaid care work as critical for the advancement of gender equality, the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls, and further recognises that caregiving is a critical societal function which involves shared responsibility (conclusion 14). These activities mean that the Participation and Gender Justice group and its partners are in a stronger position to influence global and national policy processes to make care visible following the end of the GPS programme.

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.empowerwomen.org/~documents/2013/10/10/20/51/report-of-the-special-rapporteur-on-extreme-poverty-and-human-rights>

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.genderanddevelopment.org/page/care-learning-event#learning%20event>

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.unwomen.org/~media/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/CSW/58/CSW58-agreedconclusions-advanceduneditedversion.pdf>

“The CSW's Agreed Conclusions explicitly recognises unpaid care work as critical for the advancement of gender equality.”

## 5 Significant/Pivotal Moments in the Journey and How They Came About

During the project, SMERU held two workshops and invited stakeholders working on issues related to unpaid care work. The first workshop, held in November 2012, aimed to increase the mutual understanding of the complexity of the issue of unpaid care work and its relevance to development policy. Specifically, the purpose of this first workshop was to discuss the definition of care work and unpaid care work, as well as the scope of activities; changes in patterns of activities with regard to current economic development; the impact of these changes on the quality of care at the household level; and to understand potential problems that may occur in attempting to develop the issue of unpaid care work within the context of Indonesia. The second workshop was held in June 2014, and aimed to identify opportunities and obstacles for raising and advocating the issue of unpaid care work, discussing who should be involved, and identifying potential collective action for advocating this issue.

Bringing together various institutions for the workshops in 2012 and 2014 were pivotal moments for SMERU. At the first workshop, very few people understood what was meant by 'unpaid care work' or 'care work', even though many of them had been working on these aspects. In part, this was because of the different terms used to describe unpaid care work and care work. The second workshop was held in June 2014 and was attended by many of the same participants from the first workshop as well as many other new attendees.<sup>22</sup> Only a year had passed since hosting the first workshop, which made it much easier for participants in the second workshop to understand the terms 'care work' and 'unpaid care work'. This was an achievement in that we no longer needed to worry about using different terms to describe unpaid care work, as long as we were working on the same issue. Common ground had finally been established for raising this issue. In this regard, SMERU, who did

not have a grass-root mass or advocacy link, had coincidentally formed its own network.

The second workshop also became a strategic occasion in that it helped SMERU to launch the Indonesian version of the UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights Report on Unpaid Care Work and Women's Human Rights. It was expected that the distribution of the translated report would be useful for the workshop participants, not only for their internal discussions but also for other organisations within their networks. The participants were also asked to give their inputs on the translated report. In addition to distributing the translated UN special report, SMERU invited the workshop participants to watch the IDS short animation movie on unpaid care work. The distribution of the translated report and the movie screening have both shown that there is a potential to link advocacy in gender issues at local and national levels to the rising movements on unpaid care work of other countries (at the global level).



Mr Bambang Cahyo Hadi, SMERU

◀ Workshop on unpaid care work in 2012.



Mr Bambang Cahyo Hadi, SMERU

◀ Workshop on unpaid care work and the launch of the Indonesian version of UN Special Rapporteur Report in 2014.

<sup>22</sup> [http://www.rahima.or.id/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=1196:minimnya-perhatian-publik-terhadap-unpaid-care-works&catid=1:berita&Itemid=18](http://www.rahima.or.id/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1196:minimnya-perhatian-publik-terhadap-unpaid-care-works&catid=1:berita&Itemid=18)

## 6 What do These Policy Cases Tell us About Influencing?

**B**oth Bangladesh and Indonesia highlight the **role of the informal and also personal networks**. In both Bangladesh cases (see Box 1 and 2), personal relationships helped to open doors and also negotiate difficulties. In the case of including unpaid care in the NAP, Maheen's long relationship with the lead consultant, drafting committee members and also the Ministry, helped her to raise a new issue in the middle of the drafting process. In the BBS case, Simeen's personal relationship with the director general helped her to explain her case to the BBS. Long-term collaboration had created trust and support, which encouraged BBS to open up about their needs. Personal relationships made the policy agencies less resistant to the initial hearing of the CGST proposal.

A similar case was found with SMERU, for whom the first challenge for getting unpaid care work into Indonesia's development agenda was to find the right entry point and to find the right key partner. In this case, **key partners are people who have strategic positions** and are interested in the issue of unpaid care work, particularly government officials, donor agencies, and NGOs who have already gained some understanding and awareness about the importance of this issue. SMERU's efforts in building relationships with key partners were done through informal communication, by keeping regular contact, support data and evidence for them.

One of the most important relationships was with Bappenas, who provided SMERU with the opportunity to present in their expert group meetings, which focused on a background study for gender issues in preparation of the next RPJMN – as mentioned above. SMERU also maintained an informal relationship with UN Women Indonesia. Their first discussion with UN Women Indonesia on the issue of unpaid care work was on 4 December 2012, when SMERU was invited by UN Women Indonesia to attend a public consultation with

Michelle Bachelet (Deputy of the UN Secretary General and Executive Director of UN Women). The consultation aimed at mapping gender issues in Indonesia. SMERU raised the issue of unpaid care and later in 2014, UN Women Indonesia went on to mention unpaid care work as their main focus for the year.

Maintaining relationships with donor agencies was a strategic decision for SMERU, given the observation that programmes taken up by government are mostly based on 'donor driven' initiatives. UN Women has been one of the donor agencies who supported Bappenas in the development of the background study for RPJMN on gender issues and who also assisted the National Statistics Agency (BPS) in finding potential ways to use time diaries in their survey.

For Bangladesh, there are many similarities between the two policy influencing cases. Some of these are discussed below:

**The role of femocrats** in promoting gender equity concerns comes across very clearly. In the case of the NAP, it was the Minister for Women's Affairs and also the external consultant who played a key role in creating space for the agenda. In the case of BBS, it was the Director General who had created space for the issue. In both cases, the importance of linking state agencies with women's movements in order to forward gender equity concerns is very clear. Though, this is not to say that debate is completely absent, the relevance of unpaid care was easy to present mainly because those involved in the policy cases worked on similar issues as a part of their engagement within the movement.

**Contingency** is a key feature in both cases. In the case of BBS, the initial involvement of BBS with CGST on the Sida funded project was made possible through the work CGST was doing with ActionAid. This work with ActionAid came through by a chance meeting of the CGST

researchers and the Actionaid co-ordinator at a Sida funded meeting. Another coincidence was that the lead consultant, approached by MOWCA to draft the action plan, happened to have close friendships with the CGST researchers. Despite these chance events, what is really illustrated here is the ability to recognise an opportunity and be proactive/nimble enough to grab it on behalf of policy activists.

**Alignment of Interests and framing:** Mutual gains are key in advancing policy concerns. Collaboration with BBS was made possible once CGST was able to demonstrate the benefits of the collaboration. It was also useful to point out what BBS stood to lose if it failed to collaborate (free technical help, joint co-authorship, strengthening credibility, demonstrating demand for BBS' work). This also demonstrates how interests need to align when policy negotiations are happening. Similarly, framing issues in a manner that demonstrates alignment of interests is also important. In the case of inclusion of care into the NAP, we see that CGST had framed the issues related to unpaid care in a manner, which allowed the civil society partners to identify how unpaid care was linked to their own agenda.

**Political and policy context play important roles.** In the case of inclusion of unpaid care into the

NAP, the fact that the ruling party was in support of drafting the plan and wanted to expedite the process created space for engagement. Opposition by the religious right had, in this case, created scope for pushing women's rights issues.

The fact that there was **no vociferous resistance within the policy space** is interesting. This is partly because there was no financial gain or redistribution to be made. In the case of the NAP, the inclusion of unpaid care did not divert resources from other agendas promoted by the CSOs. This is because there was no discussion on the budget. In the case of BBS, CGST had offered its services for free. Perhaps if money were involved, the outcome may not have been as smooth.

It is also interesting to note that when CGST negotiated a change in policy, **they did not necessarily use evidence to advocate their case**. The need for evidence came later once there was an interest or once the policy doors had opened. What played a critical role at the start was knowing the right person and having them at the right place at the right time; and also framing the agenda in a manner that highlighted mutual gains; and the larger political context creating space and CGST researchers spotting this entry point.

“What is really illustrated here is the ability to recognise an opportunity and be proactive/nimble enough to grab it on behalf of policy activists.”



# 7 What Worked/What Didn't Work and What Can We Learn?

In terms of what worked, our strategies were very iterative. Also, large-scale global movements brought questions of unpaid care work to the fore – migration, HIV, ageing. There were also unconventional spaces, such as the Global Cooking Conference, which enabled us to introduce the issue to new audiences. Framing the work from the beginning around 'policy asks' was also quite useful, as was the use of more 'creative bits' – the animation, the caring men photo exhibition etc. Through the work, we realised that

“The neglect of care is not necessarily due to the lack of good data or evidence.”

it is not only about policy asks, but about visual images being presented.

Strong leadership, in the form of Rosalind Eyben, played an important role in motivating our action throughout. Having strong

partners and building a really strong bond within our team (within IDS and also across IDS and different partners) has also been crucial.

*Building the team has been critical both within and outside of IDS. This is essential for building energy and commitment for moving forward. We are putting in other proposals and developing ideas. Now we know what we want to achieve, but we don't yet know how we are going to get there. Previously we didn't know what 'the what' was, so it is a different kind of climb ahead of us. There has been a lot of conceptual learning. IDS team member*

However, there are a number of challenges and still many areas, which we could learn from.

## 7.1 Learnings and Challenges

There is the issue of care itself:

*Unpaid care work is nebulous, it can be linked to migration, female and male, linked to diverse sectors and issues. But when you can pitch an issue to so many different people and issues you have to be sure about what issue you pick and why and how*

*you communicate this. You need technical skills there in terms of actually being able to show the demand for change. BIGD team member*

We have also faced questions from various groups, especially feminist economists, who repeatedly asked us about our data sources. We have to make clear that our work has taken a new approach to the recognition of care, one which draws on the extensive empirical work on these issues done by feminist economists and others, and takes a political economy and an activist approach to understanding why care remains under-recognised in development. This includes recognition that the neglect of care is not necessarily due to the lack of good data or evidence – there is ample, even though regular time use data exercises would no doubt be helpful. It is instead the conditions in which the data are useable and can influence policy that we believe needs to be worked on, and that is what we have tried to do.

While we have achieved a lot in the programme as we have had a lot of visibility, there is still another hill to climb – which is that of funding and the resultant continuity of the programme:

*Sustainability – when the funding runs out you are asking what next. You raise a critical mass and then you aren't sure where to go. You can't start some sort of collective process or movement and then say there is nothing else, this is very difficult. BIGD team member*

A newly formed network potential has been created for SMERU, which could bring about unintended success in the future – that is, if SMERU is able to manage it. In a sense, as a research institute, SMERU could play a more active role in supporting research data for advocacy materials for its network institutions. However, there are still some challenges that need to be tackled.

*In internal SMERU, not all of the researchers had seen unpaid care work as an important issue. Even though most of their studies have revealed the*

*impact of keeping unpaid care work ignored from the development agenda. SMERU team member*

On the one hand, unpaid care has been completely absent from the agenda of women's organisations/movements in Indonesia. The advocacy on gender equality is still primarily focussed on increasing women's participation in the public/political sphere and economic empowerment. There is also a fear that any efforts to bring the issue of (unpaid) care will draw women back into the domestic sphere.

On the other hand, the Indonesian government is still focusing on unpaid (economic) work and home-based work. The National Development Planning Agency has argued the importance of incorporating unpaid care work into the development agenda, but is demanding a measurable indicator for (unpaid) care work to be recognised – whether to monetise or quantify the (unpaid) care work contribution to national economy. The Ministry of Women Empowerment and Child Protection is not yet aware of the unpaid care issue. The National Commission for Eradicating Violence against Women (Komnas Perempuan) is aware that the over burden of care work is one form of violation against women's rights, but they still consider the main priority to be issues to do explicitly with violence (domestic violence, trafficking, protection of women migrant workers) and political rights.

There is also the disjuncture between conversations at the national and international level and how those at the national level can get more involved at an international level:

*... we have had international workshops organised by Action Aid International, bringing people together on unpaid care, which was interesting. However, for the national teams when you are talking about CSW, the national teams are not sure about how this is relevant for them. There wasn't enough work out there to link these national projects to the international processes. Space may be limited in the international arena too. Strategically there may be more space and traction at the national level to engage on unpaid care, for example looking at the ageing population at the national level this is more relevant than global economic change.*

Within IDS, there are project teams in GPS and the AG working on unpaid care, as raised in the GPS Stories of Influence workshop,

*... the conversation between the project teams should have been earlier, there was a learning event, but the conversation was happening late*

in the day. But this is an issue of funds, time and bringing people together.

Some of the key lessons learnt on how to make care visible include:

**The importance of flexibility:** It is worth noting here that initial aims such as working with civil society groups involved with the G20 were dropped – due to the modus operandi of the G20 that influences the advocacy 'asks'. The objective of getting unpaid care as the key theme of Progress of the World's Women – with whom we had a strong contact via the principal editor – was also dropped because belatedly UN Women decided (at least for the time being) not to go ahead with another Progress Report.

**Building Connections Across Different Projects** (Sida and AG) – Our Sida funded work was not in isolation, we drew on all and any opportunities open to us as part of our policy influencing agenda for unpaid care. This helped optimise the value of the Sida funding. Examples include accessing (after very considerable effort) additional funding via a grant from DFID to IDS as well as commissioned work, such as (1) Rosalind Eyben's advisory inputs to the DAC Guidelines on Women's Economic Empowerment (2012) that resulted in greater emphasis being accorded to unpaid care than might otherwise have been the case<sup>23</sup> (2) Marzia Fontana arranging for her and Rosalind Eyben to write a piece on unpaid care as part of a series of background papers ('Caring for Wellbeing') for the Rockefeller Foundation's Bellagio Initiative<sup>24</sup> (3) Marzia Fontana's participation in an FAO Conference on food security (4) Naomi Hossain's work with the World Food Programme as part of the gender-mainstreaming partnership headed by Alyson Brody at IDS.

**Correct Timing to Exploit Larger Trends** (Migration, Ageing, Domestic Workers Movement) and **the importance of seizing opportunities:** Examples include Rosalind Eyben being a speaker at a workshop in October 2011 in Geneva on results-based management and human rights, where she met the adviser to the UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights. Their initial meeting was followed up with an additional meeting and several Skype conversations with respect to making the 2013 Special Rapporteur's annual report the theme of unpaid work<sup>25</sup>

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.oecd.org/dac/povertyreduction/50157530.pdf>

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.bellagioinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Bellagio-Eyben-and-Fontana.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Poverty/Pages/UnpaidWork.aspx>

## 8 Conclusion

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*Influencing is beyond the life of the project, the story has no beginning and no end. It is so embedded, it is a part of our lives. Our project was about influencing in every part so it can't be pinned down into an a-b-c.*

IDS team member

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The process of influencing to make care visible has been unexpected, unintended and contingent. We have learned that context matters and that it creates certain opportunities in which you may be found asking, who are your allies? Who is opposing you? Policy influencing, however, is not a linear process. It is an iterative, fluid, emergent and complex process of change, in which there is no beginning or end. This complexity is reflected in the diverse work of the multiple partner organisations in the stream of unpaid care work. In our work to make care visible, we are showing

that as a process, the work within this strand can produce cracks in the current hegemony (no matter how small) and can lead to small wins, which can contribute to making the unpaid care work done largely by women and girls more visible. Many important lessons have been learnt, including the importance of recognising and working with political strategies, personal connections, and building networks and a critical mass of people, ideas and entry points through which unpaid care can be made visible in a range of policy spaces.

“Policy influencing, however, is not a linear process. It is an iterative, fluid, emergent and complex process of change, in which there is no beginning or end.”

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## References

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The Gender, Power and Sexuality – Connecting Local Voices to Global Arenas for Equality and Rights programme (GPS) is coordinated by the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) and funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA). The aim of the programme is to influence norms and institutions at global and local levels to more effectively tackle the challenge of achieving gender equality.

<http://www.ids.ac.uk/idsresearch/gender-power-and-sexuality-connecting-local-voices-to-global-arenas-for-equality-and-rights>

While there is a large and robust body of evidence, particularly from feminist economists, about the extent of unpaid care work that women and girls do, and its contributions to both the economy and human development outcomes, there is a reluctance to engage with care issues, and specifically to use the evidence to inform public policy. As unpaid care work was seen as falling through the cracks, the Unpaid Care Work strand in the Gender, Power and Sexuality (GPS) programme has been working with partners in South and Southeast Asia and in international civil society and policy spaces to *raise the visibility of women's unpaid care work* as a key issue for development policy and practice. As part of our work, we set about exploring the political economy conditions under which policy actors recognise or ignore the significance of unpaid care - where, why, when and how unpaid care concerns become more visible on domestic policy agendas. In this report, we track the processes taken with our three partners – a research centre based at the BRAC Institute of Governance and Development, BRAC University; SMERU Research Institute, Indonesia; and ActionAid International (AAI) – to raise the policy visibility of women's care work within public policy.

<http://www.xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>



