

Counting Women's Work for Better Policy and Understanding

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Overview

- Why count “women’s work”?
- How to measure unpaid care work (UCW)
 - In terms of time
 - In terms of money
 - To be comparable with measures of market work
- What do we see when we count UCW?
- What should we do?

Why count “women’s work”?

- Policy development and analysis requires data and measurement
- Example of National Transfer Accounts (NTA), measuring the generational economy to understand long-term trend of aging population
 - Disaggregate national accounts by age
- Now want to include gender
- Changing gender roles also long-term trend

The gendered economy

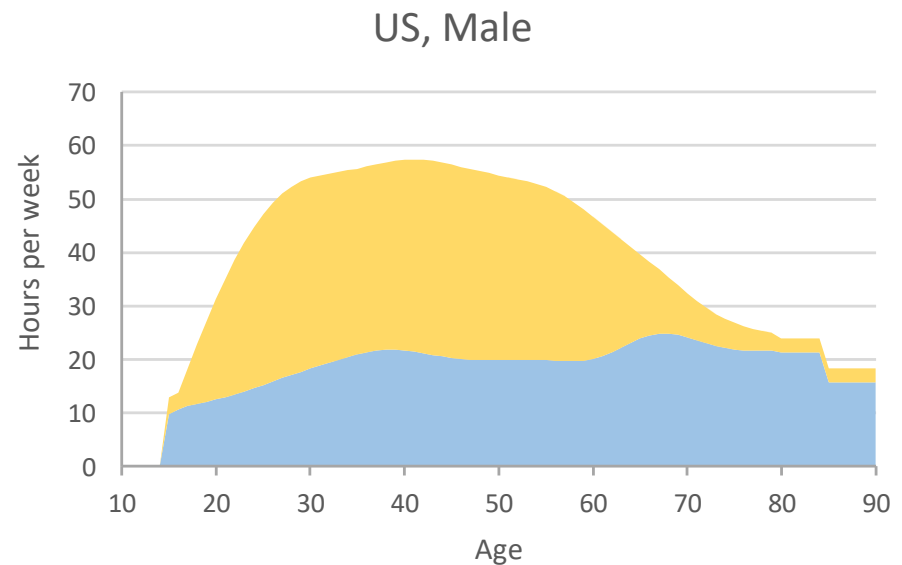
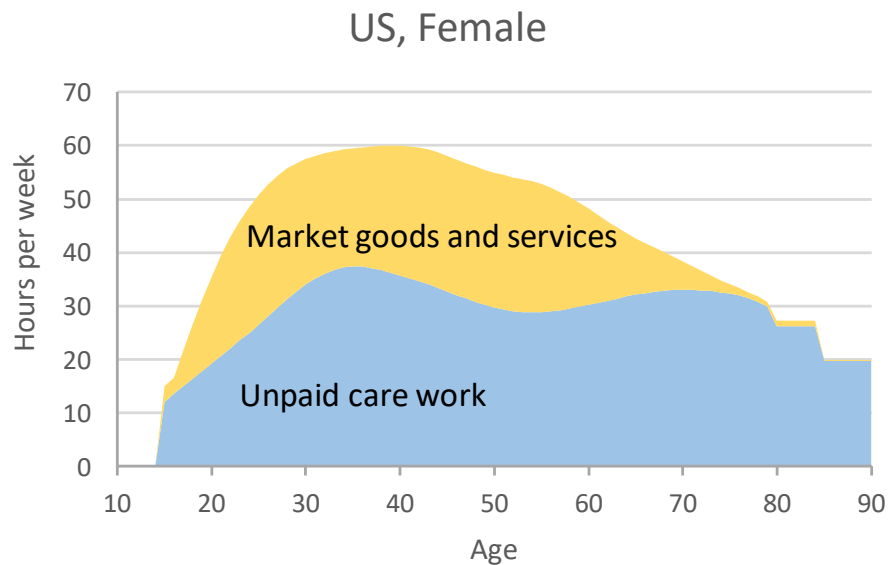
- In high-fertility context, women specialize in bearing and raising children
- Fertility decline means this can change but often changes slowly
- Why study the gendered economy?
 - To do good (support equal rights)
 - To do well (promote economic efficiency)

Gendered economic measurement

	Goods	Services
Sold in the marketplace	Included	Included
Produced and consumed in the household	Included	Not included

“Not included” is unpaid care work (UCW) most often done by women.

Women spend more time on UCW, men do more market work

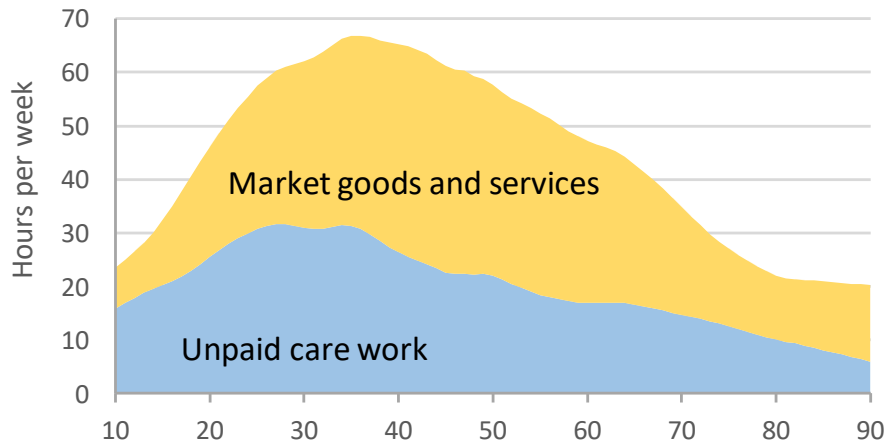


UNPAID CARE WORK (UCW):

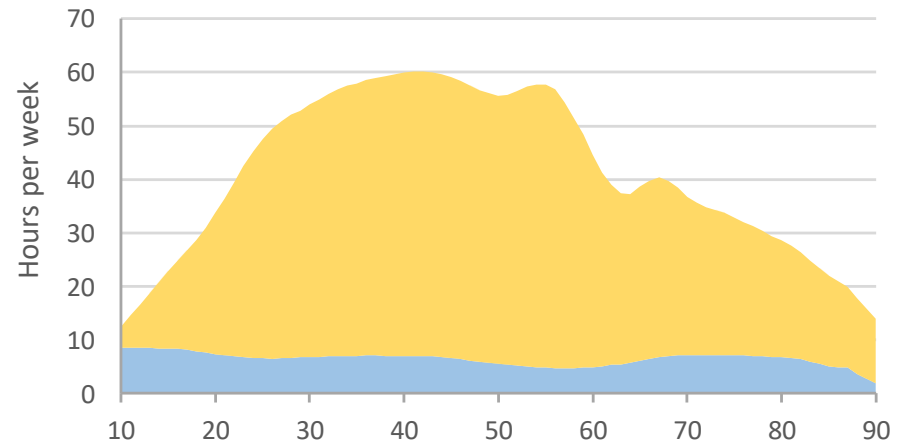
- Direct care for children, elders, community
- + Housework, household maintenance and management

Degrees of economic gender segregation vary across countries

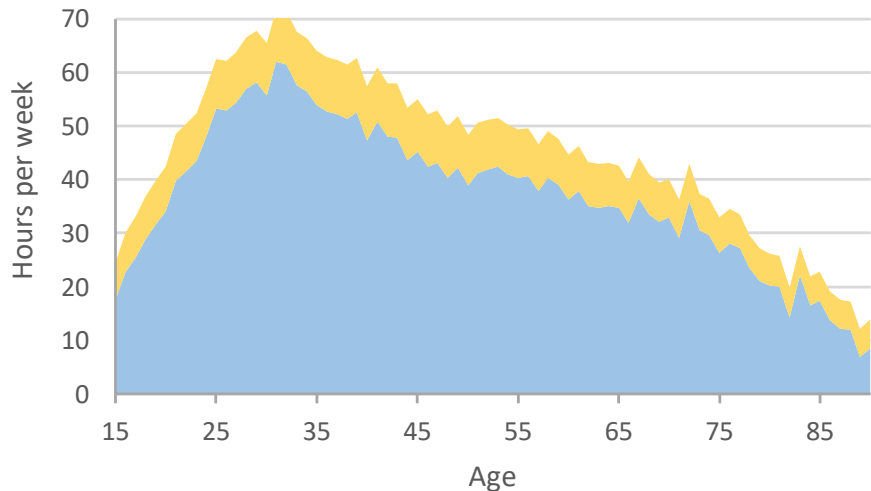
Ghana, Female



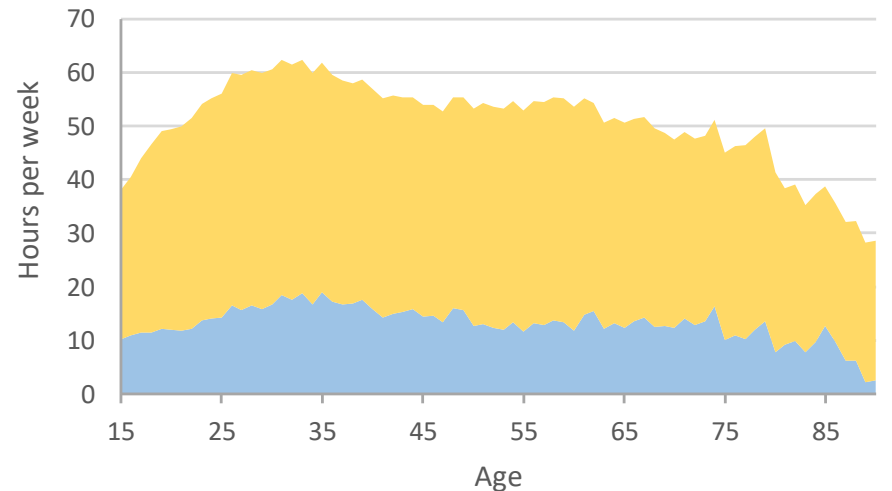
Ghana, Male



Mexico, Female



Mexico, Male



Is specialization a problem?

- Girls' and women's unpaid care work time may be a barrier to
 - Paid work
 - Education
 - Access to time for leisure, rest, and self-care
- Women specialize in “invisible” sector
 - Value of UCW not recognized
 - Creates policy and monitoring “blindspots”

Counting Women's Work: Measuring the gendered economy



- Develop methodology, apply across a broad range of countries
- Supported by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
- Countries
 - Africa: Ghana, Kenya, Senegal, South Africa
 - Asia: India, Vietnam, (Japan, China, Turkey)
 - Americas: Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, US, Uruguay
 - Europe: 22 countries

CWW's Goal:

Value everyone's work, measure everyone's care

Producing market goods:



Producing non-market services:



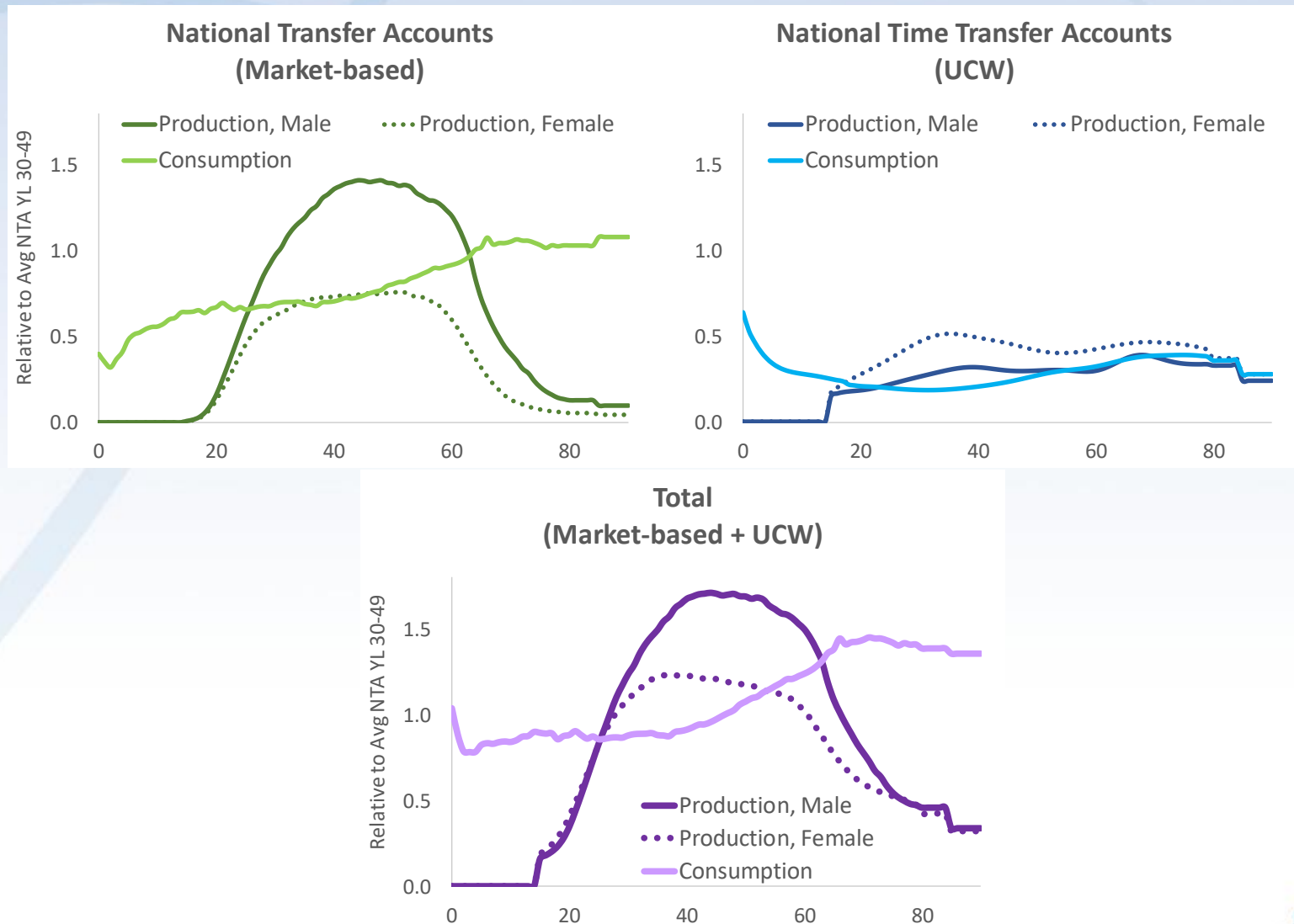
Approach

- National Transfer Accounts (NTA)
 - Disaggregate national accounts data by age
 - Uses household surveys and administrative data
 - Reveals the generational economy, intergenerational transfers and support systems
 - Extend this approach to include separate estimates by sex
- National Time Transfer Accounts (NTTA)
 - Measure time spent in UCW from time use surveys
 - Third person criterion: can you pay someone to do it for you?
 - Value the time at an appropriate market wage for each type of activity (specialist replacement method) to estimate time production by age and sex
 - Estimate consumption of UCW by imputation

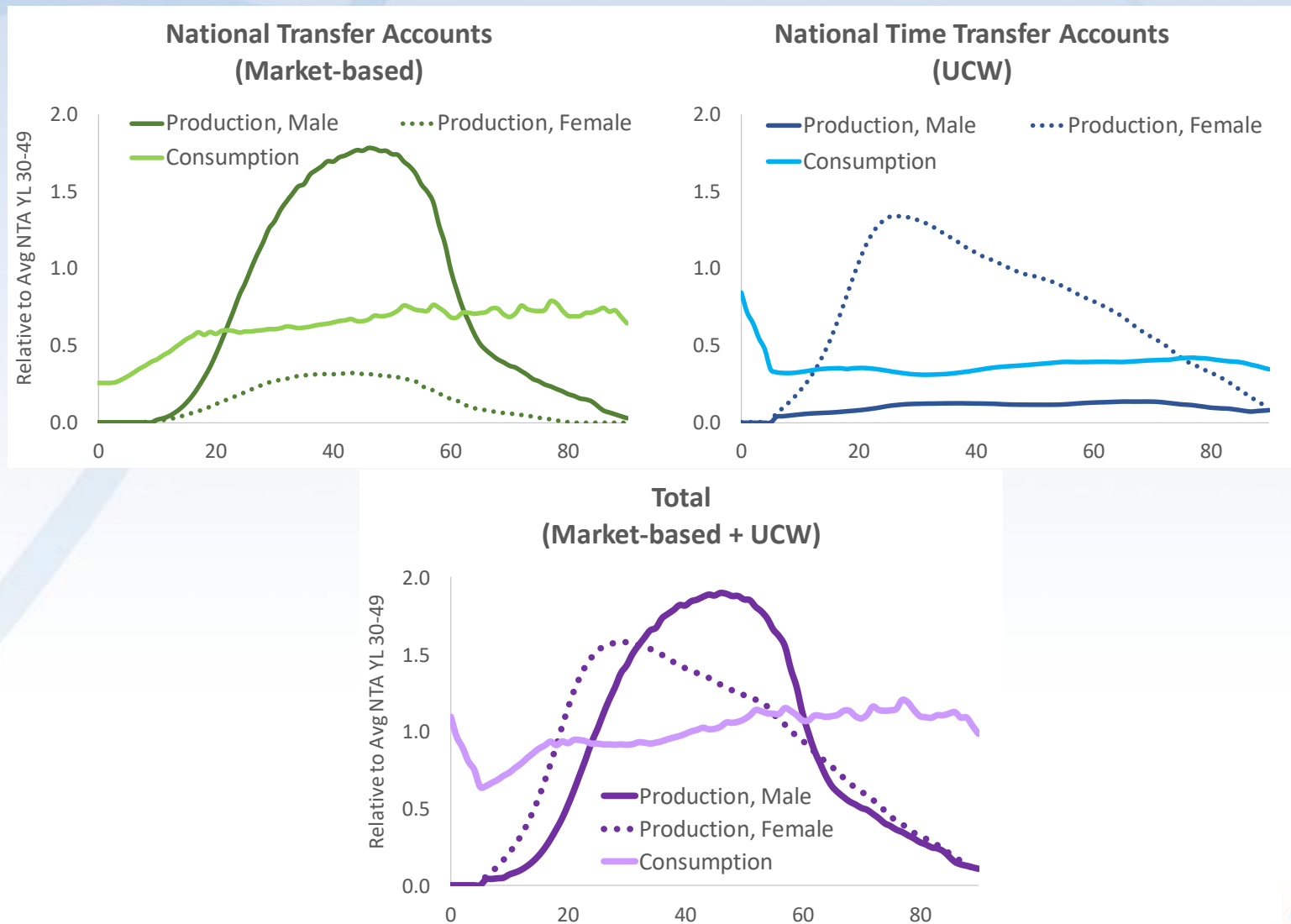
Advantages of NTA/NTTA approach

- Includes age dimension
 - Life cycle processes drive financial and UCW dynamics, so age is an important factor
 - Makes estimates more useful for policy
- NTTA fits in with existing NTA framework
 - Can estimate consumption of UCW time in same way as consumption of market goods and services
 - Integrates time estimates with existing NTA estimates
 - Relates NTTA with existing NTA analyses, like demographic dividends

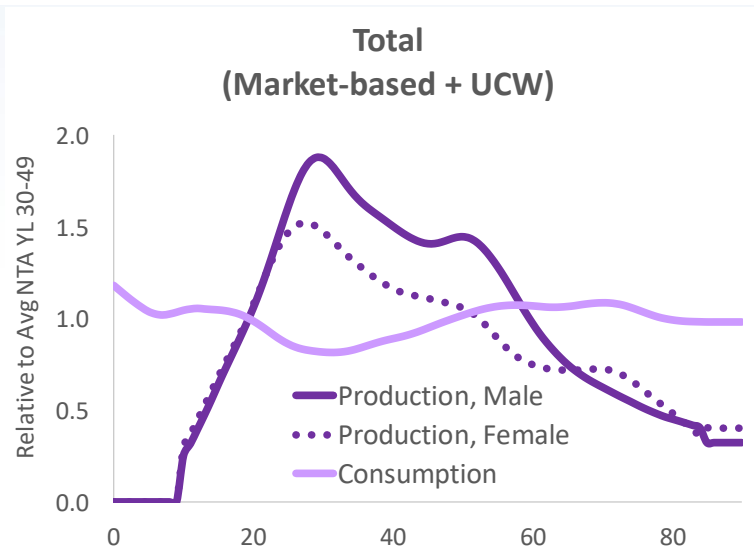
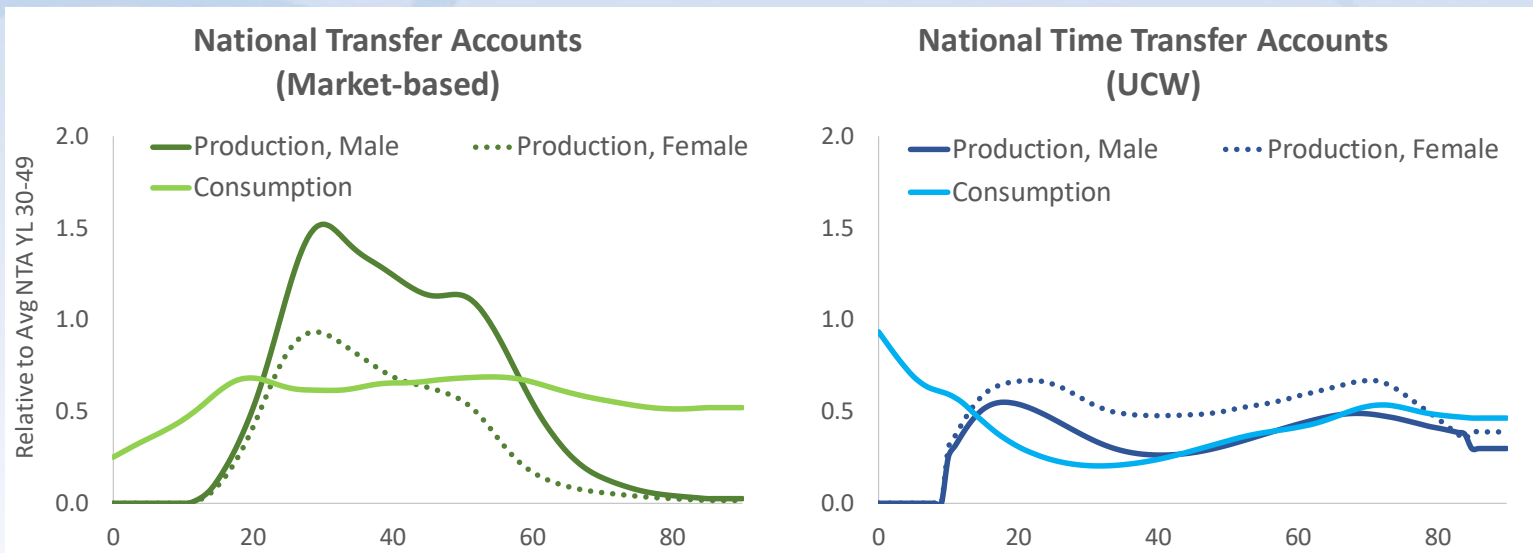
Example (US, 2009)



Example (India, 1999)



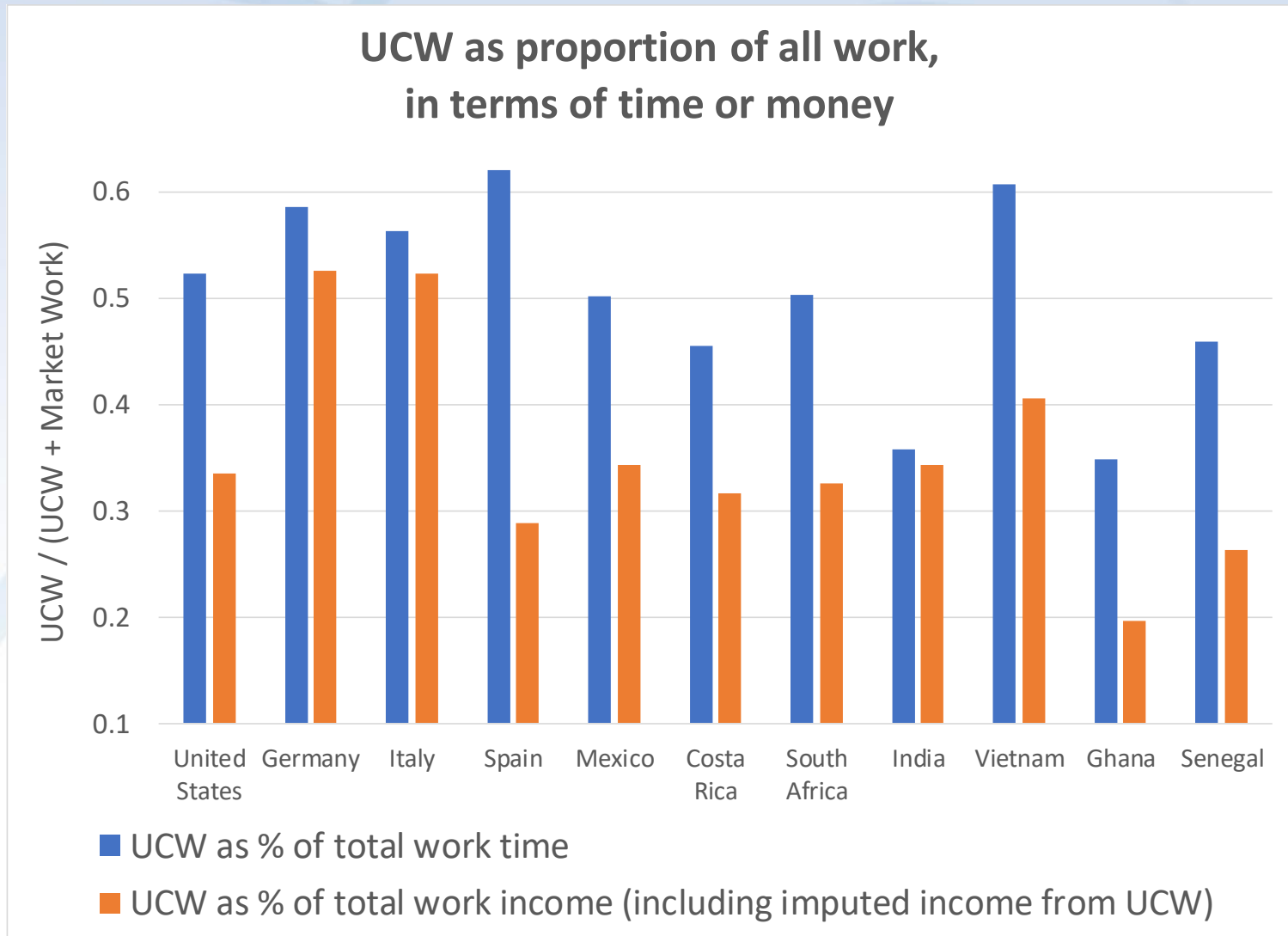
Example (Vietnam, 2015)



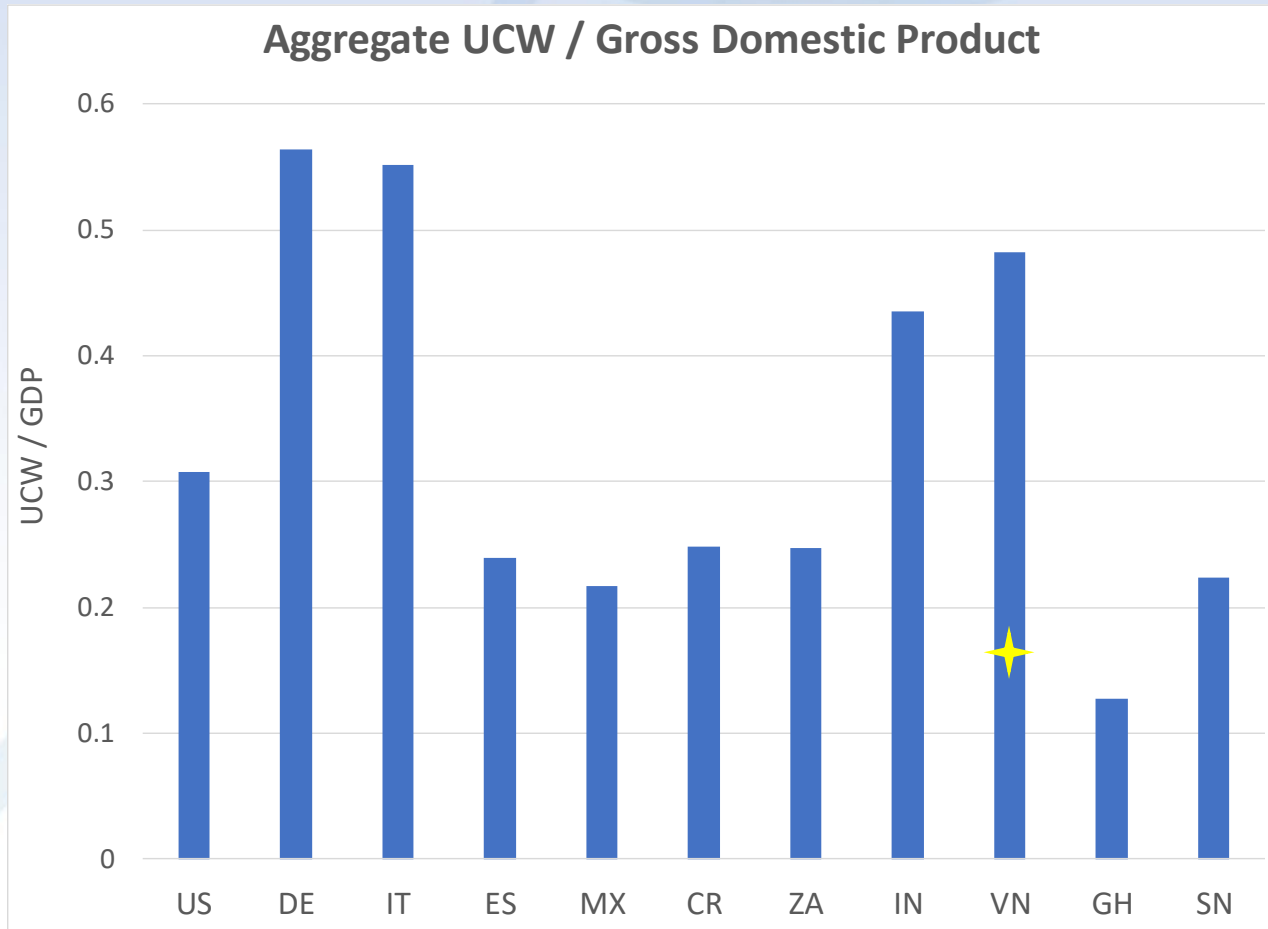
What do we see?

- Great deal of specialization by gender in economic participation in many different types of countries
- UCW is a huge part of the economy but it is largely “invisible”
- Young children consume more in time than in market goods and services
- Age patterns appear very different if we consider the total economy

UCW is a lot of 🕒 but less \$

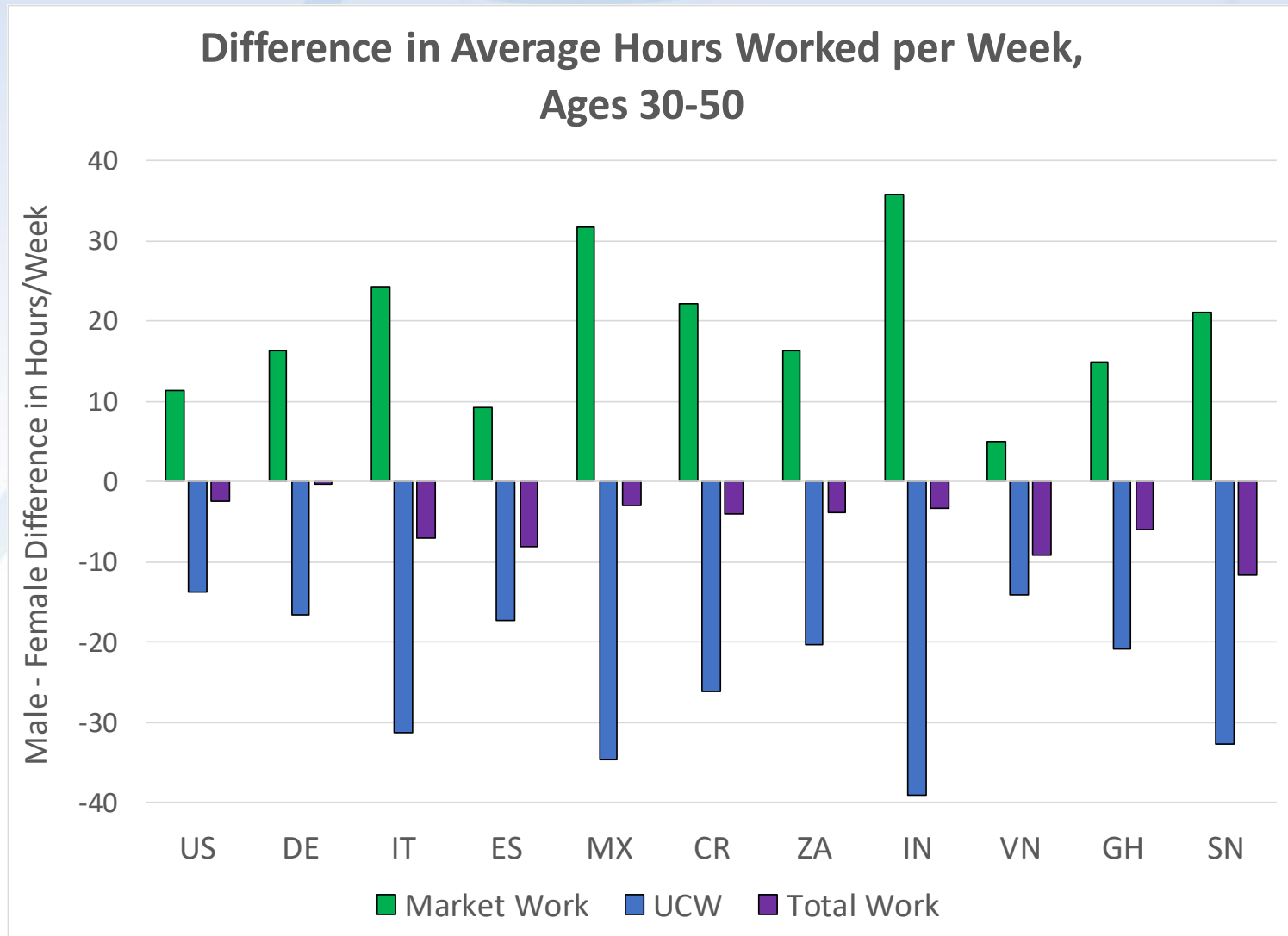


UCW relative to GDP



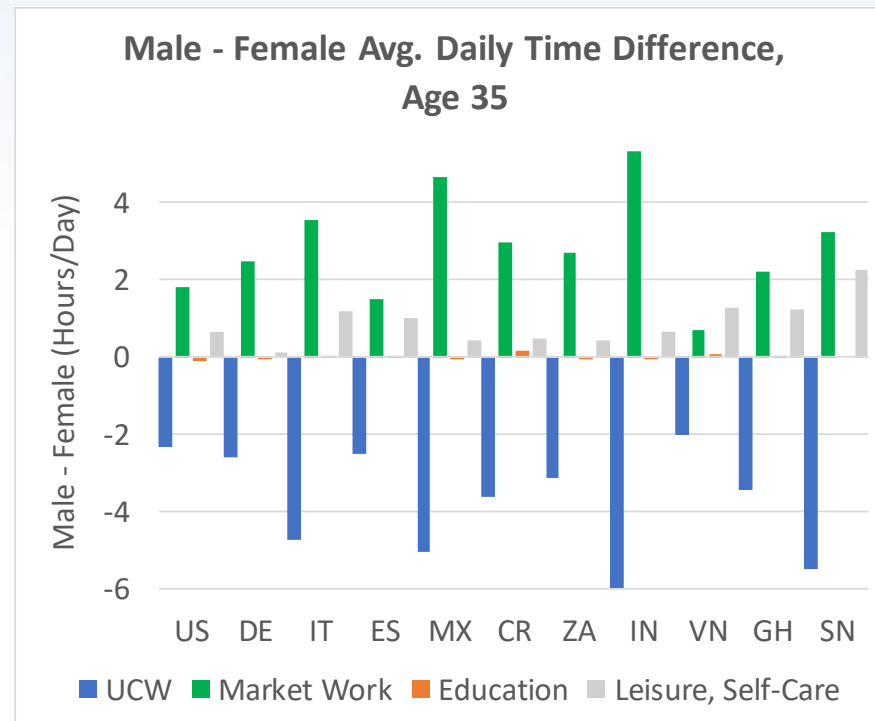
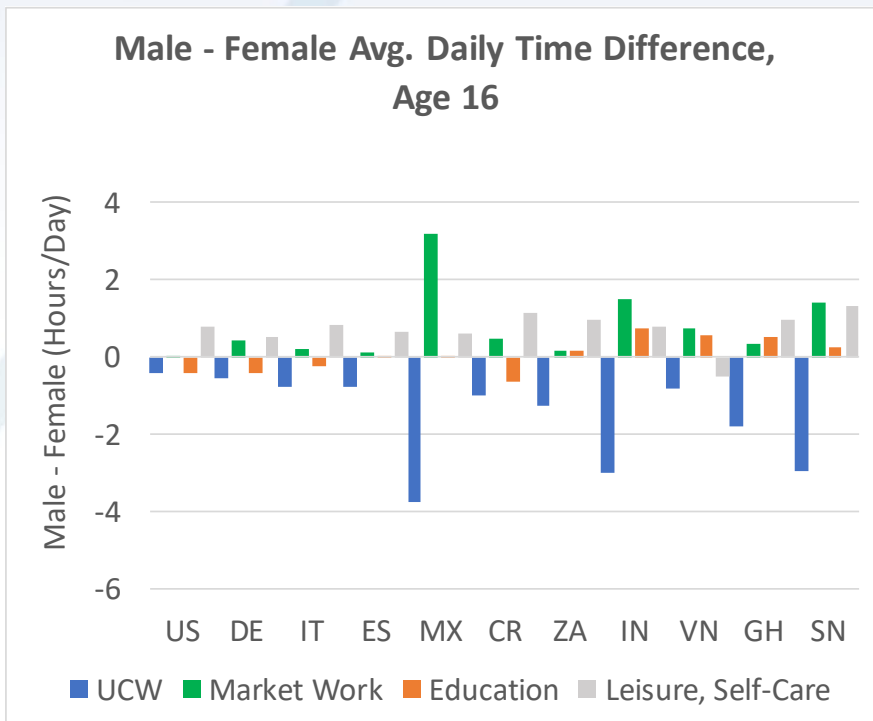
Vietnam's UCW relative to GDP is shown two ways: Blue bar is value using minimum wage to value UCW (48%), yellow star is value using specialist replacement wages (17%).

Women specialize in UCW and spend more time in total work

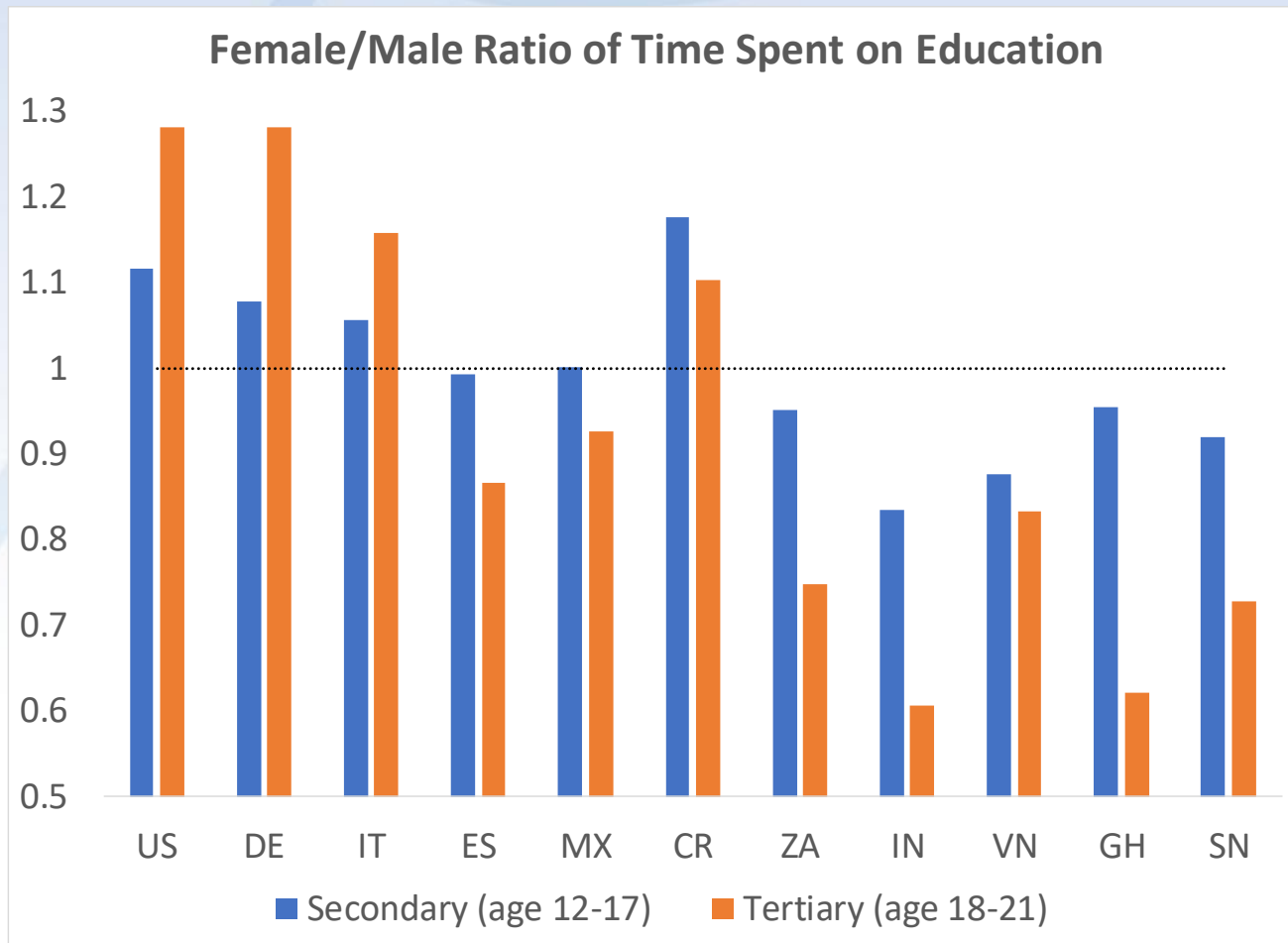


Is all this UCW a problem?

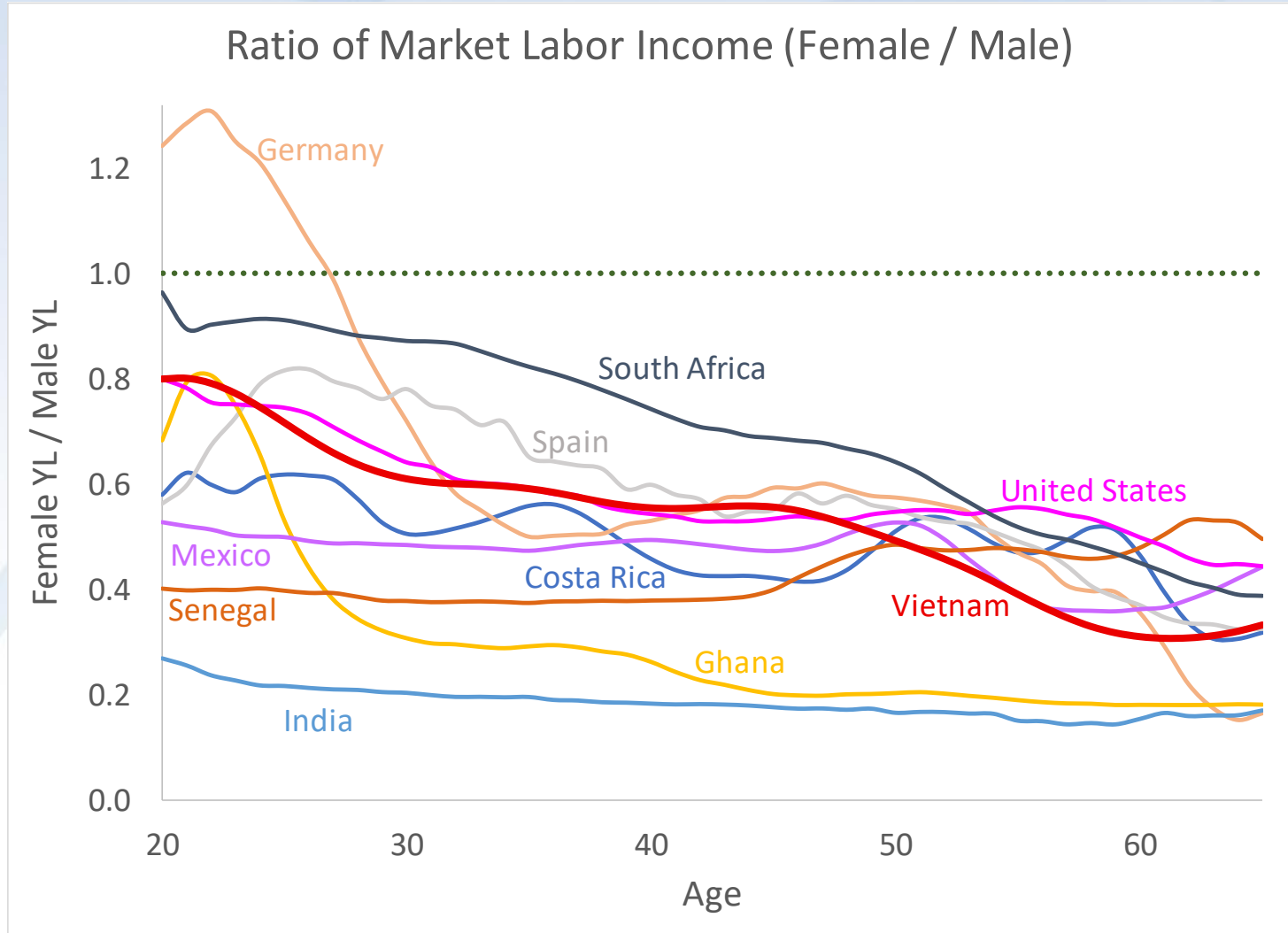
- For girls
 - Crowd out education?
 - Specializing in UCW at young age?
- For women
 - Barrier to market work or job search?
 - Create time poverty?



Beyond enrollment: time



Gender in Market Work



What do we see?

- Great diversity in gender gap in market work
- Strong trend in many countries of greater gender gaps at older ages
 - Cohort change?
 - Increasing household and care responsibilities with age?

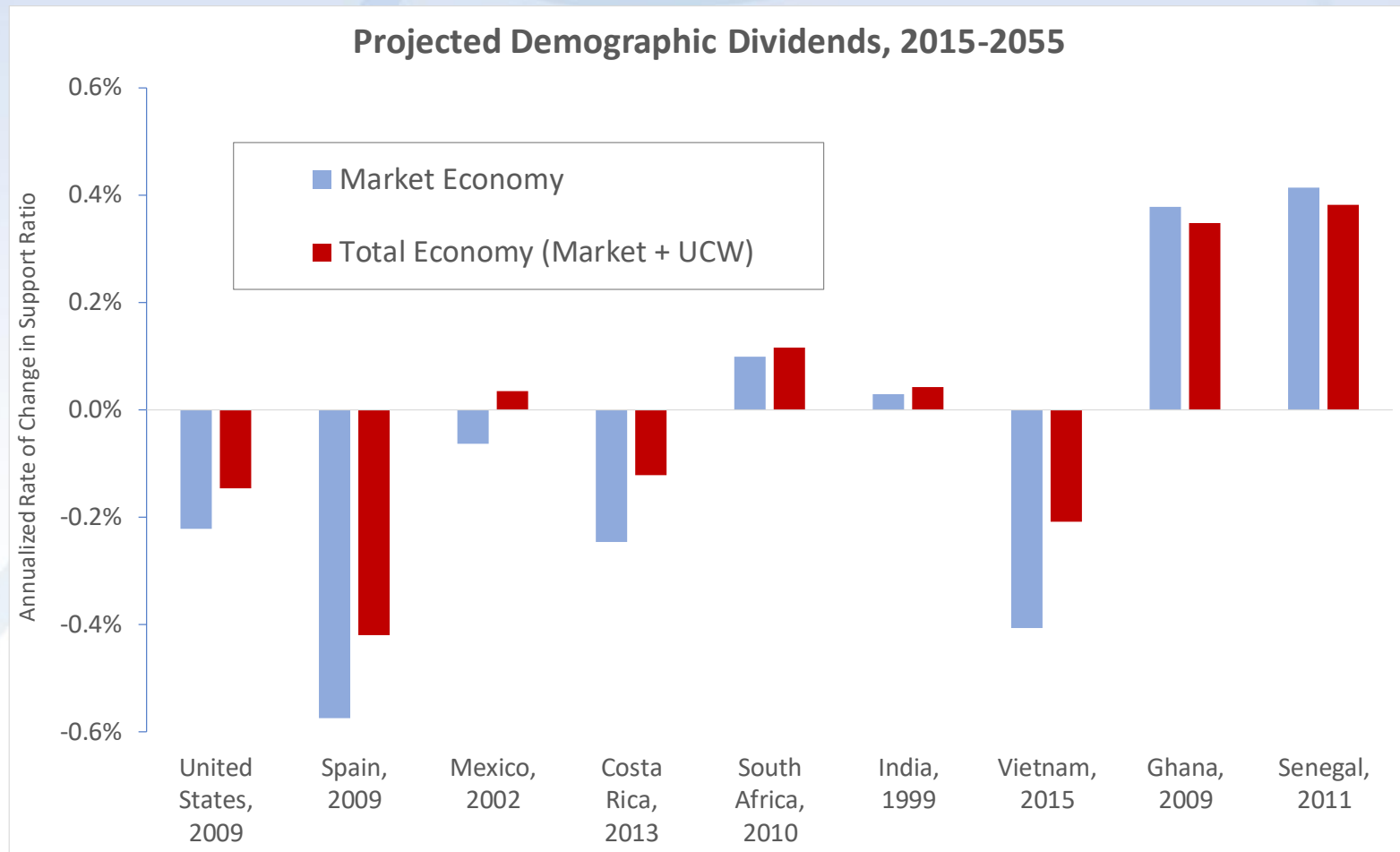
Policy relevance

- Gender equity
 - In investment, work, and time
 - New research showing the gender wage gap is a parenthood wage gap, but falls on mothers
- Efficiency
 - Are housework and care responsibilities a barrier to market work?
 - Can infrastructure make housework time more efficient?
- Inclusiveness
 - Do we make incorrect policy when we only measure some work? And some consumption?

UCW invisibility → policy “blindspots”

- Human capital investment
 - Returns may be lower if girls do a lot of UCW
 - Child marriage is also a child labor issue
- Infrastructure investment
 - Returns may be higher than expected if investments decrease UCW burdens
- Policies to capture demographic dividends
 - Depend on gender and UCW dynamics to realize full potential

Analysis example: demographic dividends



What to do?

- Remove barriers to women's and girls' full economic participation
 - End discrimination in wages, access to capital, labor market, etc.
 - Address inequality in unpaid care and housework
 - Recognize
 - Reduce
 - Redistribute (Elson 2008)
- Maximizes return from all other development investment

Data gaps

- Need more and better time use surveys, harmonized across time and place
- How to measure time use of younger children?
- Will be needed for monitoring SDGs related to unpaid care work
- Will be needed to better understand care needs in aging populations