

The unequal distribution of Unpaid Care Work represents a violation of women's rights, acting as a barrier to their economic empowerment, hindering their potential economic contributions to the national economy, and obstructing progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment.

These sentiments were underscored this Thursday at Marriot Hotel in Kigali during a presentation of a Policy Brief titled "The Inequitable Burden of Unpaid Care Work in Rwanda."

The research findings were gleaned from interviews conducted across various districts in Rwanda, including Burera, Rwamagana, Gicumbi, Nyabihu, and Musanze. This presentation was meticulously crafted by the Institute of Policy Analysis and Research, Rwanda (IPAR), a prominent independent Think Tank in the country.

During the presentation of a Policy Brief Paper, researchers, experts and policymakers urged stakeholders and legislators to take concrete actions towards recognizing and crediting the unpaid domestic work being performed.

Eugenie Kayitesi, the Executive Director of IPAR-Rwanda, emphasized that women, being among the least educated demographic, predominantly shoulder the burden of unpaid work within households.



*Eugenie Kayitesi, the Executive Director of IPAR-Rwanda*

"Reducing and redistributing the burden of unpaid care work serves as a catalyst for inclusive national development, fostering greater gender equality and socioeconomic progress for all," Kayitesi said.

She stressed the importance of engaging policymakers and decision-makers in advocating for the rights of unpaid workers as a means to address this issue.

"Our campaign's primary objective is to alleviate the burden of unpaid work in Rwanda and effect positive change in the lives of Rwandans," she added.

Silas Ngayaboshya, the Director General in Charge of Gender Promotion and Women Empowerment at the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, labeled unpaid work as a manifestation of gender inequality.

He highlighted the societal perception that domestic responsibilities are inherently women's duties as a significant concern for policymakers.

"The prevailing societal attitudes towards unpaid work disproportionately affect women, leaving them at a distinct disadvantage. It's imperative that this mindset undergoes a transformation," he stressed.



*Group photo of participants during the presentation of the brief policy paper*

According to the UN Women Report 2022, women in Rwanda dedicate approximately 26.7 hours per week to unpaid work, compared to men's 16.1 hours. Women above the age of 16 spend 3 hours per week collecting firewood, as opposed to men's 2 hours, while 4 hours are allocated to fodder search for females compared to 7 hours for males.

The report further highlights that women bear the brunt of escalating prices of essential goods during crises and endure heightened workloads during the aftermath of climate-related disasters.

Similarly, the International Labor Organization underscores that domestic unpaid work contributes significantly to the global GDP, accounting for 40% of its value.