Issues in time-use measurement and valuation

Lessons from African experience on technical and analytical issues

Jacques Charmes

Economist

Institute of Research for Development (IRD, Paris)

African experience

- Recent national time-use surveys
 - ◆ Benin 1998
 - ◆ Nigeria 1999 (pilot)
 - ◆ South Africa 2000
 - ◆ Madagascar 2001
 - ◆ Mauritius 2003
 - ◆ Tunisia 2005
- Modules in living standard surveys
 - ◆ Ghana 1991-92 and 1998-99

African experience

- Many local surveys on work time in agricultural and subsistence activities (Senegal, Cameroon, Guinea)
- Surveys on activity patterns and energy expenditure (Cameroon)

Planned surveys

- The African Centre for Gender and Development (ACGD) of the Economic Commission for Africa is about to launch a program of time-use continuous household surveys in
 - South Africa
 - ◆ Uganda
 - ◆ Cameroon
 - Djibouti

Table: Time devoted to economic activity and to work, by gender in various countries.

	Benin (1998)			South Africa (2000)			Madagascar (2001)			Mauritius (2003)		
	Women	Men	W om en / M en	Women	Men	W om en / M en	Women	M en	W om en / M en	Women	Men	W om en / M en
SNA productio n	3 h 5 5 m n	3 h 5 5 m n	100%	1 h 5 5 m n	3 h 1 0 m n	61%	2 h 5 5 m n	4 h 5 0 m n	60%	1 h 56 m n	4 h 5 6 m n	39%
Extended SNA productio n: Domestic activities, carework	3 h 28 m n	1 h 7	310%	3 h 48 m n	1 h 1 5 m n	304%	3 h 4 1 m n	47 m n	470%	4h 37mn	1 h 1 3 m n	379%
Work	7h 23mn	5 h 2 m n	147%	5 h 4 3 m n	4 h 2 5 m n	129%	6h 36mn	5 h 3 7 m n	118%	6h 33mn	6 h 9 m n	106%
% SNA in work	53.0%	77.8%	68.2%	33.5%	71.7%	47.0%	44.2%	86.1%	51.0%	29.5%	80.2%	36.8%

Technical Issues

- Notion of time
- Seasonality and sampling procedures
- Simultaneous activities

How to capture time slots of 10, 15 or 30 minutes among populations with no watch or clock?

The divides of the day among the Soussou of Guinea.

Toxè singé raté

Toxé firindé raté

Subaha

Kuè yalan béré

Waliha

Sogé xono
 When the sun is at its zenith in the middle of the day (noon)

Sogé xono yanyi ra When the sun is at its zenith in the middle of the day(noon)

Sèli fana

Laxansara

Fitiri

Sarafu

Sa tèmui

Kuè tègi

The first cockcrow

The second cockcrow

On very early morning

At the time when the night is cured

Work hour (6 o'clock)

The prayer (2 o'clock)

The frog hour

The decline of the day

The time when one play music (9 o'clock)

The time to go to bed

The middle of the night

Seasonality and sampling procedures

- Several types of surveys
 - ◆ Surveys with one-off observation
 - Repeated surveys with two or four observations in a year
 - Rainy season (short rainy season, long rainy season)
 - Dry season (short dry season, long dry season)
 - ◆ Surveys with continuous rotating sample (the total sample is distributed across the country and over the 12 months of the year)

Simultaneous activities

- When recording the activities of an entire day, many of them may occur simultaneously
 - ◆ Socialising can take place while working, travelling, preparing meals, etc.
 - ◆ Caring for children of adults can take place while working for market activities or for domestic activities as well as while socialising.
- These activities are very often under-reported because the interviewer does not repeat systematically the question
- Double-counting can be misleading and raises the question of weighting between the simultaneous activities

Political and analytical Issues

- Weak use of time-use surveys for policy purposes
- Weak use of time-use surveys for analytical purposes

Weak use of time-use surveys for analytical purposes

Common analyses

- by age group and sex
- by urban and rural areas
- by matrimonial status (not married, married, married to a polygamous)
- by employment status (own-account worker, wage-earner, family worker)

Uncommon analyses

- by socio-economic status of the household head
- by income group of the household
- by educational level of the individual
- by health status of the individual
- by proximity of infrastructures (health, education, market)

Weak use of time-use surveys for analytical purposes

Why?

- because time-use surveys are too often ad-hoc surveys rather than a section of a multi-purpose survey
- because the publication of the surveys remains at the stage of preliminary results or descriptive results
- because policy-makers do not make use of the results

Weak use of time-use surveys for policy purposes

Why?

- Because the results of the surveys remain at preliminary or descriptive stage
- ◆ Because policy makers are not aware of the potential usefulness of time-use analyses
- ◆ Because time-use surveys and time-use analyses remain an inter-UN agencies exercise

Conclusion

- Africa experienced a lot of surveys in the recent period
- But this experience is characterised by an under-use of the survey results by policy makers and even UN agencies
- Improving the awareness and interest of national institutions in the use of time-use surveys is therefore a major objective, together with the multiplication and repetition of such surveys.