

The importance of time-use surveys in guiding social policies

COVID-19's gendered impact on paid and unpaid work in the Caribbean

Daniel Leon, Associate Social Affairs Officer

Shirelle Floyd, Consultant

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Outline of Presentation

- Background of the study
- The source of data for the study
- The gendered time-use impact of COVID-19 on paid work
- The gendered time-use impact of COVID-19 on unpaid work
- Considerations for the design of time-use surveys in the Caribbean
- Conclusion

Background for the study

- Socially constructed norms place women as caregivers in our society
- Surveys performed by different international organizations show that COVID-19 impacted women's and men's time-use in paid and unpaid work differently
- Time-use increases affect people's ability to rejoin the labour market
- If women are more adversely affected than men, then the gender gap in unemployment widens

Source of data for the study

- The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), in collaboration with the United Nations International Telecommunication Union (ITU), undertook a Rapid Gender Assessment Survey of the impacts of COVID-19 in the Caribbean
- The survey was conducted online between September 2021 and January 2022
- The survey included retrospective questions on the impact the pandemic on the time-use of paid and unpaid work
- 1592 women and 565 men in 17 Caribbean countries and territories responded to the survey

Employment status of the survey respondents before COVID-19

	Men (%)	Women (%)
I worked for a person/company/institution/household (for pay)	61.2	56.4
I had my own business/freelanced, and I employed other people	4.5	2.7
I had my own business/freelanced, but I did not employ other people	5.1	4.5
I helped (without pay) in a family business	2.5	1.4
I am retired; pensioner	3.6	3.4
I did not work (I was not looking for a job, and I was not available to work)	1.5	3.6
I did not work because I am studying full-time	5.1	4.3
I did not work as I have a long-term health condition, injury, disability	0.9	1.6
I did not work, but I was looking for a job, and I was available to start working	6.9	9.2
Other	4.0	6.4
Prefer not to answer	4.7	6.5

The gendered time-use impact of COVID-19 on paid work

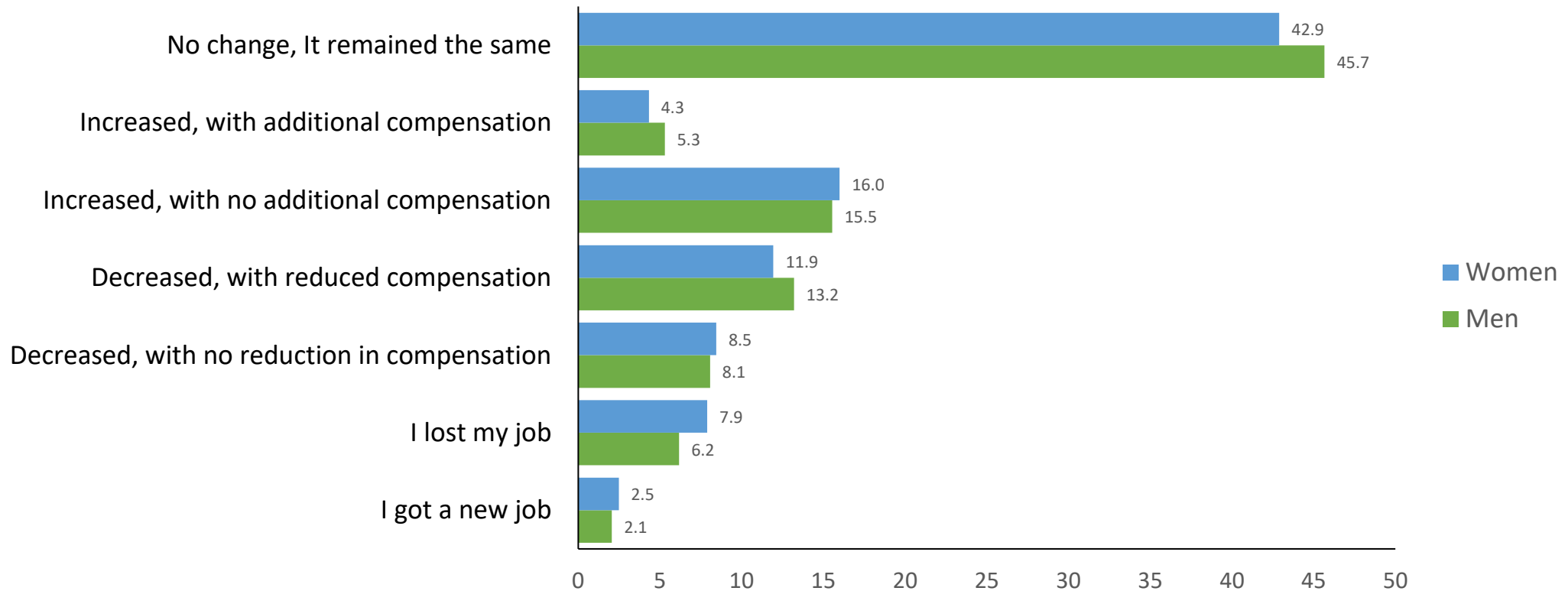


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COVID-19 was only slightly more detrimental to women

Proportion of respondents reporting a change in the number of hours worked during COVID-19 by gender
(Percentages)

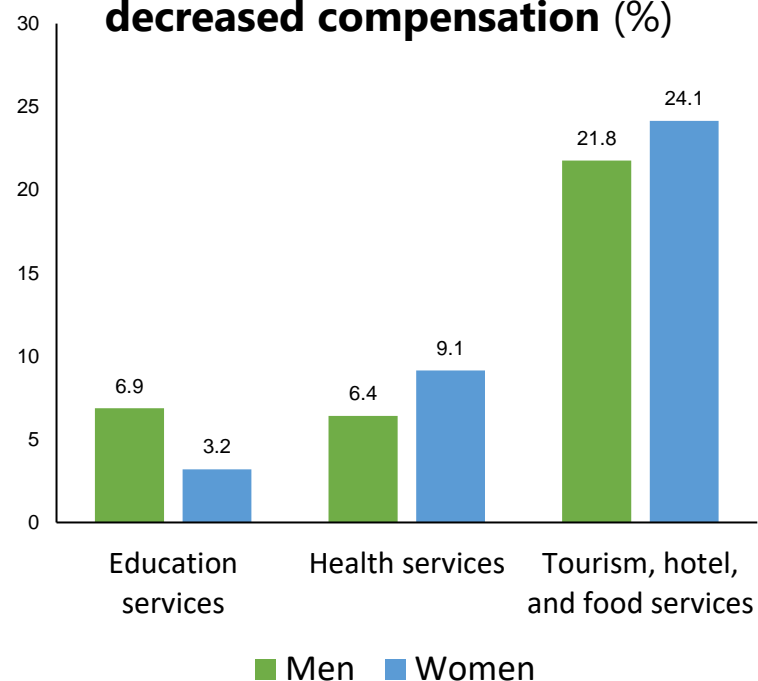


However, crucial sectors show COVID-19's differential effects on women and men

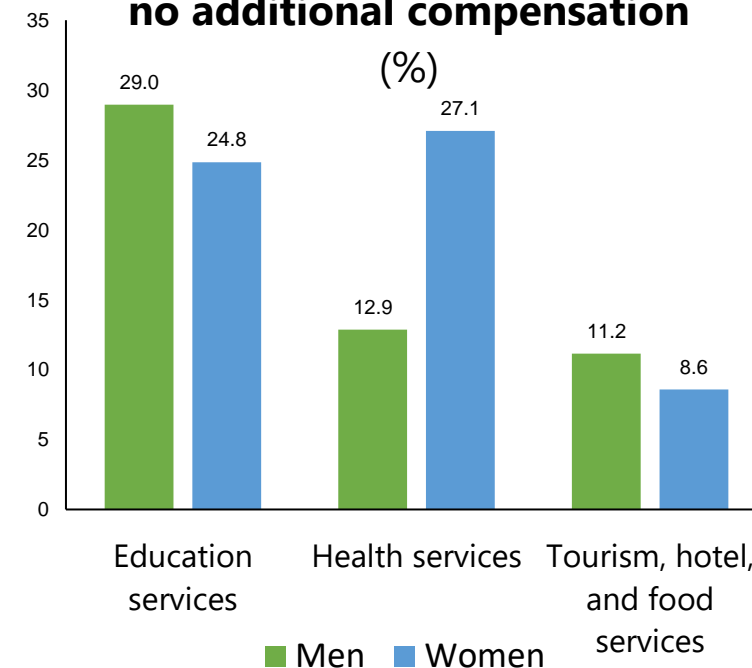
Respondents reporting job loss (%)



Respondents reporting decreased working hours with decreased compensation (%)



Respondents reporting increased working hours with no additional compensation (%)



The gendered time-use impact of COVID-19 on unpaid work

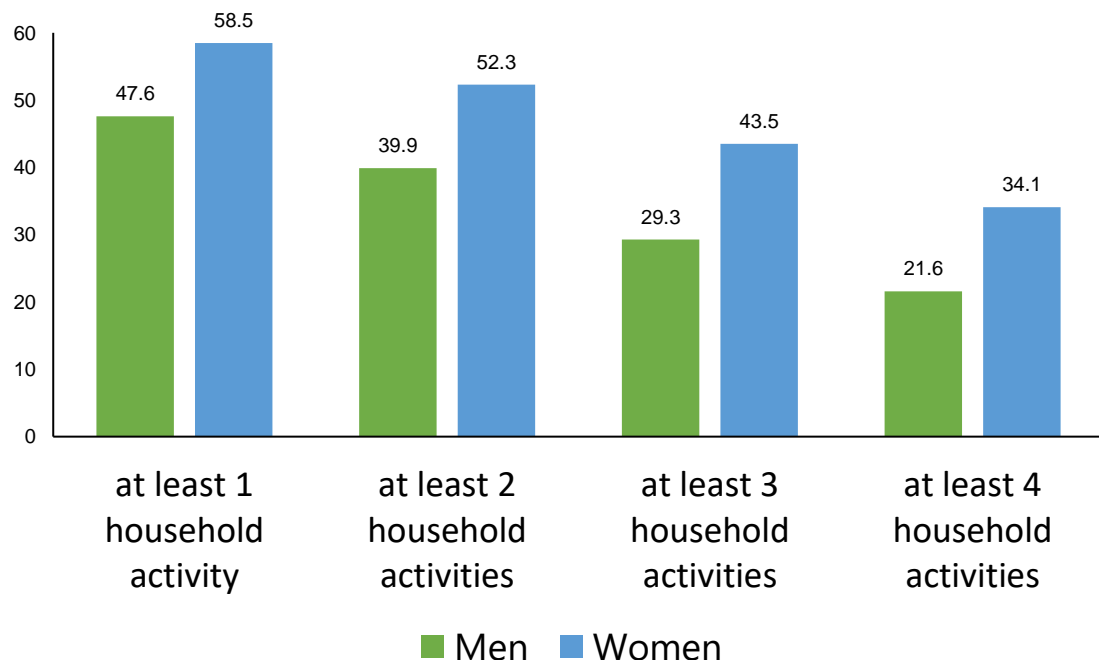


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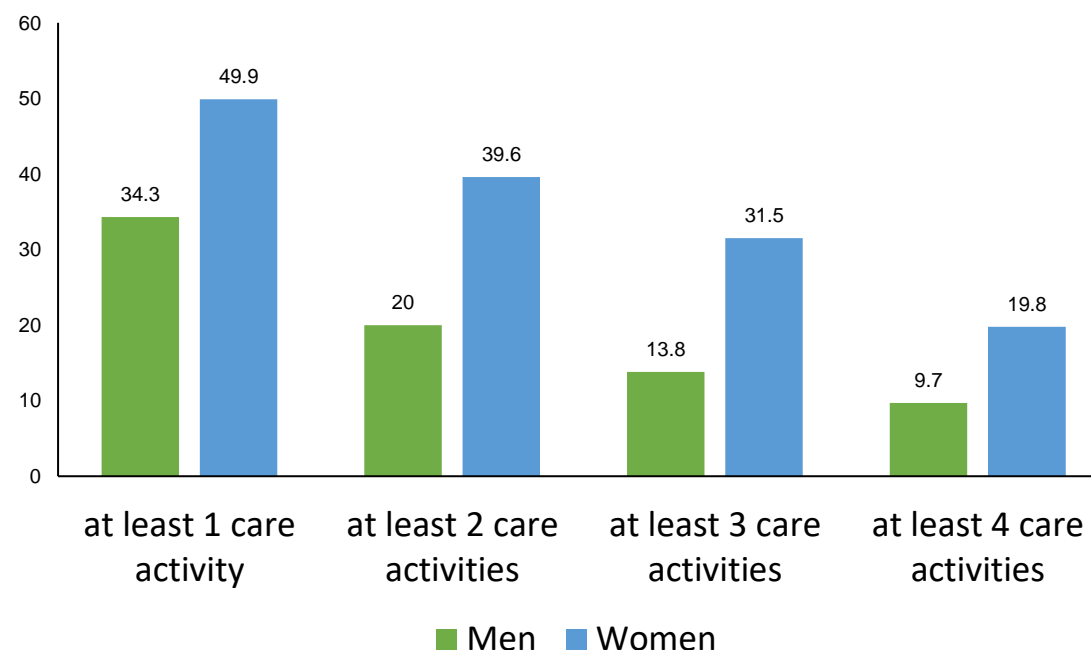
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Before COVID-19, women were mostly responsible for unpaid work

Household activities performed before COVID-19 by gender
(Percentages)



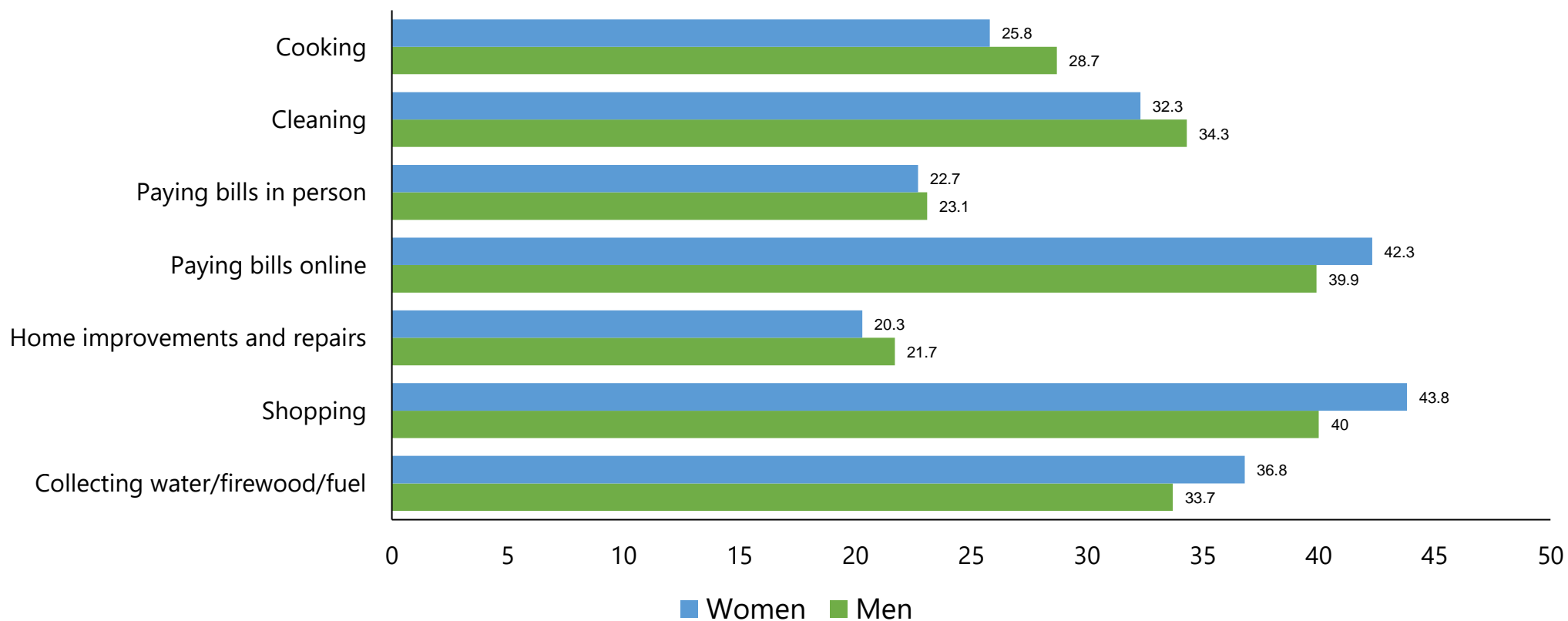
Care activities performed before COVID-19 by gender
(Percentages)



Little gender differences regarding unpaid household work

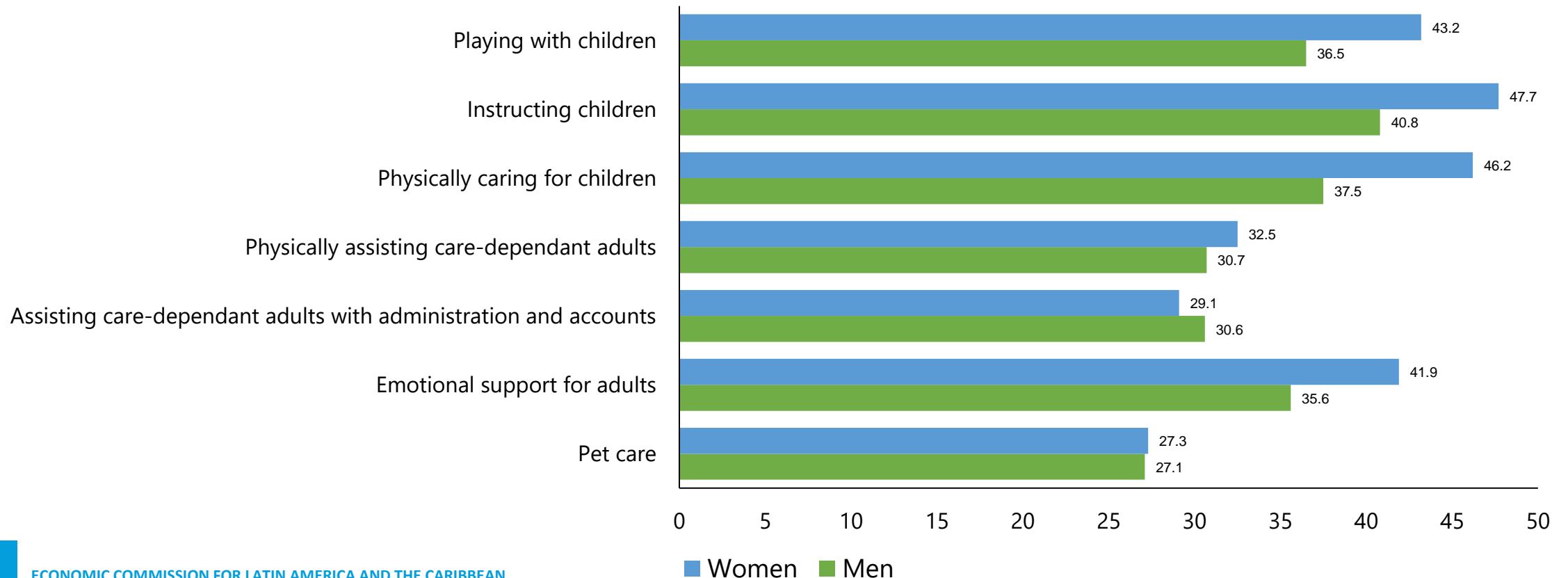
Proportion of respondents who reported increased time-use in household activities because of COVID-19 by gender

(Percentages)



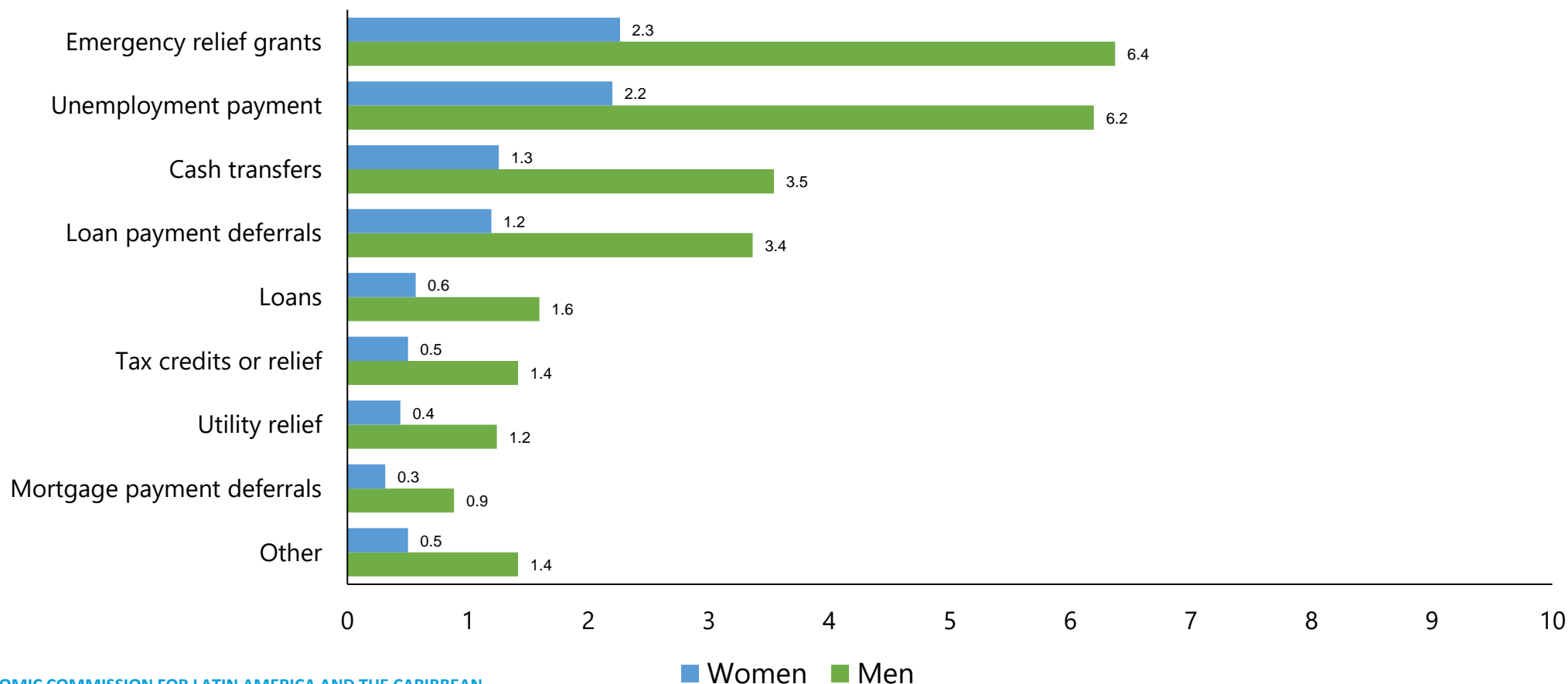
Women devoted more time to unpaid care work

Proportion of respondents who reported increased time-use to care activities because of COVID-19 by gender
(Percentages)



Gender disparities in public assistance receipts present a puzzle

Proportion of recipients of financial support from the government by gender
(Percentages)



Considerations for the design of time-use surveys in the Caribbean



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Time-use surveys help guide social policies

There are two types of time-use survey questions:

- *Stylized questions*
- *Diary questions*

Stylized time-use survey questions

Open question variant

Q: How much time do you spend feeding, bathing, changing diapers, dressing, putting to bed, talking to, minding or playing with a child (0 and 5 years) in your household on a typical day during the last week?

[2] hours, [30] minutes

Closed version variant

Q: Last week, how many hours did you spend providing unpaid care or assistance to one or more seniors?

- None
- Less than 5 hours
- 5 to 14 hours
- 15 to 29 hours
- 30 to 59 hours
- 60 hours or more

Diary time-use survey questions

Structured variant

Activity categories	15:00–16:00	16:00–17:00	17:00–18:00	19:00–20:00
Sleeping and resting				
Cooking and eating			X	
Employed work	X			
Caring for children			X	X
Commuting		X		

Semi-structured variant

Time period	Description of activities (Up to 3 activities per time period)	Same time? (yes or no)	Location 1	Location 2
15:00–16:00	Working	Yes	Work	
16:00–17:00	Working, Driving home	No	Work	On the road
17:00–18:00	Cooking, Eating, taking care of children	Yes	Home	
19:00–20:00	Taking care of children, watching TV	No	Home	

Conclusions

- Women were more affected by job loss
- Women were particularly burdened with unpaid work
- Time-use surveys could provide critical data to guide social policies

Thank you for your attention!



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