



## Seminari di Economia

Giovedì 22 giugno 2023

Ore 12:00 – Aula Anfiteatro

Facoltà di Scienze Economiche Giuridiche e Politiche - Via Sant'Ignazio 17

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### *Understanding the Gender Division of Work across Countries*

con Charles Gottlieb, Cheryl Doss, and Douglas Gollin

**Abstract.** We harmonize high-quality time use data for many countries and document patterns of market, domestic and care work across the development spectrum. We find large gender gaps that vary with development. Women's market work is U-shaped in country per capita income, while household production by women is hump-shaped. For men, market work declines and household production rises in per capita income. The ratio of female to male market hours is lower in low-income compared to high-income countries, and is lowest in middle-income countries. In contrast, the ratio of female to male hours worked in care and in domestic services is much higher in low- and middle-income countries than in high-income ones. To understand the economic forces behind these facts, we write down a rich yet tractable model of household labor supply with home production. The model allows us to jointly consider a large number of determinants of labor supply that have been proposed, often separately, in the literature. The model can be inverted in closed form, so that the structural determinants of households' work choices by gender and marital status can be directly inferred from our data on observed hours worked and on wages. Some of our main findings are that 1) the low level of market work by women in middle- compared to low-income countries mostly reflects higher wages of their spouses, whereas 2) the high level of market work by women in high- compared to middle-income countries predominantly reflects lower disutility of market work and 3) higher household production by males in richer countries reflects higher household-level efficiency in household production, as well as lower relative disutility of males in household production. The more equal division of market and household work in the US over time reflects wage trends, but also a declining gender gap in the differential disutility of market work and household production, as well as a greater female weight in the household utility function.

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