



Women's Time Allocation and Dietary Outcomes in Bungoma County, Kenya

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Background

"Gender-just food and nutrition security (FNS)" means a world without hunger, in which...

❖ **roles, responsibilities, opportunities and choices** available to women and men are not predetermined at birth¹

➤ women, men, girls and boys have equal **access to nutritious, healthy food**¹

✓ **women, men, girls and boys have equal access** to nutritious, healthy food¹

However, in **Bungoma County, Kenya ...**

❖ **traditional gender norms** are widespread²

➤ **91%** of the population was classified as **severe food insecure**³

✓ **only 56%** of the women achieved the **minimum dietary diversity score**⁴

Research questions

- ❖ Can the reduction and redistribution of women's unpaid care work allow women to decide **how to allocate their time**?
- How is women's time allocation linked to **household FNS**, and through which pathways are these effects mediated?
- ✓ How is women's time allocation linked to **intra-household food allocation**, and through which pathways are these effects mediated?

Methodology

❖ Focus Group Discussions

- **Focus Group Discussions & Mediation Analysis**
 - Household Food Insecurity Access Scale Score
 - Household Dietary Diversity Score
 - Women's Empowerment in Livestock Index

✓ Focus Group Discussions & Linear Regression Models

- ✓ Individual Dietary Diversity Score
- ✓ Women's Empowerment in Livestock Index



Picture 1: Women carrying water on their heads (Own picture)

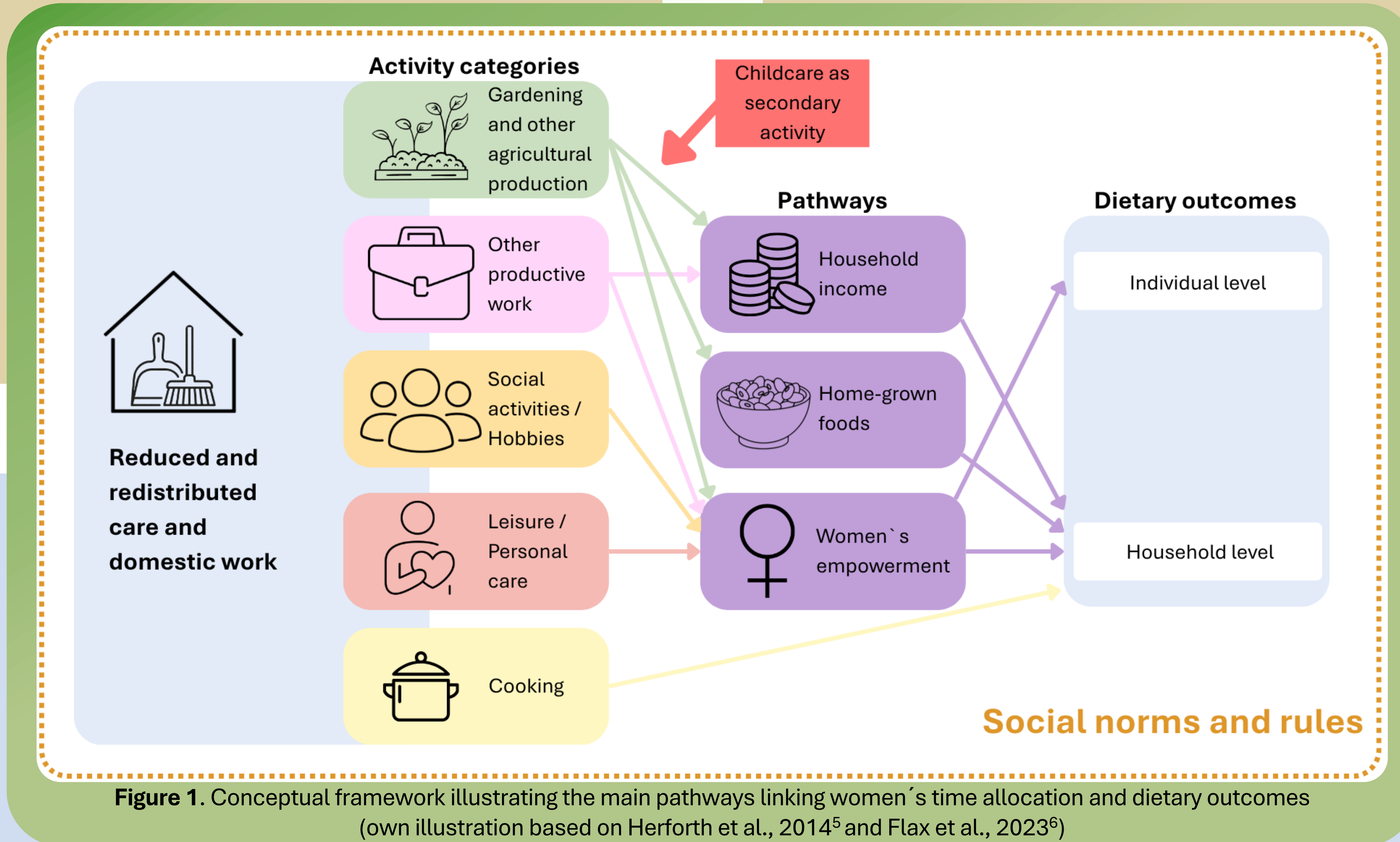


Figure 1. Conceptual framework illustrating the main pathways linking women's time allocation and dietary outcomes (own illustration based on Herforth et al., 2014⁵ and Flax et al., 2023⁶)

- ❖ Reducing and redistributing women's unpaid care work can **increase women's control over their time**. Social norms and role expectations remain limiting aspects.

- Reallocating women's time improves household FNS, mainly by **strengthening women's decision-making power**.

- ✓ Time reallocation is linked to more equitable intra-household food allocation, indicating **greater bargaining power**.

- ❖ **Reallocation of time:** Other domestic work, Gardening
- ❖ **Mainly through:** Home-gardens, Male engagement
- ❖ **Limitations:** Insufficient childcare facilities, Responsible for care work, Skill-based task allocation

- **Improved:** Household FNS
- **Mainly through:** Women's empowerment
- **Limitations:** Men have final say in decision-making

- ✓ **Improved:** Equality of intra-household food allocation
- ✓ **Mainly through:** Women's empowerment
- ✓ **Limitations:** Fixed serving order and food allocation

Conclusions

Results

References

Acknowledgements

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³ Schmaltz KM, Diallo A, Wafula Lwagale D, and Wekesa C (2025) Assessment of Food Security and Nutrition, Health, Water and Sanitation Access in Bungoma and Trans-Nzoia Counties in Kenya: LOVES Final Report Kenya. Online available at <https://researchportal.nacosti.go.ke/researcher/ApplicationsLibrary/view/1327/818045/28119>
⁴ Nutrition in City Ecosystems (NICE) project (2025) NUTRITION SURVEY - Key insights into nutrition status and consumer behavior in Bungoma. Online available at https://nice.ethz.ch/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/NICE_Nutrition-Survey_Shortreport_KENYA_Bungoma_20250918_final.pdf
⁵ Herforth A, and Harris, J (2014) Understanding and Applying Primary Pathways and Principles. Brief #1. Improving Nutrition through Agriculture Technical Brief Series. USAID/Strengthening Partnerships, Results, and Innovations in Nutrition Globally (SPRING) Project. Arlington. DOI: 10.13140/RG.2.1.2504.3922
⁶ Flax VL, Ouma EA, Baltenweck I, Omosa E, Girard AW, Jensen N, and Dominguez-Salas P (2023) Pathways from livestock to improved human nutrition: lessons learned in East Africa. In Food Sec. 15 (5), pp. 1293-1312. DOI: 10.1007/s12571-023-01382-4

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