

Social Reproduction, Gender Inequality and Economic Growth

Elissa Braunstein, UNCTAD & Colorado State University

Rachid Bouhia, UNCTAD

Stephanie Seguino, University of Vermont

Key question

How do care and social reproduction interact with gender inequality in the labor market to determine economic growth and development?

The paper

1. Theoretical macroeconomic model → “Social reproduction regimes”
 - Demand and growth
 - Supply and the distribution of social reproduction
2. Empirically estimate the model (principal component analysis)

The macroeconomics of social reproduction: *Some preliminaries*

Social reproduction

Time and commodities it takes to produce and maintain the labor force



Human capacities

Dynamics: Two time horizons

1. Daily aspects of social reproduction that raise current productivity
2. Long-term investments that raise future productive capacity and contribute to current demand

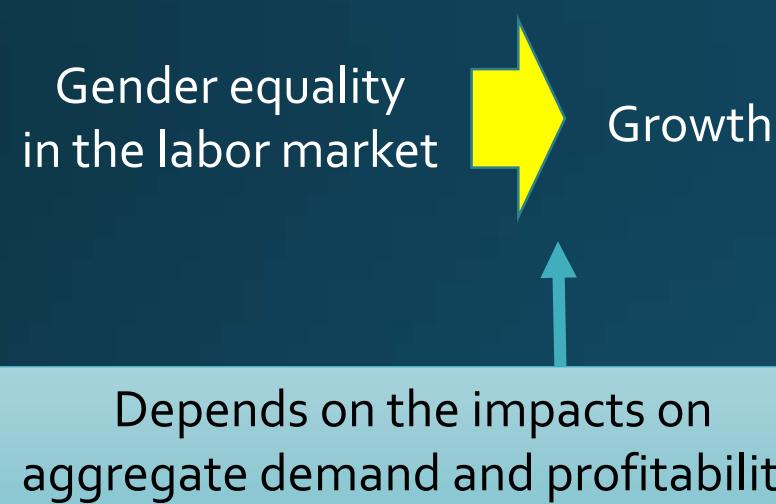
The Demand Side: Economic Growth



Some structuralist macro preliminaries

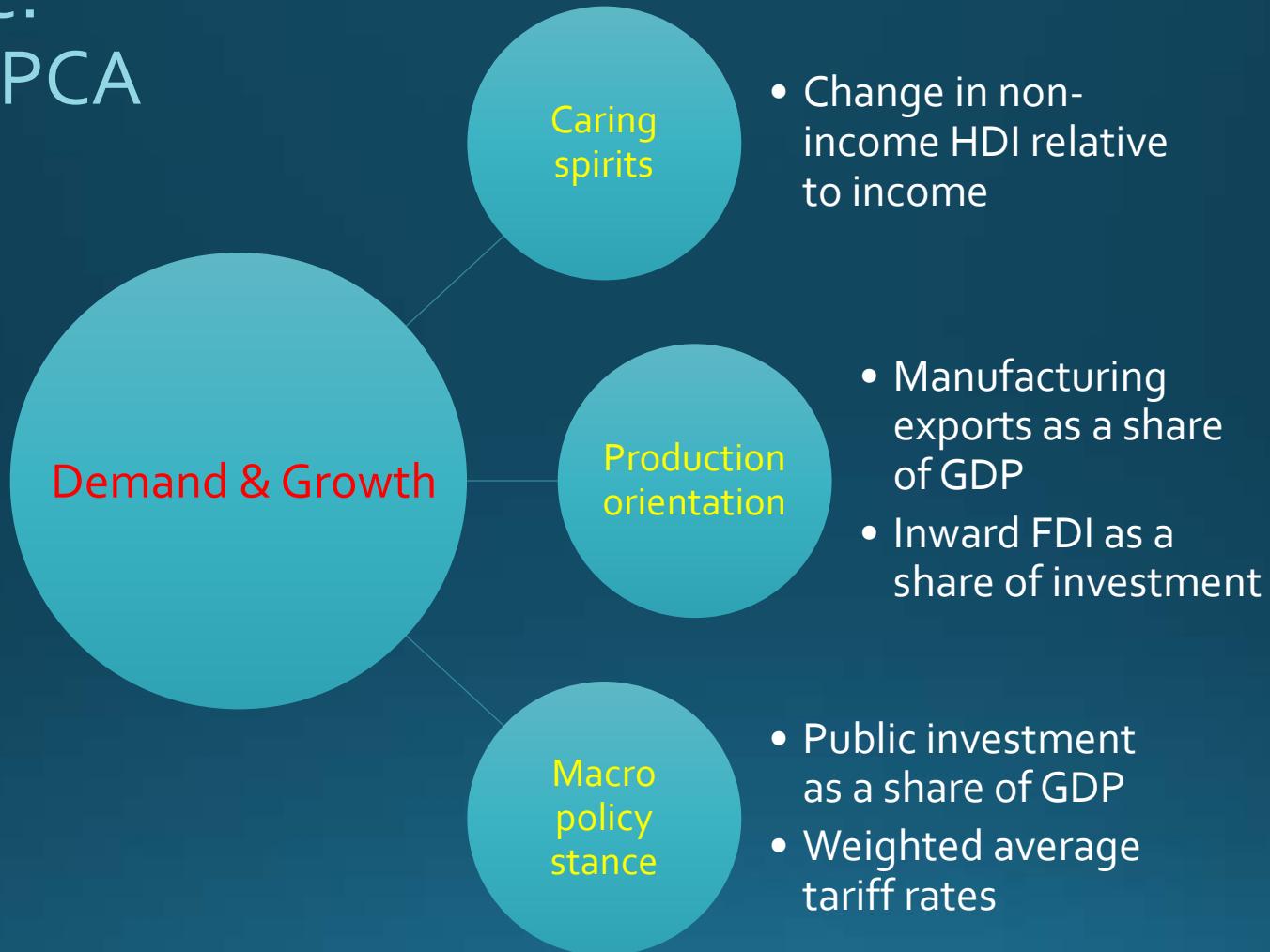
- Say's Law doesn't hold
- Firms function with excess capacity:
Economies are demand-constrained
- Macro problems stem from lack of investment and aggregate demand
- Distribution of income plays a central role in aggregate demand, investment and growth

The Demand Side: Economic Growth



Stylized types of economies		
	Wage-led/ altruistic	Profit-led/ individualistic
<i>Relationship between gender equality in the labor market & growth</i>	Positive	Negative
Characteristics		
<i>Caring spirits</i>	Strong	Weak
<i>Production orientation</i>	Domestic	External
<i>Macro policy stance</i>	Developmental, employment-oriented	Geared to managing openness

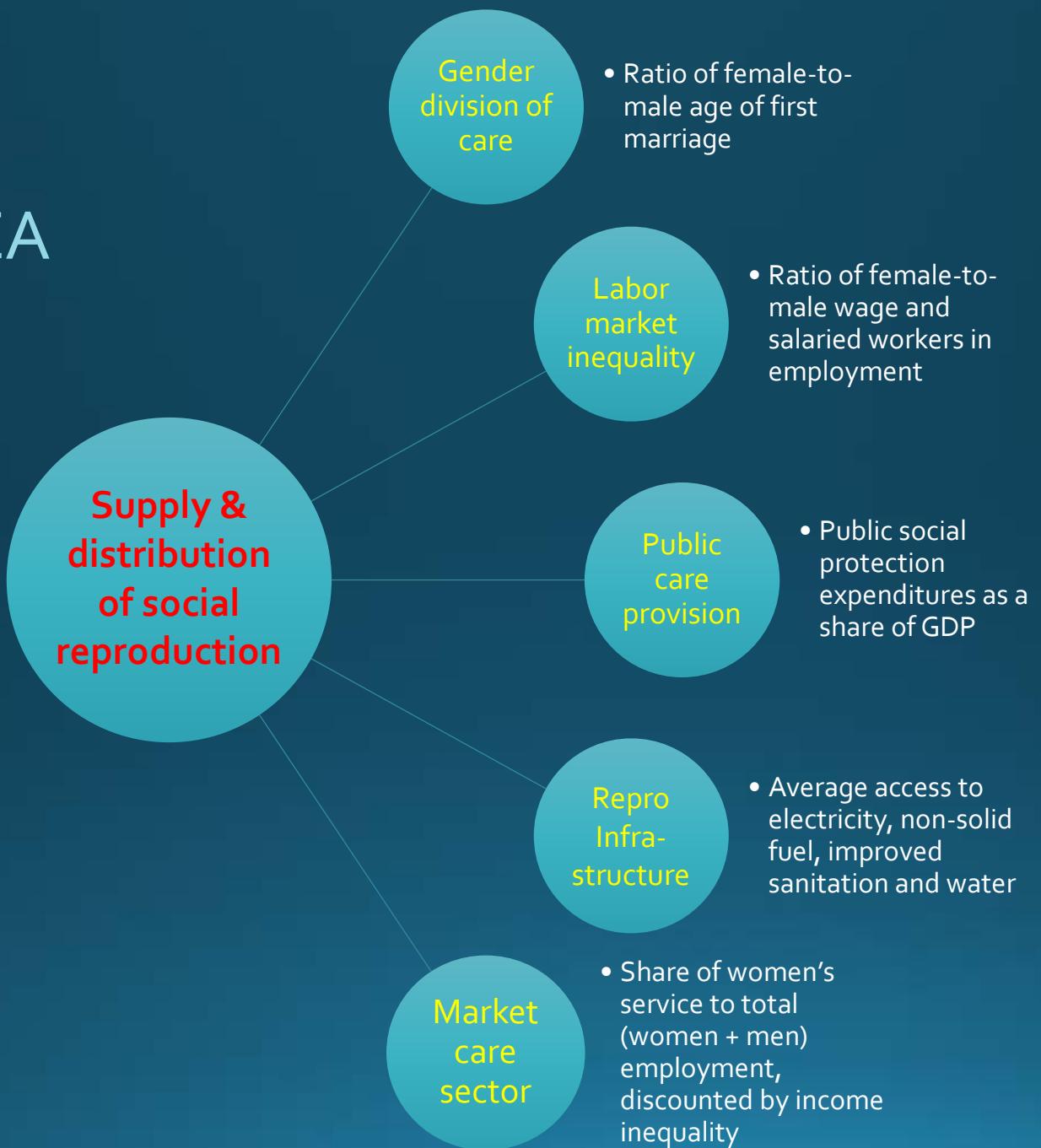
Demand side: Data for the PCA



The supply side: Distribution of social reproduction

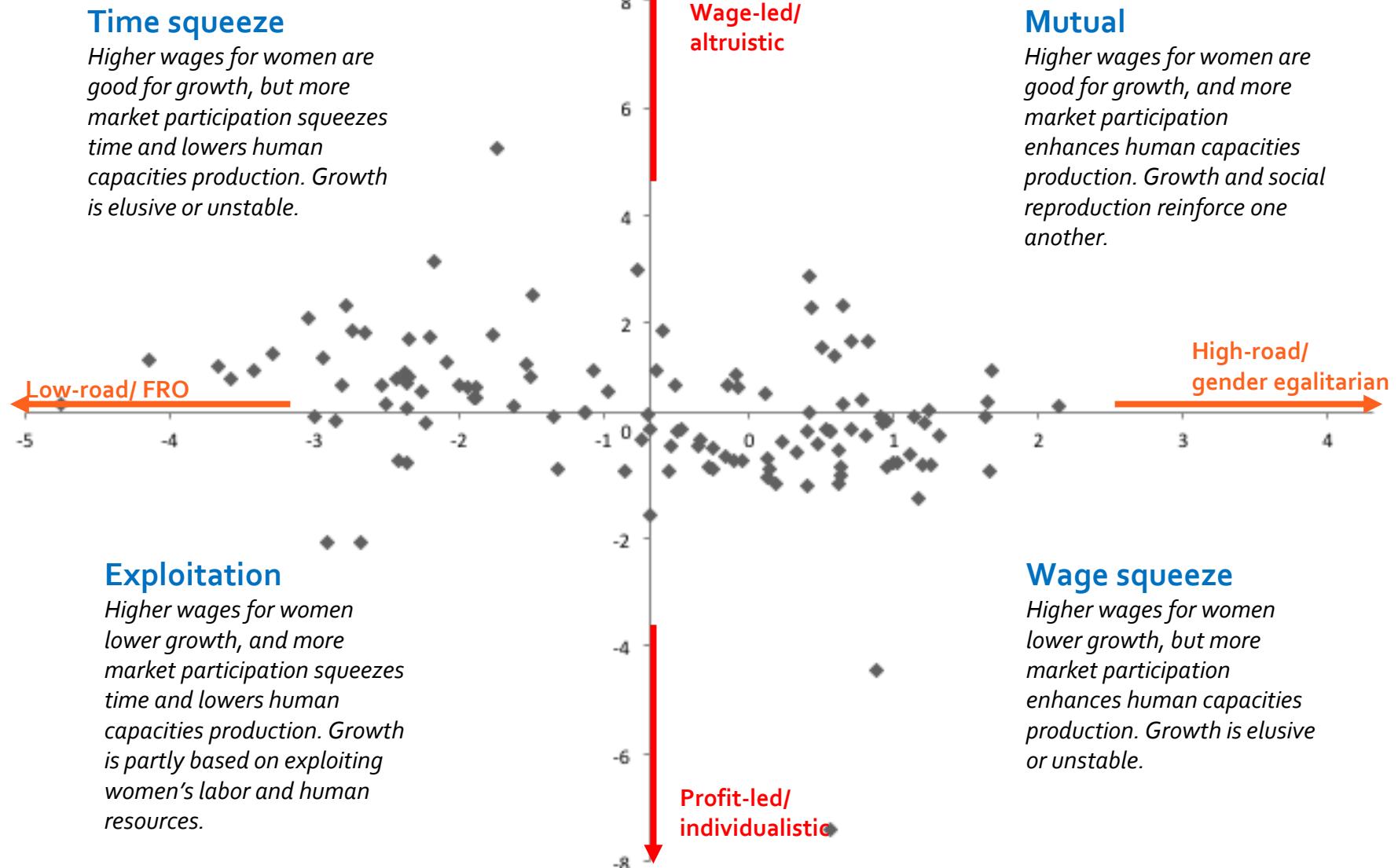
	Stylized types of economies	
	High-road/gender egalitarian	Low-road/feminization of responsibility and obligation
<i>Time and financial costs of social reproduction</i>	Equitably distributed among women, men and the state	Women shoulder disproportionate share of the costs
<i>Effects of increased female labor force participation on human capacities production</i>	Increase	Decrease
Characteristics		
<i>Unpaid care work</i>	Sharing between women & men	Low participation by men
<i>Public provision for care</i>	Strong	Weak
<i>Market care sector</i>	Extensive & high quality	Limited &/or low quality
<i>Labor market gender inequality</i>	Low	High
<i>Reproductive infrastructure</i>	Extensive	Limited

Supply side: Data for the PCA



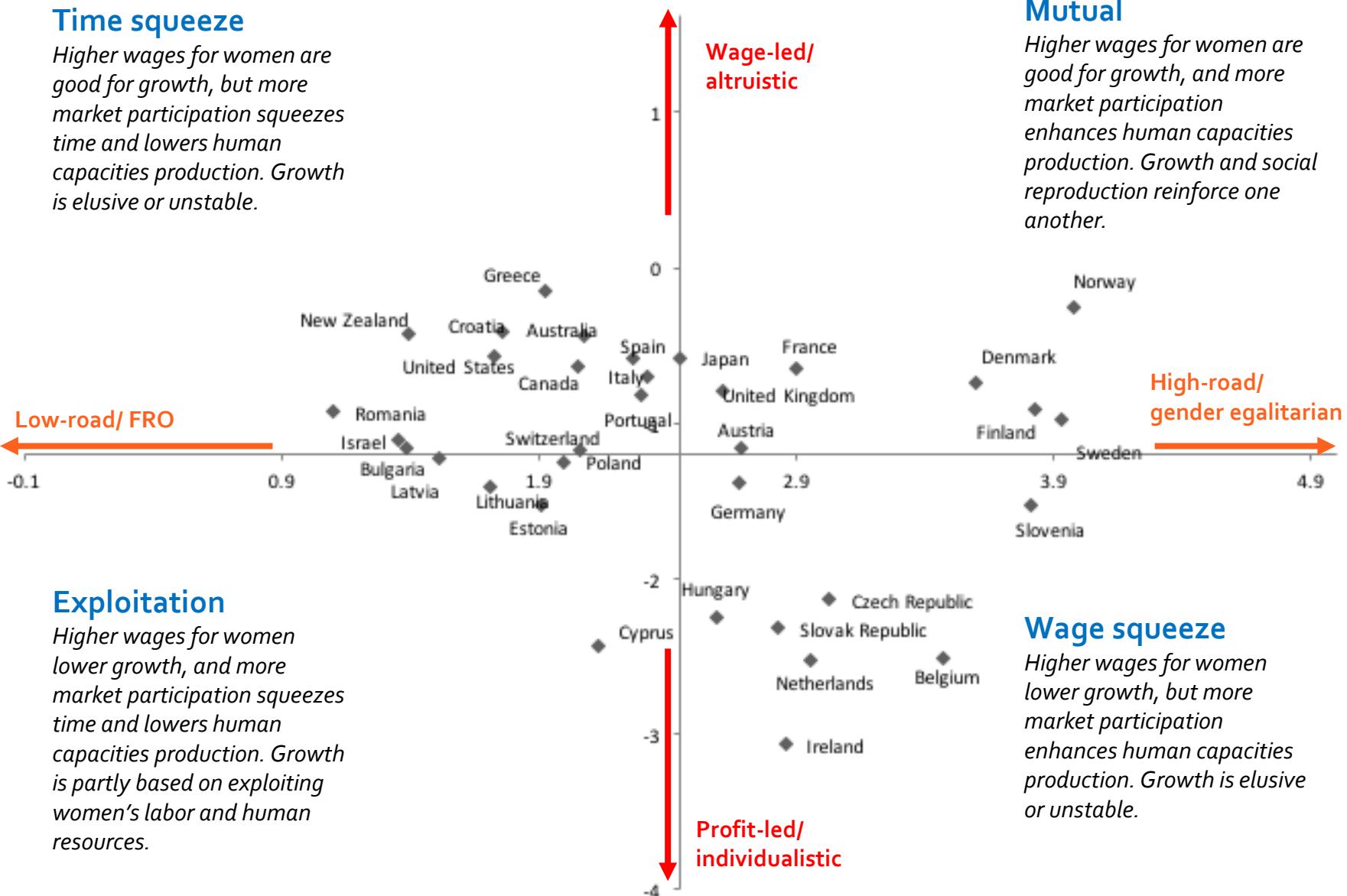
Social reproduction regimes, 2008-2015

Developing countries



Developed countries

Social reproduction regimes, 2008-2015



Time paths of social reproduction regimes, 1990-2015

