GENDER DIMENSIONS OF RURAL AND AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYMENT: DIFFERENTIATED PATWAYS OUT OF POVERTY

A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

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Introduction

This paper examines the links between gender equality and rural employment for poverty reduction by constructing a gender analytical framework to interpret differentiated patterns and conditions of work across regions, socio-economic contexts and policy environments. The main objective of the study is to identify adequate policy responses to key gender-based constraints to the achievement of decent work for all. Decent work, as defined by the ILO, is employment that takes place under conditions of freedom, equity, security and dignity, in which rights are protected and adequate remuneration and social coverage is provided (ILO, 2000).

Gender norms and patterns are rigid, and very often put women in disadvantaged positions relative to men – including limiting women’s access to decent work. But gender norms can and do change. Economic policies – at the macro, meso and micro levels – can be designed in ways that are transformative and gender equity enhancing.

The ability of paid employment to expand women’s range of choices – hence contributing to closing persistent gender gaps in labour markets and within households – is related to the type of jobs women have access to, the level of pay, the regularity of the payment, and the way in which women’s and men’s productive and reproductive roles are coordinated and protected through policies. ILO studies (for example Maijd, 2001 and Kapsos, 2004) point to a large number of ‘working poor’ in many developing countries, particularly in rural areas. This is worrying. The poverty reduction and empowerment potential of paid employment depends not just on the quantity of jobs that are created, but also on the quality of such jobs, including whether the rights, protection and voice of the workers are respected.

Rural employment generation has been uneven across the world and in the last few decades is frequently confined to flexible and irregular forms of work which do not always provide security of livelihoods and protection of labour rights. The flows of trade, capital, labour, technology and information across countries have accelerated in recent decades. These processes of globalisation provide a strong potential for a significant reduction in rural poverty but have risks and costs. The downside of globalisation is most vividly illustrated at times of financial and economic crises such as the current crisis. The costs of economic and financial liberalisation appear to have been borne disproportionately by the poor, and particularly by vulnerable women. This calls for a fuller understanding of how the gendered structure of employment is evolving in response to the emerging trends, and key determinants of gender biases in rural labour markets.

The reasons for gender differences in rural employment and pay are many, and are often intertwined. Policies that can redress these differences include, among others: measures to support education and training, complementary policies to improve access to various markets (including land, credit, and other resources), active labour market policies and labour legislation, policies to strengthen frameworks for rights, welfare policies, and broader macroeconomic reforms. To be effective, such polices need to be designed as a package of reinforcing measures. Labour markets form one of the crucial points of intersection of the market economy and the household economy. Any measure aiming at gender equality and poverty reduction must acknowledge that women do most of the work of caring for their
children and their families. Thus, policies need to be formulated in ways that do not disadvantage them because of their combined productive and reproductive roles.

Institutional settings and economic structures vary a great deal between countries, or even between regions within a country. One of the goals of the paper will be to identify under what contexts and circumstances some policy instruments are more effective than others. This will evidently vary also with the type of employment, whether waged employment or self-employment is concerned: for example labour legislation is likely to be a more relevant enabling factor for waged workers than for own-account farmers.
PART I. FACTS AND FIGURES: GENDER PATTERNS OF WORK, LINKS WITH POVERTY AND CURRENT TRENDS

1. Gender patterns of work

Rural employment ranges from farming, to self-employment working in trade, to small enterprises providing goods and services, to wage labour in these, and wage labour in agriculture. Some of this work involves long hours and is not sufficiently remunerated. Women, in particular, constitute a significant proportion of unpaid family helpers. For example, unpaid work on family agricultural enterprises accounts for 34 percent of women’s informal employment in India (compared with 11 percent of men’s informal employment) and for an astounding 85 percent in Egypt (compared with 10 percent for men) (UNIFEM, 2005: Table 3.2).

Women and men working in rural setting are often involved in multiple activities and different contractual arrangements simultaneously. They may need to change jobs, depending on the season, or may remain unemployed or underemployed for periods of time. In rural contexts, the domestic sphere and market production appear to be more intertwined than in urban areas, and reproduction activities (mostly on women’s shoulders) constitute a heavier time burden because of poor infrastructure and lack of facilities. This partly explains why ‘necessity’ and ‘survival’ are more prevalent driving factors than ‘choice’ in rural women’s diversification strategies, as opposed to rural men’s. A wide range of data on many dimensions (on employment status, economic sectors, hours of both paid and unpaid work, earnings, working conditions and so on) and at many levels (at the household level as well as at the district and regional levels) are necessary to adequately understand the complexity of rural livelihoods and their gender patterns. Some of these data are not systematically collected and easily found in standard statistics. The researcher concerned with gender dimensions of rural work has, thus, often to patch together various sources and rely on a combination of specific case studies and anecdotal evidence. This paper is unfortunately no exception. We did undertake a thorough search of both international and country–level data sources, and are reporting some of the key findings in the next pages. We also tried to indicate areas in which data gaps are most severe.

2. The gender structure of rural employment by region

Table 1 provides a breakdown of sex–disaggregated rural employment by sector and by employment status. Agriculture continues to be the main source of rural employment for both women and men in Sub–Saharan Africa, in South Asia and South East Asia. In Latin America, rural female workers appear equally distributed between agriculture and non–agricultural sectors (with self employment more prevalent in agriculture than in manufacturing and services) while rural men work mostly in agriculture, either as self–employed or as wage workers. In the Middle East and North African region rural women work mostly as self–employed in agriculture and rural men as non-agricultural wage earners. Non–agricultural activities are the main source of employment for both men and women in Central Asia and Europe, where the majority of the rural population work as wage employees. In most regions, rural women seem more likely to be engaged in self–employment (and thus less likely to be wage earners) than rural men.
Table 1: Rural employment by gender and employment status, 2000 (percent of adult population)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment Status</th>
<th>Sub-Saharan Africa</th>
<th>South Asia</th>
<th>East Asia and the Pacific (excl China)</th>
<th>Middle East and North Africa</th>
<th>Europe and Central Asia</th>
<th>Latin America and the Caribbean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed</td>
<td>54.9</td>
<td>60.6</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>54.9</td>
<td>44.1</td>
<td>56.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wage earner</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>56.6</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>33.1</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>21.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-agriculture</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>28.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wage earner</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>17.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-active or not reported</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>64.3</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>97.2</td>
<td>97.8</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>99.3</td>
<td>99.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Note: Data are for 2000 or the nearest year. Based on representative household surveys for 66 countries which accounts for 55 percent of the population in Sub-Saharan Africa, 97 percent in South Asia, 66 percent in East Asia and the Pacific (excl China), 47 percent in Middle East and North Africa, 74 percent in Europe and Central Asia, 85 percent in Latin America and the Caribbean. The omitted group includes individuals out of the labour force and individuals whose economic activity is not defined. Activity refers to the individual’s reported principal activity.
Table 1 was compiled by a World Bank’s team drawing on 66 different country–level household surveys for the year 2000 (World Bank, 2007). This effort demonstrates how hard it is to find detailed and easily accessible rural employment data across countries. The data in Table 1 provide a useful snapshot but should be treated with caution as we are not sure that all the national surveys consulted are comparable. The large number of rural women classified as either ‘non active or not reported’ (up to 64 percent of the female population in South Asia, and above 50 percent both in Latin America and the MENA region) appears particularly dubious. It most likely reflects the fact that much of women’s work in rural areas is informal or unpaid and thus goes unrecorded (and that the table reports only workers’ main activity). It is also quite odd that none of the figures in each column sum up to 100 as one would expect.

Table 1 highlights that, in Sub–Saharan Africa, where countries are still mostly agriculture–based (in the sense that agriculture contributes significantly to growth and the poor are mostly rural, as defined by the World Bank, 2007), own account farming is, not surprisingly, the most common form of employment for both the sexes (about 56 percent and 54 percent of male adults and female adults respectively are agricultural self–employed) followed by non–agricultural wage work for men (9 percent) and non-agricultural self-employment for women (7 percent). African women are more likely than African men to be self–employed and to be working in the agricultural sector.

Gender differences in employment status appear to be more marked in South Asia where only 13 percent of adult women are self–employed in agriculture compared with 33 percent of men, and less than 6 percent of rural women work in non–agricultural sectors compared with 27 percent of men. It is interesting to note that in South Asia, women appear somewhat equally distributed between wage work and self employment (13 percent and 12 percent respectively) within agriculture, whereas most men who work in agriculture are self–employed. Women in South Asia are relatively more engaged in agricultural wage employment than women in any other region, most likely the result of women’s weaker property rights in land and other assets than in most other regions, coupled with increasing landlessness.

South Asian women are also more likely to be unpaid for work on their own family business than in any other region: ILO data for 2007 indicate that 59 percent of the total female labour force in South Asia works as contributing family workers, compared with 36 percent in South East Asia and the Pacific, 35 percent in Sub–Saharan Africa and only 7 percent in Latin America. The corresponding shares for men are 18 percent in South Asia, 18 percent in Sub–Saharan Africa and 4 percent in Latin America. (ILO, 2008).

Women as own–account agricultural workers are a significant 38 percent of the rural female workforce in both the Middle East and North Africa region and in East Asia and the Pacific, while they are only about 23 percent and 7 percent in Latin America and Europe and Central Asia respectively. In these latter two regions, on average, agriculture constitutes a small share of GDP and poverty is no longer a rural phenomenon (i.e. in these regions most countries are ‘urbanised’ according the World Bank’s definition).

Non–agriculture employment appears to be less relevant for women than for men in the rural areas of most regions, and particularly in the Middle East and North Africa region.
where only 7 percent of rural women work in non–farm activities compared with 40 percent of rural men. The only exception is Latin America, where the ratio of rural women’s non–agricultural employment to agricultural employment is higher than the corresponding rural men’s ratio.

In sum, overall rural men appear to be more evenly distributed across sectors and forms of employment. The relationship between the distribution of rural female and male employment and a country’s economic structure seems that women tend to work more in agriculture, even when agriculture is no longer a dominant sector (such as in transforming countries). Land availability and the structure of land rights in agricultural-based countries influence the form of employment rural women have access to, with a prevalence of wage labour and unpaid family contributions in South Asia—a land scarce region, and (mostly smallholders) self-employment in Sub-Saharan Africa—a land abundant region. Latin America, which is the most urbanised of all developing regions (and also has the most equal educational levels by gender), is the only region where the ratio of rural women’s non–agricultural employment to agricultural employment is higher than the corresponding rural men’s ratio.

2.1 Zooming in: the gender structure of rural employment in selected countries of Sub–Saharan Africa and South Asia

This section documents the gendered structure of rural employment in selected countries of Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Whilst it shows how patterns in specific countries confirm regional patterns discussed above, it also identifies possible outliers in the broad picture.

Sub-Saharan Africa

Table 2 describes the gender characteristics of agriculture in three African countries. Both Tanzania and Mozambique are agricultural based countries whereas South Africa is clearly an urbanised country in which agriculture contributes a very small share of GDP but where poverty rates are much higher in rural areas than in urban areas (and inequality remains among the highest in the world). Agriculture is female intensive in both Mozambique (60 percent of the agricultural labour force is female) and Tanzania (54 percent) but not in South Africa (34 percent). The data for Mozambique and Tanzania confirm African regional patterns in the sense that agriculture in both these countries is the main source of employment for both women and men. The productivity of agriculture is especially low in Mozambique where agriculture contributes only to 23 percent of GDP but provides employment to 78 percent of the labour force. There appears to be a positive correlation between low productivity in agriculture and the share of female employment: about 91 percent of the total female workforce in Mozambique is engaged in agricultural activities (of course this point would need to be substantiated by analysing such correlation across a larger number of countries). In Tanzania about 80 percent of the total female labour force works in agriculture while this share is only 6 percent in South Africa.
Table 2: Gender structure of agriculture in selected Sub–Saharan countries (percent), 2003-2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Tanzania</th>
<th>Mozambique</th>
<th>South Africa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture as share of GDP</td>
<td>45.8</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment in agriculture as share of total employment</td>
<td>75.1</td>
<td>78.0</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female intensity of agriculture</td>
<td>53.6</td>
<td>59.5</td>
<td>34.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female employment in agriculture as share of total female employment</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>90.9</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male employment in agriculture as share of total male employment</td>
<td>72.7</td>
<td>64.3</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural population as share of total population</td>
<td>76.2</td>
<td>66.3</td>
<td>41.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of the rural population which is poor</td>
<td>38.7</td>
<td>71.3</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Note: The female intensity of agriculture is calculated as the share of female agricultural employment in total agricultural employment. A share higher than 50 percent would suggest that the sector is female intensive.

Table 3 provides a further breakdown by gender and employment status for the rural adult population of Tanzania. The share of the adult population working in agriculture is higher than regional averages, more so for the female population (81 percent of the female population works in agriculture compared with 55 percent for the corresponding share for the whole of Sub–Saharan Africa). The table also shows that similar proportions of women and men work as unpaid family helpers in agriculture but that such share is higher for unpaid female helpers than for male helpers in non–agricultural activities. This category of employment was not reported in Table 1.

Table 3: Rural employment by gender and employment status (percent of the adult population, 15 years or older), Tanzania 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment status</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>80.6</td>
<td>78.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self–employed</td>
<td>72.4</td>
<td>67.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wage Earner</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unpaid helper</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non agriculture</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self–employed</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wage earner</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unpaid helper</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not in the labour force or not reported</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s calculations from Tanzania 2006 Integrated Labour Force Survey
South Asia

Table 4 describes the gender characteristics of agriculture in India and Bangladesh. The share of the rural population in the total population in these two countries is similar to the shares in Tanzania and Mozambique, but agricultural employment is smaller even through still significant (more than 50 percent of total employment). Agriculture is a female intensive activity in both India and Bangladesh (more so in India) and in Bangladesh (mostly in the form of rice production and poultry rearing) provides employment to more than 60 percent of the total female labour force.

Table 4: Gender structure of agriculture in selected South Asian countries (percent), 2003–2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>India</th>
<th>Bangladesh</th>
<th>Sri Lanka</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture share of GDP</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural employment as share of total employment</td>
<td>57.0</td>
<td>51.7</td>
<td>34.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female intensity of agriculture</td>
<td>55.5</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>35.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female agricultural employment as share of total female employment</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td>60.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male agricultural employment as share of total male employment</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>45.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural population as share of total population</td>
<td>71.7</td>
<td>75.3</td>
<td>84.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of the rural population which is poor</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s calculations from various India NSS data and Bangladesh 2000 Labour Force Survey. Other data from World Bank, 2007.

Table 5 provides a further breakdown by gender and employment status for the rural adult population of India. The share of the female adult population in both agriculture and non-agriculture work is higher than regional averages, and the share of female casual agricultural labour is especially significant (about 30 percent of the total female rural workforce), confirming that low female participation rates recorded for South Asia in Table 1 may likely reflect the under-reporting of informal employment, particularly for women. The male shares are more similar to regional patterns. To note in particular the high share of the rural male labour force working in non-agricultural activities relative to the high share of the rural female labour force working in agriculture, suggesting that some ‘feminisation of agriculture’ is taking place in India (also confirmed in Srivastava and Srivastava, 2009).

Table 5: Rural employment by gender and employment status (percent of the adult population), India 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment status</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>83.2</td>
<td>66.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed</td>
<td>53.7</td>
<td>42.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular/salaried</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual labour</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>23.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non agriculture</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>33.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular/salaried</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual labour</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from Srivastava and Srivastava, 2009
Table 6 is taken from an interesting recent comparative study of four countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia (Horrell et al, 2008) and offers a different way of looking at employment patterns – no longer from a macro country–wide perspective as in the previous tables, but from a micro perspective. It looks at the gender division of labour by activities and tasks from the point of view of the household. It draws attention to the fact that rural households, in particular farming households, derive their livelihood from diverse sources of farm, off–farm and non–farm income and that the intensity and type of contribution of different family members is gender differentiated. For example, women contribute substantially to total productive work in Zimbabwe (about 40 percent of the total is provided by women) but not in Ethiopia (where women’s contribution can be less than 10 percent). In Zimbabwe the vast majority of the work involves own farming (more than 90 percent of total activities) while in Uganda waged work/business constitutes between 26 percent and 29 percent of total work. The share of waged work/business in total employment is highest, as expected, in Andhra Pradesh, India (more than 50 percent of the total). Farm work is mostly provided by men (except in Zimbabwe where women are the main contributors) while livestock keeping is almost exclusively a children activity in all the African countries. The share of paid work done by men relative to other family members is the highest across all African countries, and in particular in Ethiopia, while in India the share of paid work done by women, other relatives and children is higher than elsewhere and than the share done by men. This is a fascinating study and more research of this kind would allow for more generalised understandings.
Table 6: Household structure and time spent in work activities, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Uganda and India, around 2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zimbabwe</th>
<th>Magoni</th>
<th>Chivi</th>
<th>Omo</th>
<th>Afeta</th>
<th>Sironko</th>
<th>Bufumbo</th>
<th>Vepur</th>
<th>Guddi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sample</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Work hours per day:**

Total per household

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Zimbabwe</th>
<th>Ethiopia</th>
<th>Uganda</th>
<th>India</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>23.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Per capita

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Zimbabwe</th>
<th>Ethiopia</th>
<th>Uganda</th>
<th>India</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.9b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.6b</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No. in household

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Zimbabwe</th>
<th>Ethiopia</th>
<th>Uganda</th>
<th>India</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total work hours (percent) contributed by:**

- **Man**
  - Zimbabwe: 37.2
  - Ethiopia: 33.7
  - Uganda: 30.3
  - India: 68.0
- **Woman**
  - Zimbabwe: 42.0
  - Ethiopia: 35.2
  - Uganda: 31.6
  - India: 3.2
- **Children**
  - Zimbabwe: 16.6
  - Ethiopia: 24.4
  - Uganda: 29.1
  - India: 26.0
- **Relatives**
  - Zimbabwe: 4.3
  - Ethiopia: 6.6
  - Uganda: 8.3
  - India: 2.8

**Total work hours (percent) spent on:**

- **Own farm**
  - Zimbabwe: 89.3
  - Ethiopia: 95.3
  - Uganda: 95.4
  - India: 83.5
- **Livestock**
  - Zimbabwe: 5.0
  - Ethiopia: 1.1
  - Uganda: 1.2
  - India: 1.3
- **Waged work/business**
  - Zimbabwe: 5.7
  - Ethiopia: 3.6
  - Uganda: 3.4
  - India: 15.2

**Farm work (percent) done by:**

- **Man**
  - Zimbabwe: 38.6
  - Ethiopia: 32.9
  - Uganda: 30.0
  - India: 66.6
- **Woman**
  - Zimbabwe: 44.9
  - Ethiopia: 36.1
  - Uganda: 31.7
  - India: 3.9
- **Children**
  - Zimbabwe: 13.5
  - Ethiopia: 24.7
  - Uganda: 29.3
  - India: 29.5
- **Relatives**
  - Zimbabwe: 3.0
  - Ethiopia: 6.3
  - Uganda: 8.7
  - India: 2.8

**Livestock keeping (percent) done by:**

- **Man**
  - Zimbabwe: -
  - Ethiopia: -
  - Uganda: -
  - India: -
- **Woman**
  - Zimbabwe: -
  - Ethiopia: 38.1
  - Uganda: -
  - India: 24.3
- **Children**
  - Zimbabwe: 81.0
  - Ethiopia: 100.0
  - Uganda: 100.0
  - India: 64.8
- **Relatives**
  - Zimbabwe: -
  - Ethiopia: -
  - Uganda: -
  - India: 10.8

**Paid work (percent) done by:**

- **Man**
  - Zimbabwe: 46.2
  - Ethiopia: 64.8
  - Uganda: 51.7
  - India: 77.5
- **Woman**
  - Zimbabwe: 32.3
  - Ethiopia: 11.3
  - Uganda: 48.3
  - India: -
- **Children**
  - Zimbabwe: 9.7
  - Ethiopia: 23.9
  - Uganda: -
  - India: 23.5
- **Relatives**
  - Zimbabwe: 11.8
  - Ethiopia: -
  - Uganda: 22.5
  - India: 15.4

**Source:** Horrell et al, 2008, Work, female empowerment and economic development, London: Routledge. Table 3.1: p.34

**Notes:**

- In Zimbabwe no adults reported their main activity as either housework or childcare. However, these activities constituted 18 percent of women’s time and 22 percent of other relative’s time in India and 42 percent of household total work time in Ethiopia, of which 77 percent was done by the woman, the remainder being done by children and other relatives.
- These figures are only given for those who reported a main activity; a number of people in Ethiopia were not recorded as having any activity.
- This refers to local waged work on and off farm in India. Of total work hours some 35 percent were spent as local waged work, mostly on farm, and 10 percent as waged work away from the village, other paid work and running one’s own business.
The data presented so far show broad aggregated gender patterns in the distribution of the rural labour force by type of activity in different countries, but do not tell us about the quality of employment opportunities available and whether access to decent work is gender differentiated. Both farm and non–farm activities are very heterogeneous categories comprising both low and high returns occupations with different entry requirements. For example, both land size and land quality matter for agricultural productivity, so it is essential to know whether landholding differs by gender in a country. As for wage work, we have seen, for instance, that a significant share of women in South Asia work as agricultural labourers but we do not know whether they receive similar wages and work a similar amount of hours as male agricultural labourers. In sum, we need richer evidence on the quality of employment – not simply on its quantity and distribution – in order to fully understand the relationship between employment and gender equality/poverty outcomes. These are the aspects we turn to in the next section.

3. Gender differences in the quality of rural employment

Some of the factors that may push women into a disadvantaged economic position relative to men in terms of the returns to their labour are: (a) employment segmentation (women are disproportionately employed in low–quality jobs, including jobs in which their rights are not adequately respected); (b) the gender gap in earnings (partly as a consequence of high segmentation, women earn less for a given type of work than do men – usually for both wage employment and self–employment); (3) fewer hours of paid work but overall larger work burdens (due to competing demands of care responsibilities and non-market work, women spend less time on average in paid employment. This lowers their total labour income and is likely to increase stress and fatigue).

3.1 Employment segmentation

There is evidence of gender–based labour market segmentation in both agricultural and non–agricultural sectors in most rural areas. Women tend to be clustered in fewer sectors than men and, in agriculture, tend to be mostly involved in subsistence production. This segmentation suggests that it may be more difficult for women than for men to switch to better jobs in new sectors when new economic opportunities arise. But there are variations in these patterns across regions and countries which are summarised in Table 7 and Table 8.

As for the agricultural sectors, there seems a common pattern across regions in that women tend to be the main producers of food whilst men seem to be managing most of the commercial crops, although not without women’s (often unpaid) contributions. Women do participate also in commercial farming but within a rather rigid division of tasks. This rigidity in the gender division of tasks appears to be stronger in South Asia than in parts of Africa or South East Asia. It is important to note, and previewing the discussion in following sections, that there appears to be some sort of asymmetry in the dynamics regarding the gender division of crops: men may take over female crops (such as for example in Zambia and the Gambia) when these became more profitable but there seems to be no evidence of women taking over the management of previously male crops, except possibly in rare cases when the males in the household migrate. As for agricultural wage workers, it appears that working conditions for women are harsher than for men but this aspect deserve further analysis.
Table 7: Gender division of labour and working conditions in crop production

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crop types</th>
<th>Sub-Saharan Africa</th>
<th>Asia</th>
<th>Latin America</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women tend to be the main producers of food crops such as maize, rice,</td>
<td>Women produce mostly food crops, whereas men tend to diversify into commercial</td>
<td>Women farmers cultivate food crops, poultry and small livestock for domestic consumption,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cassava and other tubers while men are more engaged in commercial farming</td>
<td>farming. In some countries, both in Southeast Asia and South Asia, women are</td>
<td>while men dominate large-scale cash crop farming. Women involved in NTAEs, particularly in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and produce cocoa, cotton and coffee for export. However several cases</td>
<td>involved in cash crops (e.g. cotton in Pakistan) but the gender division of tasks</td>
<td>Chile, Ecuador, Mexico and most of Central America, but NTAE productions is highly gender</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e.g. Burkina Faso, Zambia and Tanzania) where male and female farmers</td>
<td>remains marked. Especially in South-East Asia women heavily involved in rice</td>
<td>segmented in the sense that men occupy more permanent positions and women are the vast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grow jointly both food and commercial crops. Women are also involved in</td>
<td>production where they constitute up to 90 percent of the labour force. In Cambodia</td>
<td>majority of seasonal workers. Also women are found mostly in packing houses and other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-traditional agricultural exports (NTAEs) in Kenya, Uganda,</td>
<td>and Vietnam, when male labour not available, female farmers take on also male</td>
<td>related activities while the gender composition of labourers in the field is more mixed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zimbabwe and South Africa. Most NTAEs production is female dominated.</td>
<td>tasks, such as land preparation and irrigation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conditions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women tend to manage smaller plots than men (e.g. Mozambique). In NTAEs</td>
<td>A very high share of women working as unremunerated family helpers and increasing</td>
<td>Women tend to manage smaller plots than men. In NTAEs, women form the bulk of temporary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>women tend to work in more precarious positions than men with no social</td>
<td>casualisation of agricultural labour, both male and female (e.g. in India).</td>
<td>and seasonal workers with low social protection coverage, whereas permanent jobs generally</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>protection and only seasonal contracts (e.g. in South Africa women are</td>
<td></td>
<td>reserved for men. Workers in NTAEs exposed to high use of pesticides, chemical and toxic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69 percent of temporary workers; in Tanzania, 85 percent of the</td>
<td></td>
<td>substances, likely to be particularly damaging to women’s health.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>workforce on flower farms are casual workers planting, harvesting and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grading and most of them are women; men occupy a small number of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>managerial positions). Women are exposed to sexual and verbal abuses (e.g.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8: Gender division of labour and working conditions in non-agricultural activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sectors</th>
<th>Sub-Saharan Africa</th>
<th>Asia</th>
<th>Latin America</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women involved in small-scale low returns trading and trade only particular commodities (e.g. perishable fresh produce for domestic markets), whereas men more likely involved in trading for international markets (e.g. Uganda, Tanzania, Ghana). Large shares of women working as domestic helpers (e.g. South Africa, Mozambique, and Senegal). In Uganda and Ghana, women clustered into wholesale/retail trade and manufacturing, while men's activities range across public administration, trade, construction, transport, and mining.</td>
<td>In Afghanistan, India (West Bengal and Kerala) and Uzbekistan, women engaged in manufacturing (e.g. dress-making) but NOT in trade. In South East Asia (Thailand, Indonesia, Vietnam and the Philippines) women involved in small trade, particularly of agricultural goods.</td>
<td>Women tend to be involved mostly in domestic services (in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Mexico, Nicaragua and Panama) and petty trade (in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Paraguay). Men mainly in mining, utilities, construction, transportation, communications and financial services.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Working conditions | Women traders exposed to violence and harassment (e.g. Burkina Faso and Kenya). Women street vendors unorganised and isolated, lack health, disability, unemployment and life insurance. | Much home–based in India. Very poor working conditions for women in South Asia (e.g. limited ability to organise, particularly if home based work; no access to social protection) | Women working as domestic helpers exposed to exploitation, lack of social protection and social isolation. |
A similar pattern of marked concentration of the rural female labour force in very few sectors relative to the male labour force is also found in non-agricultural employment. One of the most prevalent forms of rural non-agricultural employment for women in all regions, and particularly in Latin America, is domestic services. Domestic work, however, often pays below the agricultural wage rate (e.g. Brazil) and offers no social protection. Petty trade is a more prevalent activity for women in Africa, Latin America and some South East Asian countries than in South Asia. In South Asia most female non-agricultural activities are home-based, reflecting prevailing strict norms of women’s seclusion, particularly in parts of Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh.

(A longer write–up with complete references, to be added in the final version)

3.2 Gender gaps in earnings

Gender–disaggregated data on earnings from agriculture are very difficult to find. Most of the available, but still limited, evidence refers to wage work either in off–farm or non–farm activities. This partly reflects the fact that calculating labour earnings for self-employment is especially problematic because it requires undertaking complex calculations to separate the proportion of total self-employment income (which is what usually surveys report) between labour income and income attributable to returns from other assets. Moreover, under-reporting is a more acute problem for self-employment earnings than for wages. This is an important area where improvement in statistics is much needed.

Table 9 shows, not surprisingly, that women are generally paid less than men. However, what is interesting is the extent of this gender pay gap, and the variations across countries and occupations.

Gender gaps seem to be lower in some of the NTAEs activities in Kenya, Senegal and South Africa in Sub–Saharan Africa, and in Mexico. Gender wage gaps vary even within a sector in a country – for example in Mexico women’s daily earnings are almost the same as men’s daily earning in avocado production but only 78 percent of men’s earnings in mango production. Differences in daily earnings, though, may reflect gender differences in hours worked as well as differences in remuneration, which is why information on hourly wages is usually preferable. Earnings gaps appear to be largest for earnings from agricultural self-employment both in Africa (Ghana) and Latin America (Costa Rica and El Salvador). The sharpest gender differences in all forms of earnings are found in Afghanistan and in Pakistan.
Table 9: Gender gaps in rural wages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Gender gap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-Saharan Africa</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>Agricultural self–employment Women’s hourly earnings are 65% of men’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>Agricultural wage employment in NTAEs Women’s hourly wages similar to men’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>Agricultural wage employment Women’s hourly wages are 93% of men’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>Agricultural wage employment Women’s mean monthly wages are about 69% of men’s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>Agricultural wage employment Women’s hourly wages are 84% of men’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>South Asia</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>Agricultural wage employment Women’s daily wages are about 50% of men’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beard Bangladesh</td>
<td>Agricultural wage employment in agro–processing (fry catchers and sorters) Women’s wages are about 64% of men’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>Agricultural casual wage employment Women’s daily wages are 69% of men’s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>Agricultural regular wage employment Women’s daily wages are 79% of men’s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Southeast Asia</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>Agricultural wage employment Women’s hourly wages are 73% of men’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Latin America</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>Agricultural self–employment Women’s hourly earnings are 53% of men’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>Agricultural wage employment Women’s hourly earnings are 82% of men’s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>Agricultural wage employment in NTAEs (total) Women’s daily wages are 88% of men’s wages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Avocado Women’s daily wages are 99% of men’s wages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mango Women’s daily wages are 78% of men’s wages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cucumber Women’s daily wages are 97% of men’s wages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Flowers Women’s daily wages are 80% of men’s wages</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3 A longer working day for women

Women work longer hours than men in most developing countries when both paid and unpaid work is taken into consideration. However, much of their work remains undervalued because it is unpaid. Women often spend less time on average in paid market work than men, whereas they are largely responsible for water and fuel collection, domestic chores, child care and care of the sick and elderly.

Table 10: Household time use in male-headed households, man’s main activity is farming. Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Uganda and India (average hours per day), around 2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Zimbabwe</th>
<th>Ethiopia</th>
<th>Uganda</th>
<th>India</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours spent on:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livestock</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other work</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housework</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relaxing</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Within agriculture, hours spent on:

- Ploughing: 0.9 1.3
- Weeding: 5.6 5.4
- Preparing land: 0.5 0.2
- Manuring: 0.1 0.1
- Irrigation: 0.1 0.1
- Spraying: - 0.1

Within housework, hours spent on:

- Housework: 0.6 0.1 1.7 5.5 1.4 2.2 0.0
- Cooking: 0.7 0.2 2.3 - 2.8 0.0
- Fetching water: 0.1 0.0 0.8 - 0.8 0.1 0.4 0.2
- Fetching fuel: 0.1 0.0 1.2 - 0.1 0.1 0.0 0.2
- Collecting produce: - 0.1 - - - - - -

Within other work, hours spent on:

- Buying/selling: - - - 0.4 0.7 - 0.2 0.4 0.3
- Paid work – on farm: - - - 0.0 0.0 0.1 0.2 3.2 0.9
- Paid work – off farm: - - - - - 0.6 - 0.2
- Own business: - - - - - 0.7 1.4 0.2 0.1


Table 10 is from Horrell et al (2008) and draw on the same surveys of Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Uganda and India as in Table 6. It shows gender patterns of time use in male–headed households where the man’s main activity is farming. Confirming patterns found in other developing countries, men appear to be working longer hours than women as far as
SNA work is concerned. The difference in time spent farming and tending to the livestock is largest in Ethiopia where men work double the time as women (8 hours per day for men compared with about 4 hours for women). In Zimbabwe, women and men spend on average the same time on agricultural work (about 9 hours). The pattern is reversed for housework: in all countries women work much more than men. In Ethiopia, in particular, women spend on average 6 hours on housework each day while men do not do any of it.

Similar patterns can be found in many other countries for which Time Use Surveys are available. For instance Table 11 shows patterns of time use among the rural population of three other African countries. Women work at least ten hours longer than men every week, when both SNA-work and non–SNA work are considered but work between five and ten hours less than men in SNA-work. In Benin women appear to be working longer hours not only in non–SNA work but also in SNA-work.

Table 11: Average hours per week spent by the adult rural population on SNA and non–SNA work in Benin, Madagascar, and Tanzania (various years)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Benin</th>
<th>Madagascar</th>
<th>Tanzania</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNA work*</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>28.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of which water and fuel collection</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non–SNA work*</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>24.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total work</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>52.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Data refer to 1998 for Benin, to 2001 for Madagascar, to 2005 for Tanzania. For a definition of SNA/non-SNA work see footnote 4

The average time spent in agricultural work varies also by employment status. As shown in Table 12, in Brazil, El Salvador, Kenya and South Africa, weekly hours of work in agriculture tend to be lower on average for the self–employed and for contributing family workers, both females and males, than for wage workers. In Brazil and El Salvador, the gender gap in hours worked is more pronounced among the self–employed, in the sense that women in this category appear to work significantly fewer hours than men relative to other workers. This may reflect the fact that a large share of women in this form of employment has young children to look after and hence devote less time to paid work. Other forms of employment, such as wage work for an enterprise, would not allow the same flexibility in combining reproductive and productive tasks.

Table 12: Average hours per week in informal agriculture by gender and employment status in Brazil, El Salvador, Kenya and South Africa (about 2005)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Brazil</th>
<th>El Salvador</th>
<th>Kenya</th>
<th>South Africa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wage work</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>40.8</td>
<td>38.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self–employed</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>45.7</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributing family workers</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td>36.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Data for Brazil refer to 2005, data for El Salvador to 2003, data for Kenya to 2005 and for South Africa to 2004.
4. Rural employment, gender and poverty

Remunerative employment is one of the most important channels through which the living standards of poor women and men can be improved. A large numbers of rural workers remain poor as they earn low wages and live and work in precarious conditions, are vulnerable to health and other shocks, and have little access to risk–coping mechanisms such as insurance or social assistance. A study by Majid (2001) indicates that in the late 1990s the working poverty rate was higher than 50 percent in several countries mostly in West Africa (Mali, Burkina Faso, Sierra Leone, the Gambia, Nigeria and Niger), in Zambia and in Madagascar. South Asia appeared to have lower working poverty rates than Sub–Saharan Africa but still as high as 45 percent in India. More recent ILO data confirm that the highest working poverty rates remain in Sub-Saharan Africa (ILO, 2008). Working poverty rates are determined at the level of the household and hence it is important to complement this information with analysis of employment dynamics, which focus on the individual. A full gendered picture can only be gained by intersecting the household structure with the employment structure.

In most countries women tend to be more vulnerable workers than men, due to the fact that they face many biases in both rural labour markets and within households, and therefore have less opportunities to diversify into better quality employment than male workers. In some family settings, they may also have weaker claims over what they earn. These aspects will be further discussed in Part II.

The linkages between employment, poverty and gender inequality are complex and require an understanding of how household dynamics and labour market processes interact. The relationship between poverty and women’s employment runs in both directions. Poverty can push women into employment – the so called ‘distress sale of labour’ (Elson, 1999), often in informal and poorly paid jobs (a vicious circle). On the other hand, women’s employment income often makes a critical difference in the poverty status of their households. This does not however necessarily mean that the individual situation of the woman concerned improves at the same time, because household income may not be distributed according to the amount of time each member contributes to its generation. Attention should be given to separating out individual from average household well–being impacts, which may differ because of unequal distribution of rights, resources and time between genders. Policies for rural employment and development must give due consideration to women’s bargaining position both in the household and in the labour market. Poverty is linked to weaker incorporation in both.

Poverty can push women into employment, often in informal jobs: In most developing countries women often seek wage employment in response to economic crises and difficult family circumstances such as separation and widowhood. Agricultural casual wage work often appears to be the only available employment option for poor rural women (more than for poor rural men). Because crowded in a limited number of occupations and lacking start–up assets, poor women enter the bargaining process with their employers in a weak position. Vulnerability may force them to sell their labour well below market rates. Whitehead (2008) offers examples of these from West and East Africa.
Evidence from Southern Africa corroborates these patterns. In Mozambique (Cramer et al., 2008) a high share of female wage labourers are single heads of households. In-depth interviews indicate that women who are widows or divorced have greater difficulties in accessing decent jobs. Their weak bargaining position means that they often have to accept irregular wages and receive few, if any, benefits. In Zimbabwe casual female wage labourers were hired for shorter periods of time than casual male labourers. They earned less than men and were more likely to be paid on a daily rather than on a monthly basis. Households headed by female casual workers were among the poorest households. Their children were more likely to be underweight (in 40 percent of the cases compared with 26 percent for other households) (Adams, 1991). Adams’ study is rather dated, though, and would need to be revisited, especially in light of the crisis Zimbabwe experienced in the last years. A study of South Africa from the mid-1990s shows that women working in the export fruit farming sector who had children were largely seasonal workers and 70 percent of them had experienced food shortages at least one time in the 12 months preceding the interviews (Barrientos 1999). The situation has evolved in South Africa too, in terms of both economic developments and legislation, and an update of the analysis would be very useful.

Evidence from South Asia also shows that rural women from poorer households are more likely to take up paid employment, particularly as wage workers, than women from wealthier families (Das and Desai 2003). For example, in Pakistan, women from landless households, or from sharecropping households, have higher levels of participation in agricultural waged labour and work longer hours than women in landowning households (Sathar and Desai 1996 quoted in Kabeer 2008).

Women’s employment income can make a critical difference in the poverty status of their households: A much quoted study for Ghana and Uganda (Newman and Canagarajah, 2000) shows that poverty rates for female–headed households engaged in non–farm activities declined faster than poverty rates for other households. In Ghana, for instance, female–headed households combining both farm and non–farm work experienced a 37 percent decline in poverty compared with a 14 percent decline for male-headed households with similar characteristics over the 1987–1992 period. The study finds that women in Ghana are more involved in non-farm activities than in farming, while the reverse holds for Uganda. In both countries high shares of non–farm employment performed by women are associated with higher overall household income. This suggests that the ability of women to diversify out of agriculture may provide an effective pathway out of poverty but these findings should be taken with caution as the time period over which changes were analysed is rather short (and the study quite old).

A study of Vietnam (Kabeer and Tran Thi Van Anh, 2002) offers similar findings. Rural women’s ability to diversify out of farming was more strongly associated with household well–being than that of men’s. Diversification into off–farm activities, rather than diversity per se, explained higher levels of household income. The study also suggests that, despite women’s longer hours of work in domestic and childcare activities, marginal returns to their off–farm activities were similar to those of men.

All these findings are very context–specific and more and sounder evidence is needed to substantiate these claims. Rural non–farm work can be very diverse and, as discussed in
earlier paragraphs with regard to the case of Mozambique, female members of the poorest household may be lacking the resources to participate in the most profitable activities.

*When household income increases as a result of women taking up paid employment, this does not necessarily mean that the individual situation of the woman concerned improves at the same time:* For instance, a study of Kenya (Kennedy 1994) shows that increased participation of women in sugar production brought about significant income gains in overall household income and food consumption. Women’s direct control over income from the new cash crop was much less than that of men, though. Increases in women’s own income were associated with decreases in their body mass index, because additional work and greater energy intensity of activities exceeded the concurrent increase in their caloric intake.

As for the impact on other household members, substantial evidence (reviewed in Salazar and Quisumbing, 2009 but also earlier anthropological literature such as Whitehead, 1981) shows that women’s access to economic resources increases the share of household expenditures devoted to ‘public goods’ and is more beneficial to households’ wellbeing (in particular the wellbeing of children) than income earned by men. However the impact of women’s access to paid labour more specifically is more mixed (evidence reviewed still in Salazar and Quisumbing, 2009) because of the presence of two opposite effects: a positive effect due to an increase in household income associated with mothers’ paid work and a negative effect due to a possible decline in the time devoted to housework and childcare. These considerations suggest that attention needs to be paid to the type of employment obtained by women and the intensity of their work.

### 5. Emerging trends

The flows of trade, capital, labour, technology and information across countries have accelerated in recent decades but not all countries are benefiting in the same way. The gendered structure of employment is evolving in response to these processes of globalisation. These are emerging research and policy issues, and this section reviews some of the available evidence and suggests areas for further analysis.

Some of the dynamics likely to influence rural families, their livelihood strategies and gender relations are: (a) greater economic vulnerability of smallholders to global market forces as international trade in high–value non–traditional agricultural products is increasing and increasingly dominated by large agribusiness, inputs into commercial agriculture become more expensive and food becomes less efficient to produce; but also greater off–farm employment opportunities generated by non–traditional agricultural exports (NTAEs); (b) increased out-migration which, if mostly undertaken by men, would leave women in rural areas with the main responsibility to provide for their families; (c) the HIV/AIDS epidemics, leading to labour shortages and heavier care burdens in rural areas; (d) climate change; and (e) the current economic crisis which, started as a financial crisis in developed economies, is affecting developing countries surprisingly quickly and strongly and, according to the recently released Global Employment Report of the ILO, is expected to cause a dramatic increase in working poverty and vulnerable employment (ILO, 2009)
5.1 International trade

Trade expansion and liberalisation can affect rural employment, food security and poverty in multiple ways – directly, through either agricultural export growth effects or import displacement effects (or both), and, indirectly, through changes in other trade–related activities such as for example, processing and packaging of agricultural exports. The resulting gender differentiated employment effects vary depending on the socio–economic structure of the country concerned – in particular on which crops women produce relative to men, and the extent of gender discrimination and segmentation of rural labour markets. Some of these dimensions are better documented than others.

Emerging trends in international trade seem to indicate that small farmers in most developing countries are often not in a position to compete in overseas markets while frequently having to compete with foreign food imports in the domestic market. They face a particular set of constraints relating to land tenure systems, poor infrastructure and lack of credit, technology and other resources. As the discussion in earlier sections highlights, these constraints are gender–intensified.

Poor farmers in many countries are increasingly abandoning or selling farms, leading to land concentration and expanded commercial crop production. For example in the early 2000s many small dairy farmers in Brazil abandoned the sector, while in Guatemala a farmer cooperative experienced a severe reduction in tomato producers (Reardon, 2003). Medium–sized and large scale commercial farms are in a better position to take advantage of the expansion of agricultural traded goods. As we have seen in Section 3.2, women are over–represented among small farmers. In the Philippines, as a result of liberalisation, food imports have increased substantially threatening rice farmers. There is evidence of small poor female farmers being pushed by large NTAEs businesses into increasingly less fertile land or even being displaced to cities and tourist zones, where they end up working as domestic helpers or sex workers (Beviglia–Zampetti, 2004).

Expansion of commercial crop production appears to benefit larger farms which are largely owned and managed by men. Weak marketing structures and lack of the technical expertise required to comply with regulations and output standards are other important factors preventing women from enjoying the new opportunities created by trade liberalization. Evidence that female producers experience more constraints in accessing international markets than male producers and that women traders are often confined to local markets can be found in Samoa, Mozambique, and other Sub–Saharan African countries (Carr 2004).

Even if not directly involved, women often increase the amount of time they contribute to their husbands’ crops, leading to higher female unpaid work burdens. The effects of the expansion of agricultural exports vary evidently also with the gender intensity of the crops that expand, but this may itself be endogenous. There is evidence, for example, that even when a crop is traditionally female intensive, commercializing it causes men to enter the sector and take over production. This was the case for groundnuts in Zambia (Wold 1997), for example, and rice in The Gambia (von Braun, John, and Puetz 1994).
Wage employment in non-traditional agro-export production including fresh fruit, vegetables, cut flowers, poultry and shrimps, has emerged as a significant source of employment for rural women particularly in Latin America, in countries such as Colombia, Ecuador, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Peru, as well as in some Sub Saharan African countries such as Kenya, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe and South Africa. These sectors however remain small and employ a relatively small share of the rural labour force. Further details are provided in Table 13.

In NTAEs women appear to be working in more precarious positions than men. For instance in South Africa women are 69 percent of temporary workers (Barrientos et al, 1999), and in Tanzania, 85 per cent of the casual workers planting, harvesting and grading on flower farms are women, while men occupy a small number of managerial positions. In Bangladesh, exporters of shrimps (mostly men) realize more profits than farmers and fry catchers. Women fry catchers and sorters earn about 64 percent of what men earn and are found in the most insecure nodes of the shrimp chain (Gammage et al., 2006).

Women’s wages in NTAEs tend to be lower than men’s but often higher than the agricultural wage they could earn in other non-export oriented sectors. Recent studies focusing on beans and tomatoes production in Senegal (Maertens and Swinnen, 2008) and banana production in Ghana (Beviglia–Zampetti, 2004) show that female workers employed in these sectors receive same treatment as male workers. However female workers in banana production in Ghana constitute only about 20 percent of total employment in the sector. Further research on ways in which women could included more effectively in decent NTAEs employment would be of great policy relevance.

Table 13: Employment in high value agricultural export production by region (data mostly from the 1990s)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regions/countries</th>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Total numbers of workers (including men and women)</th>
<th>Female intensity</th>
<th>Average age of female workers</th>
<th>Demographic characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub Saharan Africa</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>Cut flowers</td>
<td>40000</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>20-34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>20000-32000</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>18-29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>French beans</td>
<td>90</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cherry tomatoes</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>Fruit</td>
<td>280000</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>90 percent of the women working in fruit production had children, most of them under five years old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>Cut flowers</td>
<td>3000</td>
<td>75-85</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
<td>Cut flowers</td>
<td>27000</td>
<td>70-87</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>South Asia</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India, Punjab</td>
<td>Tomatoes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Latin America</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>Citrus fruit</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>Fruit</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>Poultry</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fruit</td>
<td>336739</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>20-39</td>
<td>Married rural women; young single women represent a minority (35% of women employed in the industry)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Children</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>Cut flowers</td>
<td>110000</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>15-28</td>
<td>Four out of every five households that depend on the flower industry are headed by women. More than one third of women workers in the NTAE industry are single heads of households, three quarters of which have children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominican</td>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>Cut flowers</td>
<td>30000-50000</td>
<td>50-70</td>
<td>16-29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>Cut flowers</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>70-80</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Young single women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>1.2 million</td>
<td>50-90</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>60000</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>18-25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>95</td>
<td></td>
<td>(asparagus field)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(processing)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2 Migration

Migration from rural areas is increasingly becoming an important livelihood strategy. Migration involves moving to another area of the country or another country on a long–term or short–term basis. Migration often occurs because of unemployment, land shortages and poor infrastructure in rural areas, better employment prospects elsewhere, and improved communication. Whilst attention has focused on those who migrate, less attention has been given to those left behind, many of whom are women and children.

The effect of migration on the employment opportunities and well–being of those who stay behind is ambiguous. Out–migration of labour from agriculture might reduce crop production and undermine food security. On the other hand, remittances may facilitate on–farm investment or relieve credit constraints that prevented farmers from purchasing key inputs. An important policy question is thus whether remittances support production enough to compensate for the reduced availability of male or female labour and can improve intra–household welfare (through better education of children, a decline in women’s workloads and so on). For instance, does out–migration increase the incidence of female–headed households? And, as some evidence from Africa seems to suggest (Adams, 1991 for rural Zimbabwe, and Dolan, 2002 for Uganda), are these female–headed households more able to engage in decent and productive work relative to other female–headed households with no migrants among their family members? Significant gaps in knowledge remain with relation to the effects of migration on employment opportunities and gender roles.

**Gendered employment effects – those who migrate:**

Although data are sparse and trends are not well documented, migration patterns appear to have gender characteristics, with usually men migrating more frequently than women, especially internationally. A few countries in Asia provide exceptions to this pattern. In Sri Lanka and in the Philippines female migrants are about 74 percent and 55 percent of total outflows respectively (UNRISD, 2005).

Data on rural–urban migration from the 1970s (Singelmann, 1993) show higher shares of men relative to women in most of Sub–Saharan Africa and South Asia but higher shares of women relative to men in South East Asia (particularly in the Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia) and Latin America. These trends appear to have continued in recent decades.

Female and male migrant workers tend to cluster in different occupations. Women often work as domestic helpers, nurses and sex workers or find employment in export–oriented garment factories in urban areas (evidence of this can be found in China [Davin, 1996 and Fan, 2003], Malaysia [Kusago, 2000], Bangladesh [Zohir, 1998] and Nicaragua [Espinoza Gonzales, 2008]). In other cases, they migrate to other rural areas to take up jobs in NTAEs. Male migrants work in construction, transport and trading and tend to travel further away from their homes than female migrants. The experience of migration for work tends to be more short–lived for women than for men as often marriage brings an end to it, as documented for example for China (Zhang et al. 2004).

Wages of female migrants appear on average to be lower than wages of male migrants. There is variation in the share of earnings that migrants send back home and in the use of
remittances – these too seem to be gender differentiated: paying for the education of younger siblings is a more important priority for female migrants, for instance in the Philippines, Thailand (Paris et al, 2009) and in Bangladesh (Zohir, 1998). But the evidence is mixed on this point. For example, a recent study of rural Mexico (Pfeiffer and Taylor 2007) finds that households with female migrants spend less on education than similar households with no female migrants among their members.

*Gendered employment effects—those who stay behind:*

Few studies document how migration affects the livelihood strategies of the household members left behind. The impact seems to vary depending on whether the family member who migrates is female or male, on the duration of migration and the type of employment. For example, rural women who migrate as seasonal casual labourers to work in agribusiness are found to be unable to contribute to improve their family’s wellbeing and/or enhance their personal situation in both Zimbabwe (Adams, 1991) and India (Jackson and Rao, 2004).

When men migrate, the household members left behind must either hire labour or substitute for male labour. Scattered evidence from Sub-Saharan Africa suggests that male out–migration may intensify women’s workload in agricultural and contribute to women taking up traditionally male farming tasks. In South Africa, for example, when men migrate, women must also clear the land for planting (Mtshali 2002) and in Malawi 45 per cent of the women interviewed were performing tasks once handled by men (Deshingkar 2004). These women were already over–burdened and remittances were too low to hire in labour.

As for South East Asia, an interesting study by Paris et al (2009) shows that in Northeast Thailand, a higher proportion of family members contributed to rice production but also more labour was hired as a result of male migration. In the Philippines, the proportion of hired labour was higher than family labour and hired female labourers substituted for wives’ labour. In North Vietnam, rice farming was dominated by female family labour, particularly in households with migrants. In all such cases, remittances were used to pay for farm inputs and/or hiring of labour, thus maintaining productivity. In the Philippines and Thailand, the absence of principal males and sons did not change women’s workload because female household members used remittances for hiring labour for land preparation, spraying of chemicals, and other heavy tasks. Thus migration did not seem to have changed women’s traditional roles. In Vietnam, wives’ workload appears to have increased because of additional tasks such as fertilizer and pesticide application, and land preparation, which are typically male tasks. Some of the female farmers shifted their roles from unpaid family labour to managers.

In areas where socio–cultural gender norms are very rigid, women withdraw from agricultural work, or other type of rural employment, as a result of male migration, reinforcing the gender division of labour between productive and reproductive spheres. Evidence of this is found in parts of South Asia (Kerala, India and Muslim communities in eastern Sri Lanka, Jackson and Rao, 2004) in rural Armenia and in Guatemala (Menjívar and Agadjanian, 2007).

In rural Mexico, male international migration, and hence higher remittances, appears to be associated with a gender–differentiated labour supply behaviour among those who stay
behind. Women in families receiving remittances withdraw from paid work – mostly from poorly paid occupations in the informal sector, whereas men who remain in rural areas appear to shift from formal sector jobs to the informal sector (Amuedo–Dorantes and Pozo 2006). A reason for this behaviour is hard to find. A more recent study (Appendini, 2009) finds that women who stay behind appear to have ambiguous feelings about their situation-- enjoying greater independence in decision making in some instances but also feeling further overburdened with family responsibilities.

The effects of female migration on subsistence production and food security as well as on rural labour markets are documented even less than the effects of male migration. As for the impact of women’s migration on subsistence production, a recent study (Pfeiffer and Taylor 2008) finds that neither female nor male migration has any effect on the propensity to produce staple crops in rural Mexico but that non-staple crop production responds negatively only to male migration.

If women migrate, their husbands often find it difficult take on responsibility for childcare and household work. For example, Toltstokorova (2009) reports frequent cases of anti-social behaviour among (mainly unemployed) husbands and adult sons in Ukraine. It is usually other female household members left behind, particularly old relatives, who take on more unpaid work in addition to their own following female international migration, as documented in studies of rural China (Luo, n.d.), Vietnam and the Philippines (Paris et al, 2009). In the Philippines, some household female members were able to move from unpaid subsistence agricultural work to running small businesses (e.g. Sari–sari stores) thanks to remittances from their female relatives (IFAD and INSTRAW, 2007)

5.3 HIV

In 2007, 33 million people were estimated to be living with HIV in the whole world. Sub-Saharan Africa accounts for 67 percent of people with HIV and for 75 percent of AIDS deaths. Countries especially affected include: South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, Swaziland, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Women account for nearly 60 percent of HIV infections in Sub-Saharan Africa (UNAIDS, 2008). HIV infection rates in rural areas are hard to measure and likely to go unreported. While early outbreaks of the disease occurred predominantly in urban areas, the majority of people living with HIV/AIDS are now in rural areas, as a result of many male migrant workers with AIDS symptoms returning to their villages (see for example FAO 2004 for Zambia; ODI 2005).

HIV/AIDS affects rural households and rural employment in multiple ways. Many rural households appear to experience labour shortages for farm work, with serious implications for agricultural production and food security. The extent to which HIV/AIDS–affected households may diversify into non–farm jobs is not known. HIV/AIDS has also significant indirect effects on rural employment through restrictions on female labour availability as women’s productive time is diverted to taking care of the sick.

All these changes appear to be markedly gender differentiated. Adult men may often be the first to be affected in a household and the first to die (UNAIDS, 2008; Rugalema, 1999). When men are sick, women may attempt to maintain farm production by taking over farm tasks previously performed by their husbands. In Zambia, for example, wives with sick
husbands or recently widowed took over male tasks such as ploughing while retaining responsibility for all domestic activities as well as nursing sick household members (FAO 2004). Occasionally, women received help from relatives but in most cases they hired male labourers in exchange for home-produced beer to prepare rice fields. In many cases, however, cash crops are abandoned when adult males fall sick (ODI 2005). Widows may come under pressure to leave the fields to their husband’s family (see Strickland, 2004 for Lesotho, South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania and Malawi). This severely restricts women’s ability to work as independent farmers and to meet household food needs through own production.

When women are sick, men may be not available to take over female tasks in farm production such as weeding. For example, still in Zambia (FAO 2004), most male–headed households either sought help from other adult female relatives, or, more frequently, relied on their children’s work.

As for the impact of HIV/AIDS on the care burden, there is ample evidence that women disproportionately carry such burden (Akintola, 2008 for a general review of the literature; Chimwaza and Watkins, 2004 for rural Malawi; Lindsey et al., 2003 for three districts of Botswana) thus adding to already heavy workloads. Having to care for their sick relatives reduces women’s capacity to engage in paid work, in both farm and non–farm activities. A few studies document the negative impact of increased care giving responsibilities on women’s agricultural labour supply. In Bukoba district, Tanzania, women spent 60 percent less time on agricultural activities if their husbands were ill (Rugalema, 1999). In Ethiopia, women in AIDS–affected households spend on agricultural activities between 12 and 16 hours per week compared with 34 hours for women in non-AIDS affected households (FAO, 2004). In southern Zambia women had to withdraw from agricultural work altogether (Waller, 1997).

The impact of HIV/AIDS on women’s and men’s rural non–farm activities is little investigated. In response to HIV/AIDS and declining agricultural production, rural households may seek non–farm employment opportunities. However, because women are overburdened, they may no longer have time for non–farm activities such as artisan crafts, market gardening, and food processing that previously contributed to the family budget. Women in HIV/AIDS affected households may be forced to enter the worst forms of paid work in order to feed their families or raise money for medicines and for school fees. There is sparse evidence that women in HIV/AIDS affected households resort to commercial sex (Fleischman, and Morrison, 2003; Gillespie, 2006).

The HIV/AIDS epidemic significantly affects also child work. Some plantations in Zimbabwe hired children in place of their dead parents to help them survive (ILO, 2003). It has also been reported that bonded and forced labour of children is on the increase on South African farms, where children inherit family obligations when their parents die (ibid). Moreover, AIDS–affected households often take children away from school, especially girls, so they can take care of sick family members and younger siblings (Kipp et al., 2007; for rural Uganda; Grant and Calmiere, 2003 for rural Zimbabwe).

Female–headed households affected by HIV are likely to be more disadvantaged and more vulnerable to poverty than their male–headed households. In the northern province of Zambia, female–headed households were found to have about three times as many orphans as
female–headed households, owned fewer physical assets and fewer small ruminants, had the lowest average land available per person and suffered from shortages of labour (FAO, 2004).

5.4 Is there a feminisation of agriculture?

A number of studies on gender and rural employment point to the ‘feminisation of agriculture’ (for example Deere, 2005; Katz, 2003; and Lastarria–Cornhiel, 2006) since the 1990s, partly as a result of these trends. The term ‘feminisation of agriculture’ refers to women’s increasing participation in the agricultural labour force, whether as agricultural wage workers, as independent producers or as unremunerated family workers. Evidently, the forms and conditions under which women are incorporated in agricultural employment matter for gender equality and poverty outcomes – as does it whether an increase in the percentage of women in the agricultural labour force relative to men is because more women are economically active or because fewer men are working in agriculture.

Extra caution should also be used in interpreting higher rural female participation rates as true ‘feminisation’, as these higher rates may be simply a reflection of women’s contribution to agriculture starting to be better counted in standard statistics. The evidence is patchy and anecdotal in most countries and regions. Statistics over time are rarely available, making the task of answering this question even harder.

It is thus important to understand the processes behind the numbers. As the earlier Sections 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 illustrate, asking what the factors leading to gender–differentiated changes in rural employment are is a more fruitful policy question. Different contexts will require different types of interventions. What the earlier sections show is that the level of influence, and strength, of different drivers vary by region and sub–region and that there may be many tensions between offsetting effects. The HIV–AIDS epidemic has a much stronger negative impact in southern Africa than in any other region. Migration appears to play a more important role in South East Asia and Latin America than in South Asia or Sub–Saharan Africa (or at least it is better documented in the former regions). The diversification of the rural economy may be more advanced in some areas of Latin America. International trade seems to be affecting most regions but each region and country in different ways, depending on the socio-economic and institutional structures of the countries concerned.

5.5 New challenges

Other processes and events, such as climate change and the recent global financial crisis, pose significant new challenges to the achievement of poverty reduction and gender equality in the rural world. These processes are too new and hence not sufficiently documented yet to permit any sound assessment. Thus only a few tentative considerations can be made.

Climate change

One effect of climate change relevant to rural employment is related to the risk of farm yields declining. The resulting gender differentiated impact will depend, as in the case of international trade, on multiple factors, including which crops women produce, as well as their ability to adapt and respond.
Female farmers’ ability to develop effective coping strategies might be limited compared with male farmers due to their more restricted access to productive resources such as technology, knowledge and inputs. There is, however, some evidence that some women are adapting to the changing climate by shifting cultivation to flood and drought resistant crops, or to crops that can be harvested before the flood season, or varieties of rice that will grow high enough to remain above the water when the floods come (BRIDGE, 2008). Climate change might worsen wage agricultural labourers’ conditions if, in response to it, large producers expand informal employment and increase the use of pesticides. Climate change might also increase women’s unpaid workload, further reducing their opportunities for paid employment, in areas affected by desertification, where time required for water collection might increase.

Both mitigation and adaptation policies are likely to have gender differentiated effects on employment that need to be better understood. For instance, environmental labelling, by discouraging the purchase of fruit and vegetables from developing countries, may have negative employment effects on female–intensive non traditional agricultural export industries. Climate policies can contribute to rising demand for educated and qualified workers through promoting environmentally sound technologies. However, because of women’s lower levels of education than men’s in many countries, women are less likely to benefit from such demand.

The financial and economic crisis

The financial crisis, which started last year in developed countries, is spreading to developing countries very quickly, and in a highly synchronized way, through reduced trade flows, declining commodity prices, reduced liquidity and tightening of credit markets affecting both private and public sectors, lower remittances flows, a decline both in foreign direct investment and in official development assistance, and greater uncertainty. It is predicted that some of the Asian countries (except India and China) and most Sub-Saharan countries will be hit the hardest whereas Latin America seems the region best equipped institutionally to cope with the downturn (ILO, 2009). There is no clear evidence yet as to whether rural areas are being more negatively affected than urban areas, as this is context-specific and in turn depends on a range of factors and pre-conditions. Nor is it possible to know whether rural job losses will be greater among women than among men.

The employment effects of the crisis will be contingent on the particular economic structures of different countries and on the sectors in which women and men work. In countries where export sectors, such as NTAEs, are female intensive, rural women will disproportionately bear the loss of jobs. But in countries where minerals are key exports or where the construction sector is large, men will suffer the most (these sectors are often male dominated). Male and female migration from rural areas to the cities, or to other countries, may also be affected differently depending on the sectors in which workers are employed (for example, depending on whether in receiving areas the demand for construction workers--mostly a male job, will decline more than the demand for domestic workers--a female occupation).
Based on the experience of past crises, such as the Asian crisis in the late 1990s (see for example Elson, 2002), it is plausible to predict that in most countries women will be expected to assume the primary responsibility for acting as safety nets of last resort and for ensuring that their families will survive. Rural women’s unpaid work burdens may further increase, imposing significant costs and limiting further their ability to participate in the labour market. It is possible that rural women, more than rural men, will be increasingly offered precarious employment with low prospects and that female workers, being on average less educated, may be less prepared for more remunerative employment involving the use of the new technology needed to ensure a ‘green’ recovery. All these are simply hypotheses at this stage which nonetheless suggest that efforts must be made to ensure that policy responses to the crisis protect both women and men workers.
PART II. INTERPRETING WOMEN’S AND MEN’S DIFFERENTIATED PATTERNS OF WORK: KEY CONSTRAINTS AND POLICY OPTIONS

1. Changing patterns but persisting gender inequalities?

Part I documented that women and men occupy different positions, and experience different working conditions, in rural labour markets across the developing world. Patterns vary across countries and socio-economic settings and are changing in response to increased international trade, migration and other emerging trends. However some of the broad structures identified by Ester Boserup in her seminal work on women’s role in economic development in the 1970s seem still to be discernible in current regional configurations.

Boserup (1970) distinguished between a ‘male farming system’ and a ‘female farming system’. The ‘male farming system’ was characterised by high incidence of landlessness, high levels of agricultural wage labour, inheritance through male lines and a low presence of women in the fields due to strict norms of female seclusion resulting in women concentrating mainly on tasks within the homestead. The ‘female farming system’ was characterised by family farming, low levels of wage labour, bilateral inheritance practices, communal ownership of land with usufruct rights for female members, and high percentages of agricultural female family labourers. Women in this system played a major role in food production, had greater freedom of movement and were active in trade and commerce. Patterns similar to those of the ‘male system’ can still be found in the Middle East and North Africa, in parts of South Asia (especially Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh), and even in some regions of Latin America. Except in Latin America, women in these areas still participate in trading in limited ways. Some characteristics of the ‘female farming system’ can be observed in Sub-Saharan Africa but also in many countries of South East Asia.

Globalisation is playing a role in transforming these gender patterns of rural work. Both female and male workers are now present in larger numbers in the traded more market oriented sectors of the rural economy and rural women’s contributions have gained greater visibility both in policy making and research. But the extent to which different groups of workers are incorporated into the global economy and participate in the new processes varies. Even if it is difficult to tell due to poor statistics, women seem to be participating in the general movement out of agriculture but at a slower pace than men. Migration and involvement in profitable non-farm activities appear more prevalent among rural male workers (as noted in section 5.2 of Part 1). Smallholders, which count many female farmers among them, have been facing hardship. Rural wage employment in large corporate farming is emerging as an important source of employment for rural women, especially in Latin America, but the evidence about working conditions and pay in these new sectors is mixed (as described in section 5.1. of Part 1). An unchanging aspect of the gender division of labour across regions seems to be the division of domestic responsibilities: men are generally not taking up a greater share of housework as women have taken up a larger share of agricultural production and paid work. There are clearly many gender related constraints still at work in rural labour markets. These pose some challenges to the achievement of decent work for women and men in the new global environment.
2. Identifying gender constraints and related policy responses

This section identifies some key gender related constraints in the rural economy and suggests, for each constraint, a number of possible policy responses. It is by no means a comprehensive review of all factors influencing gendered rural labour markets outcomes and simply focuses on what are considered the most relevant aspects. The ILO Decent Work Framework combining the four dimensions of employment, protection, rights and voice (ILO, 2000) provides a structure to the discussion of policy options. Various forms of gender disadvantage will obviously have different relevance, and intersect with each other differently, depending on the socio–economic characteristics of the countries concerned, their institutional settings and prevailing development strategies. The required policy mix in each context will consequently vary. This latter aspect is taken up in Section 3 of this second part.

Gender related constraints can arise out of gender relations themselves (‘gender specific constraints’), or may reflect the asymmetric distribution of resources between different groups which limit men’s opportunities as well as women’s, but usually bear down more heavily on women (‘gender–intensified inequalities’). They can also be the effect of biases in policy: for instance, the state may contribute to female disadvantage by failing to legislate against discrimination or by the manner agricultural extension or land tenure reforms are designed and implemented (‘imposed forms of gender disadvantage’) (Kabeer, 2008).

2.1 The burden of unpaid work

The division of domestic labour attributing women as the main responsibility for household chores, care provision and other unpaid work to support their families and communities is one of the major examples of a gender–specific constraint. Women effectively act a safety net of last resort to ensure their family’s well-being even in the absence of adequate social provision by the state. This unpaid work burden restricts the time they have available for other productive activities. It may also limit their ability to participate actively in workers’ cooperatives and other organisations, and to mobilise for their rights. The responsibility for children, in particular, may also constitute a reason for employers (unwilling to share the costs of care provision) to discriminate against married female workers in their hiring.

There are many forms of unpaid work rural women (more than rural men) engage in, and it is useful to distinguish them for policy purposes:

(a) Women (and children) in the rural areas of most regions spend long hours collecting water and fuel (as evidence provided in section 3.3. of Part I shows). There is scope for addressing this constraint through well–targeted investment in physical infrastructure to be achieved through public investment and a variety of interventions, including, but not only, ‘gender–aware’ public works programmes (as suggested for example by Antonopoulos, 2007).

(b) Women also spend much of their day caring for their children, assisting other family members who are ill or disabled, cooking and cleaning. This would call for public financing of childcare services, support for day care centres, health clinics, strengthening of community services for the elderly and other forms of social
protection. Better physical infrastructure, for example electrification, could also help in reducing the drudgery of some tasks such as cooking and cleaning.

c) Women often work on the family farm or help in small business enterprises without receiving remuneration for it as a result of unequal power relations within households that severely limit their ability to make claims over their contributions. Policies to address this problem may include strengthening women’s legal rights and greater visibility through participation in the public life of the rural communities where they live.

There seems to be little variation in gender imbalances in domestic responsibilities across regions — in all countries from Sub-Saharan Africa, to Latin America, to Asia, women carry out the bulk of unpaid work. But there are differences between groups of women (in that, for instance, better–off women can afford to pay for help with housework if they work outside the home, and they are also likely to be in forms of employment that provide child support), and between locations (female farmers living in remote areas have to spend longer hours collecting water or preparing meals than women living in areas better endowed with infrastructure).

Water and fuel collection

The burden of fuel and water collection is likely to reduce the amount of time women can spend in paid work and to increase the probability that they will be involved in more informal forms of employment. In South African poor rural households, for example, the time that women who must fetch water and fuel spend in paid employment is only 25 percent of the time that women who do not engage in water and fuel collection spend on it (Valodia and Devey, 2005). In Tanzania, time spent fetching water and fuel appears to be a significant constraint on women’s participation in off–farm self–employment (World Bank, 2007). A simple simulation exercise carried out still for Tanzania (Fontana and Natali, 2008) suggests that the resulting earnings from reducing water and fuel collection to an average level could be about 6 percent of the total cash earnings for the entire population in a year. Because most of these wages would accrue to women in rural areas, this could significantly contribute not only to reduce poverty but also to redress the gender income gap. During the dryer summer months, women participating in a micro–enterprise project run by the Self–Employed Women’s Association (SEWA) in Gujarat, must reduce the time on paid activities because of the need to spend longer hours in water collection. Reducing water collection to one hour a day would have enabled these women to earn an additional $100 a year – a significant sum for a poor household (UNDP, 2006).

Childcare

A generalisation that can be made is that rural female workers with children are more likely to be self–employed (in agriculture or other sectors) or to work from home than single women. This type of work can be easily reconciled with reproductive responsibilities. Self–employment offers a more flexible work schedule (women in this category appear on average to spend fewer hours in paid work as shown in Table 12) and have lower barriers to entry compared with some formal wage sector employment where employers may discriminate against female workers with family responsibilities.

When women with children are very poor, though, they may lack even the most basic
start–up assets and hence are forced to take up casual wage work under very disadvantageous terms. Examples of female workers with young children who engage as seasonal workers in the most insecure forms of employment, with no child care support or maternity leave, can be found in some NTAEs sectors, for example in South Africa (Barrientos et al., 1999), where many females migrants live with their children in informal settlements close to the workplace, and in the Dominican Republic (Raynolds, 2002). In both cases some of the children were still undernourished because their mothers’ earnings were too low. In Punjab, women working as wage labourers on contract farming in horticulture often bring their infants and children with them because they lack access to child care services (Gill, 2001 quoted in Kabeer, 2008).

Both the age and the gender of children matter for their mothers’ ability to choose from alternative options of remunerate. An interesting, if dated, study from Guatemala (Katz, 1995), for example, shows that marketing activities that require women to be mobile are only undertaken by older women with no infants, and independent agricultural activities are only undertaken by women with adult sons who can provide them with easier access to land. In Eastern Africa, women with young children tend to engage only in petty trade but are unable to scale up their activities (Baden, 1998), partly because this would require travelling longer distances.

Time constraints can be even harder to overcome for female headed households. In Uganda, child care burdens coupled with poor infrastructure (lack of piped water and cooking stoves) significantly compromised women heads of household’s ability to expand and/or diversify production (Dolan, 2002). In the districts of Masindi and Mukono, when asked about the reasons for their lack of success in expanding agricultural production, men identified transport, marketing constraints and lack of credit, whereas women mentioned the time needed to look after their families, food preparation and the work on their husbands’ gardens (World Bank, 2005).

Childcare is also a problem for many of the women working in employment guarantee schemes, especially for mothers of infants. A recent social audit of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) in Tamil Nadu (Narayanan, 2008) indicates that about 70 percent of the women interviewed had no childcare facilities at the worksite despite the provision of the NREGA that ‘in the event that there are at least five children under the age of six at the worksite, one of the female workers should be deputed to look after them and she should be paid the same wage as other NREGA workers’. About 50 percent of the women left their children at home and most of them were being dissuaded from bringing them to work. Women with children older than three years did not seem to face similar difficulties and a large proportion of them reported sending their children to either local child care centres (the ‘anganwadis’) or to school. Further details about this case are reported in Box 1.
Box 1. Employment guarantee, women’s work and childcare: responses from 15 NREGA worksites in Tamil Nadu

In Tamil Nadu women constitute more than 80 percent of NREGA workers. A survey of creche facilities and childcare practices of working women conducted in the Viluppuram district in July 2007 indicates that childcare is a significant problem for many workers, particularly so for mothers of children below the age of three years.

A total of 104 women with at least one child below the age of six years were interviewed. All of them were involved in earthwork (mainly carrying mud). The mother of the youngest child was already at the worksite despite having given birth just 17 days prior to the survey. Most of the women workers belonged to the scheduled castes and about half of them were illiterate. The main occupation of the majority was working on others’ fields as agricultural labourers. As many as 41 percent declared that NREGA had been the only source of income for the household in the past few months. NREGA was perceived as giving these women a sense of independence and security. It also offered them the possibility of staying on in their village. Many women explained that without the NREGA they would migrate to Bangalore, Chennai or further away places to work on construction sites.

Despite of the beneficial role of the NREGA, these young mothers face some difficulties. Chief among them is the issue of childcare. The NREGA states that in the event that there are at least five children under the age of six at the worksite, one of the female workers should be deputed to look after them and she should be paid the same wage as other NREGA workers. Yet only a few worksites seemed to have some arrangement for childcare with one or two elderly women taking care of the children brought to the worksite. Close to 65 percent of the respondents were unaware of this basic entitlement.

Almost 50 percent of the women left their children at home. When children were brought to the worksite, they were either left in the shade or kept near the spot where the mother was working. It seemed that women were being dissuaded from bringing their children to the NREGA worksite. Some were turned away from the worksite if their child accompanied them. A few women reported that whenever they brought their children to the worksite, their wages were cut. Of those who reported some form of harassment at the workplace about 50 percent stated that such harassment was related to childcare. The children who were left at home were either looked after by their siblings or left on their own. One child was tied to a table at home, with food left on a plate beside it.

Women with older children did not seem to face such difficulties. A large proportion of mothers of children over the age of three reported sending them either to the ‘anganwadi’ or to schools. Tamil Nadu has an impressive network of anganwadis but not all these facilities work well, their opening hours are different from those of NREGA worksites and often shorter, and are at times located too far. About 85 percent of mothers who left their children at home said that if creches were provided they would certainly bring their children. Some women mentioned that because of the problem of childcare they were often unable to join the NREGA worksites at all.


The negative impact of childcare on women’s participation in public works — especially for women with children in the pre–school age group — was noted in other earlier studies such as Quisumbing and Yohannes (2004) for a Food for Work programme in Ethiopia, and Dejardin (1996) for a number of projects in other Sub–Saharan countries.

Women’s caring obligations often reduce also the length of their total years in employment with negative consequences for their wage rates.
Women with no children seem usually to have more chances to enter better paid jobs, in particular non–agricultural wage employment, than women with children. Women with relatively grown up daughters can rely on them for help with domestic chores if they take up paid employment. Evidence across countries and sectors suggests that a significant number of older children, especially girls, look after younger siblings while they mothers work (Smith et al., 2004 for Kenya, Zambia, and Uganda and Katz, 1995 for Guatemala).

Unpaid family labour on farms

Evidence from West Africa reviewed in Dey Abbas (1997) shows that women’s obligation to work on their husbands’ fields means they are often unable to undertake important operations on their own plots in time, with negative consequences for their own crops productivity. Women contributing unpaid labour to their husbands’ production of vegetable exports in Guatemala, had to reduce their involvement in activities such as craft production, small livestock raising and storekeeping, all of which were sources of independent income for them (Sacatepequez Dary, 1991 and Blumberg, 1994 quoted in Deere, 2005).

Domestic responsibilities may also negatively affect women’s participation in training and extension services.

A survey of women farmers in central Thailand found that women involved in rice production as a result of male migration lacked basic skills in pest and disease diagnosis, pesticides and application methods. Despite the negative consequences that this lack of knowledge had for their health, most of these female farmers were not willing to participate in training courses because of conflicting caring and housework commitments (Heong and Escalada, 1997). An USAID Integrated Agriculture Training Program (IATP) in Papua New Guinea had only limited success because it failed to consider women’s family responsibilities. The training courses were arranged away from the village for three full days and women found it particularly difficult to travel and to arrange for alternative forms of childcare (Cahn, 2008).

Emerging challenges

We have seen in Part I that the burden of unpaid care work has been increasing in rural Sub–Saharan Africa because of the HIV epidemics. For example, because of the need to nurse HIV–affected household members, women devote less time to both agricultural work and childcare in Ethiopia and in Zambia (Bollinger et al., 1999, and Waller, 1997) and had to switch to less labour intensive crops in Uganda (Toupozis, 1994).

Increasing female migration is also likely to contribute to higher housework burdens for the female household members remaining in rural areas, in particular if children are left behind. These other female members may be mothers, sisters or older daughters who may be negatively affected in terms of their own employment options or in their opportunities for education (see, for example, Luo n.d. for China; Paris, 1999 for Vietnam; IFAD and INSTRAW, 2007 and Paris, 1999 for the Philippines). Young single women with fewer reproductive responsibilities are more likely to migrate further away from home in search for
better job opportunities. This has been observed in China, Malaysia, Bangladesh and other Asian and Latin American countries.

Already weak essential public social services in most rural areas of developing countries are likely to worsen with the current financial crisis and thus increase the care–giving burden of rural women at the household level.
2.1.1 Policy responses

*Physical infrastructure investment*

Public investment in roads, rural electrification and improvements in water and sanitation infrastructure can significantly contribute to reducing rural women’s unpaid work and generate many other benefits such as better health for both women and their families.

In Mali, an IFAD/UNIDO project supplied diesel powered multifunctional platforms in 12 villages to help in reducing time spent in fuel collection. As a result, many women could shift their labour inputs to income–generating activities, leading to an average 50 cents daily increase in their income. Rice production and consumption also grew. One main reason for the success of this project is that women beneficiaries were involved from the beginning in its design, management, and implementation (Grown and Gupta, 2005).

Women do not always gain from improved energy services though. In a mountainous village in rural China, following the introduction of electricity, some women moved part of their domestic activities to the evening and worked longer in the field during the day — the only substantial time saving for them occurring in pigs–feeding. A general increase in time for rest resulted in the village but this was much larger for men than for women (Newsletter of the Network for Gender and Sustainable Energy, 2003). This points to the need to address the gender division of domestic labour with an integrated approach that combines improvements in physical infrastructure with awareness generating programmes.

An example of a successful initiative in the area of water infrastructure is provided by the Self Employed Women’s Association (SEWA)’s water campaign in Gujarat. The project was about improving access to safe and reliable drinking water and involved, among others, training women to repair hand pumps. Women’s collective action was a crucial ingredient of the success. Women were initially reluctant to participate because water infrastructure was regarded as a male territory and men were expressing hostility by refusing to drink water from a source built by women or to work on water structures managed by women. SEWA’s district level functionaries and village women leaders facilitated a process of mobilisation through meetings, solidarity group formation and capacity building, and acted as interface between the local women and the water board. As a result, workloads from collecting water were reduced, enabling women to devote more time to either remunerated employment or to rest. More reliable and safer water provision led also to a reduction of migration to nearby villages. More in general, the project seems to have had a significant empowerment effect on women and on their willingness and ability to participate in the public domain including involvement in *panchayat* (local council) meetings and formation of Self Help Groups (SHGs) for savings and thrift (Mishra Panda, 2007).

*Public works*

More roads and better water and electricity infrastructure can also be provided through government supported public works. Well designed employment guarantee programmes can fulfill simultaneously the two objectives of generating jobs for both women and men, and creating assets that reduce aspects of women’s domestic workloads, with important gender redistributive implications. This is more likely to happen if women and communities are directly involved in the design of public works. In Peru, for example, women’s direct
participation in the design of a rural roads project ensured greater priority given to their needs. Upgrading included not only roads connecting communities, but also many non–motorised transport tracks mostly used by women and ignored by other road programs. As a result, women started to participate to a greater extents in markets and fairs, spent less time obtaining food and fuel supplies, and 43 percent of them reported to be earning higher incomes (World Bank, 2004).

Public works that contribute to rural community welfare in a gender equitable way do not have to be confined to physical infrastructure projects. As the Tamil Nadu NREGA case described in Box 1 suggests, schemes that would allow women to look after children could be designed as a component of employment generation programmes. Care providing public works programmes could be also an effective response to the upsurge in the need for care resulting from the HIV/AIDS pandemic, particularly in Sub–Saharan Africa. A review of social fund projects in Thailand (ESCAP, 2003) highlighted several initiatives of this kind including shelters for the elderly and HIV/AIDS patients, day–care centres and playgrounds.

**Childcare services**

Childcare support for working women in rural areas can promote the ability of mothers to participate in economic activity and indirectly support children’s wellbeing. The provision of child care is of most immediate relevance to wage workers but it can also support women in self–employment by possibly enhancing their chances for a better paid non–agricultural waged work. The most common form of childcare in rural areas is still through family members, including older siblings looking after younger ones. Other forms of child care are still rather poor and scattered. Childcare can be provided through a variety of arrangements: government funded day care centres, services by voluntary organisations or informal babysitting services. Publicly funded childcare facilities relative to market–based childcare services have to potential to reach a wider range of workers, including the most disadvantaged.

Some innovative projects appear to be available to meet the demand for childcare in rural contexts, particularly in India. Mobile Creches is a voluntary organisation that offers childcare to women working in the construction sector. It has more than 300 centres and reaches about 200,000 children across India. It approaches builders in construction sites, both in urban and rural areas, with a view to opening a centre there. Those who agree provide basic facilities (Kabeer, 2008). SEWA too offers child care provision and targets groups of migrant workers. For instance, it supports women in a district of West Gujarat where many of the poorest families work in salt extraction. The salt workers have to stay in the proximity of their workplace, near the coastal desert terrains, up to eight months in a year. The children have to follow their parents, with often negative implications for their education and overall development (SEWA, 2000).

**Health insurance**

Coverage of public social security schemes, including health insurance, tends to be limited in rural areas (ILO, 2008). Even where, as in many Latin American and Caribbean countries, contributory social security systems are gradually being extended to agricultural wage workers (ILO 2003), most seasonal and migrant workers remain excluded. Lack of health
insurance may aggravate the load of unpaid care at moments in which families are especially vulnerable.

Health insurance schemes for informal workers implemented by civil society organisations can offer effective alternatives when public social security schemes are lacking. SEWA in India, for example, supports an innovative scheme providing about 100,000 women workers, in both urban and rural areas, with health insurance, including a maternity component, life and asset insurance (UNRISD 2005; Chatterjee and Vyas, 2000; ILO 2003). However some of SEWA’s poorest members cannot afford the premiums, which have to be set at a rate that ensures financial viability (UNRISD 2005).

Social pensions

Social pensions can partly contribute to redress gender inequalities in employment resulting from care responsibilities as they can offer women some financial support in their old age. As the cases of Brazil, South Africa and Namibia show, social pensions, especially if paid directly to women, have a significant positive impact on poor households (Barrientos et al., 2004; Kabeer, 2008; Duflo, 2003; UNRISD, 2005; Devereux, 2001; Schatz and Ogunmefun 2007) and, in South Africa, constitute an important source of income for households affected by HIV/AIDS (Schatz and Ogunmefun 2007; Ferreira et al. 2002 quoted in Kabeer, 2008).

Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constraint</th>
<th>The burden of unpaid work is one of the major examples of a gender-specific constraint</th>
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<tr>
<td>Forms of employment</td>
<td>Limits rural women’s participation in both self-employment and wage employment, and in both agricultural and non-agricultural work. It does negatively affect access to self-employment opportunities in the sense of preventing women to diversify into more profitable opportunities involving working longer and more regular hours and/or travelling longer distances. It does negatively affect wage-employment mostly by weakening women’s bargaining power relative to their employers. It does affect female workers’ productivity more in general by increasing stress and fatigue. Women’s taking up paid employment (in whatever form) may have negative intergenerational effects if the burden of unpaid work is transferred to daughters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>There seems to be no variation across regions or economic structures in the intensity of this burden. Where physical infrastructure is poor and public provision of social services weak, the problem is especially limiting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policies</td>
<td>A policy mix that combines: (1) public works involving women from the design stage and fulfilling simultaneously the two objectives of employment generation (for both women and men), and of creating infrastructure that reduces aspects of women’s domestic workloads; (2) social protection offering good quality care provision, hence encouraging a more equal sharing of responsibilities between public and private institutions; (3) support to grassroots organisations in creating awareness around rights and entitlements</td>
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2.2 Education and skills

Human capital gains through education can be a crucial factor in strengthening rural women’s position in the labour process (sometimes labour is the main factor of production women have some control over); can help diversify rural family incomes through non–farm earnings; may improve the stability and quality of non–farm employment by allowing access to vocational training; increase women’s access to labour markets beyond their locality (such as through migration); and increase women’s ability, resources and information to claim their rights. A crucial interrupter of female education is marriage and/or child–bearing. In turn, these can limit women’s labour market access due to discriminatory practices, and therefore reduce incentives to invest in female education. Gender biases in both the demand and supply side of education need to be addressed.

Education is likely to be positively associated with participation in high productivity rural employment. This is for example suggested by a regression analysis including Sub–Saharan African countries (Ghana, Malawi and Nigeria), Asian countries (Bangladesh, Indonesia, Nepal, Vietnam and Tajikistan) and Latin American countries (Ecuador, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Panama) (Winters 2008). The estimated effects are stronger as national incomes rise, and women appear to gain more than men from each additional year of education. A similar result is found by Abdulai and Delgado (1999) for Southern Mali: years of schooling increase the likelihood of participation in non–farm work and of earning higher wages, more so for women than for men.

Education appears to increase women’s chances to enter the formal rural labour market, particularly the wage sector, in three rural states of Mexico (Pagan and Sanchez 2001). Unfortunately, the study does not separate agricultural from non–agricultural activities. Education is found to have a positive effect particularly on the labour market participation of married women, who generally face more barriers to employment than single women. Secondary and post–secondary education increases the chance that they are in the salaried sector relative to self–employment.

Another study (Katz 2001) on Mexican ejidos (agrarian reform farms) examines gender and generational differences in off–farm wage labour market participation. Men are much more likely to hold off–farm jobs than women, but mainly in unskilled positions. The few women who access off–farm employment are more likely to be in skilled or semiskilled jobs. However, since the majority of the women in the study were single, it is unclear whether they would continue to work after marriage.

Most of the women who earned relatively high wages in stable employment on large state–run farms (including citrus plantations, coffee plantations and irrigated tomatoes and vegetables projects) in Mpumalanga, South Africa had completed more years of schooling than other female wage labourers interviewed, avoided early and frequent pregnancies, and had more work experience (which boosted wage rates). An intergenerational effect was also found: women whose mothers attended school had completed more years of school (about 9 years) than the women whose mothers had not attended school. The majority of the workers with stable jobs were South African. By contrast, migrant female workers from Mozambique were unable to access remunerative employment on state–run farms and had uncertain legal status within South Africa (Sender, 2002).
Education can help rural women, particularly the young and single ones, to access urban wage employment. The positive effect of education on rural–urban migration propensities appears to be stronger for men than for women in some countries, for example in Ecuador (Katz, 2000) but the evidence is mixed. Still Katz (2003) finds that in Mexico, higher levels of education are found to enhance rural women’s chances of migrating to the United States but to reduce men’s chances. Evidence from China suggests that the probability women with higher levels of education have to find a job by migrating to the cities has risen over time (De Braw et al., 2004).

The impact of education on women’s rural labour market participation may depend on the specific socio–cultural context. For example, in southern India where increasing the opportunity of a good marriage is often the main reason for supporting girls’ education, education can lead to a decline in female wage employment and reinforce women’s traditional roles, as found in a village in Maharashtra (Kabeer, 2003).

Barriers to women’s non–farm employment, reduce the returns to women’s education, and dampen parental incentives to invest in girls’ education. For example, the higher probability of women obtaining non–farm employment has gone hand in hand with higher educational attainment of girls in Philippines (Quisumbing et al. 2003). In contrast, Ghanaian women have more limited access to non–farm labour markets, which in turn likely discourages parents’ investment in their daughters’ schooling.

Returns to education are greater in non–farm employment. While education has a positive relation to farm yields, education is less relevant for agricultural family work and self–employment.

An important issue relates to whether some kind of minimum level of achieved education is required to acquire training. A study shows that entry into technical education requires a minimum of eight or ten years of schooling in Bangladesh (Mitra and Reza, 2002 quoted in Jackson and Rao, 2004). Very few women thus became eligible for such technical training that could improve access to better jobs. Training may actually reinforce occupational segregation based on gender. In both formal and non–formal education, boys and girls are often channelled into different subject areas. This means girls are often ‘directed’ into subjects that are essentially extensions of women’s household and reproductive tasks, such as sewing, food processing and nutrition ((ILO, 2000).

In terms of accessing agricultural technology, Quisumbing (2003) shows that education substantially improves yields, but high levels of schooling might not be the most important factor. Well–designed extension services that can be easily understood may be more, or equally, effective for women. In Kenya, women who had less education than men excelled in the uptake of soil fertility replenishment technologies as long as explanations were given in simple terms (Quisumbing and Pandolfelli, 2008). The study suggests women in the programme understood the technologies better than men but does not provide any detail of why this was the case. In Bangladesh, a local NGO successfully taught illiterate women how to manage fishponds by giving them notebooks with illustrated instructions (ibid).
Relevant and quality extension services and training are limited for women farmers (World Bank, IFAD and FAO, 2009). In Vietnam, for example, women made up only 25 percent and 10 percent of participants in training programmes on animal husbandry and on crop cultivation respectively (NCFAW 2000, quoted in Kabeer, 2008). In Cambodia, women were only 10 percent of extension beneficiaries (Asian Development Bank n.d.). In Senegal, according to the 1998/1999 census, male plot managers received 3 times more agricultural extension services than female plot managers (FAO, 2005a).

Reasons include that research and extension services tend to focus on the tasks that males specialize in; access to extension services often requires travelling long distances to district centres, taking several hours away from the family; extension services are staffed overwhelmingly by men raising cultural difficulties to engage in face–to–face communication with women farmers.

Are education and land correlated? Deere and León (2003) in their review of ethnographic material on gender and land inheritance in 12 Latin American countries argue that a woman’s age, education and status within her household (whether she is head of her family or not) are all positively related to greater gender equality in land inheritance. However, in contexts where land is accessed only through marriage, the education factor may play a marginal role. A recent study (Hare et al., 2007) finds no evidence of any statistical correlation between a woman’s educational background and the probability of obtaining land in rural China.

2.2.1 Policy responses

Policies for promoting greater gender equality in education with a view to improve access to decent rural jobs must include a combination of measures that address both the content of education and more practical problems that girls more often than boys face in accessing schools and training services. The emphasis of education policies should evidently vary depending on whether the labour market of the area concerned is dominated by agricultural activities or non-agricultural activities.

Measures could include: better design of curricula so to be more relevant to the technical knowledge required in agriculture; encouraging girls (for example through scholarships) to include technical subjects in their study plans and boys to join ‘home economics’ classes; more and better designed vocational training for women; gender training to teachers, including on issues related to sexual harassment; building new schools and improving physical access to them, paying particular attention to suitable locations and means of transportation which are safe and women-friendly; adapting school times to patterns of rural life (including the need of some children to participate in aspects of rural work in moments of the day, or seasonally).

PROGRESA (Programa de Educación, Salud y Alimentación) is a much cited example of a cash transfer program implemented in rural Mexico to assist poor families in meeting the financial and opportunity costs of their children’s school attendance (see, for example, various IFPRI reports). This programme transfers cash directly to the children’s mothers and provides higher stipends for girls than for boys. The assessment of whether PROGRESA has been successful in achieving its goals is mixed. Whilst evidence points to an increase in enrolment rates, both in primary and in secondary education, especially for
girls, there is concern that the programme may have reinforced existing gender inequalities within households by intensifying mothers’ caring responsibilities. Mothers must spend more time taking children for regular health checks, attending workshops on health and programme co-ordinators meetings, contributing to community work through cleaning buildings or clearing rubbish as requirement for obtaining the cash transfer) (Molyneux quoted in Razavi, 2005)

The FAO, in collaboration with the World Food Programme and other partners, has supported the creation of Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS) for orphaned youth and children in countries where the prevalence of HIV is highest: Cameroon, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe (World Bank, IFAD and FAO, 2009). The particularly valuable feature of this project is that it combines support to very vulnerable children with innovative and holistic teaching methods.

The JFFLS training programmes target both boys and girls and help them in developing agricultural knowledge and livelihood skills they will need to sustain themselves and their families in the future. The programmes so far appear to have been successful (as described in Box 2) but further support with access to productive assets such as land or credit is crucial to ensure that the knowledge acquired through JFFLSs will enable students to benefit from decent jobs once they complete their training programmes. More in general, integrated programmes that link skill training to creating new income generating activities, have great potential.

Box 2. Junior farmer field and life schools: empowering orphans and vulnerable youth living in a world with HIV/AIDS

Children in JFFLS programmes learn practical agricultural skills by undertaking agricultural tasks in an allocated plot. They learn about local agro-ecological conditions, field preparation, sowing and transplanting, weeding, irrigation, integrated pest management, utilization and conservation of available resources, utilization and processing of food crops, harvesting, storage and marketing skills. There is also some emphasis on ‘life skills’ because many of the children attending the JFFLS no longer have parents to support their socialisation. The JFFLSs promotes awareness on HIV and AIDS prevention, gender equality, children’s rights, nutrition and good hygiene. Efforts are made to identify the specific different needs of girls and boys. Teaching methods include participatory educational theatre. Boys and girls have equal access to learning, and school resources are distributed fairly among them. Equal distribution of school meals to boys and girls provide an alternative to local feeding practices in many communities which tend to give priority to boys.

Preliminary assessments indicate that most JFFLS programmes have managed to build women’s and girls’ confidence by offering new role models for girls through innovative educational methods, improved participants skills and their status and visibility within their communities.

Source: World Bank, IFAD and FAO, 2009

Emergencies and ‘double discrimination’

Mobile school programmes in rural areas have the potential to benefit the most vulnerable girls within groups which have been displaced by armed conflict, or are forced by other disasters to lead a nomadic life style. A successful example is provided by the Hanuniye
project run by the Nomadic Health Care Programme in Wajir, Kenya. Its implementation strategy follows the so called ‘dugsi approach’ which involves a mobile teacher living with the family, or herding group. The attraction of this model is that it is compatible with daily mobility needs – with lessons designed to fit around household labour arrangements – as well as long distance mobility.

The Hanuniye project reportedly enrolled 3,148 boys and 2,830 girls as pupils between 1995-99 (Atchoarena and Gasperini, 2003). Assuming these figures are accurate, this is a remarkably high number representing approximately 50 per cent of the total district primary enrolment. What is even more notable is the project has successfully managed to reach both girls and boys equally. Administrative difficulties, combined with shortcomings in the design and maintenance of collapsible classrooms and the reluctance of some teachers to adapt to a nomadic lifestyle, have undermined the planned use of mobile schools in other cases, such as in Nigeria (Atchoarena and Gasperini, 2003: 133) Mobile schools should be seen only as a temporary solution.

Female children with disabilities tend to face double discrimination based on both their gender and their disability. Sensitizing and training school teachers and programme administrators to recognize and deal with disabilities is essential. Special learning materials are also needed in some cases.

Other forms of double discrimination may involve young unwed pregnant girls. Early pregnancies often result in the discontinuation of a girl’s education in many rural areas (UNESCO 2005). When a young unmarried girl gets pregnant, especially in rural communities, she is immediately seen as an outcast whose prospects in life will be reduced. To address such challenge the Morocco Second Chance School Programme offers out-of-school girls a second chance at getting an education as described in Box 3.

**Box 3. The Second Chance Schools in Morocco**

The Second Chance School Programme is implemented by the Ministry of Education in partnership with various government departments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and local authorities and associations. Several international partners support the programme as well. The NGOs engage young graduates as facilitators, enrol the pupils, make local arrangements for the classes, seek additional resources and generally manage the programme at local level. Teachers and facilitators are recruited within each region. They are given training by specialised trainers. Classes take place in various facilities: rooms offered by local associations, government offices, unoccupied school classrooms, even private homes. To mobilize the varied material and human resources needed for the programme, information and sensitization campaigns are carried out.

The programme has been a success in most rural areas because of its flexibility and adaptability. The weekly teaching sessions, for example, vary from 4 to 24 hours over 6 days and the periods of holiday vary too, depending on the need and the availability of each learner.

In the four years through 2000, more than 87,000 children (of which more than 65 percent girls) participated. Of the 48,000 ‘graduates’, over 3,000 passed into the formal schooling system and some 45,000 were prepared for employment. Nearly 7,000 of them had apprenticeships in agriculture, crafts, services, industry and commerce. During the same period, 1,382 teachers/ facilitators were trained (over half of them being women).

**Source:** Atchoarena and Gasperini (2003)
Weak enforcement of legislation is also another important problem that needs to be addressed to facilitate girls’ access to education. Countries which are party to International Human Rights covenants have automatically signed and agreed to eliminate any form of discrimination on the grounds of sex. However, there has been proven failure on extending these rights to issues such as marriage, access to education and other aspects of family life in some rural communities where cultural norms are strongly gender-biased. Under Sections 21 and 23 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), it is illegal for a parent to marry off his or her daughter if she is under 18 years. However, early marriages are still common in many rural communities, where people may be unaware of laws and where extreme poverty sometimes leads families to treat marrying girls at an early age as a form of insurance. Early marriages often mean the end of the educational experience for the girls involved.

School facilities

Large distances between school and home seem to be a common problem for access to education in many countries. Lack of good and safe roads appears to be a significant problem especially for girls. Girls fear being attacked and sexually harassed and parents are equally concerned (Atchoarena and Gasperini, 2003). To remove such barriers, schools need to be placed in adequate locations, where access will not be threatening for girls. Inadequacy of school infrastructure also contributes to low girls’ enrolment numbers. Appropriate facilities, such as clean and separate latrines for girls and protected buildings and playgrounds are an important factor in creating a friendlier learning environment (Atchoarena and Gasperini, 2003). Duflo (2001) provides an example of how construction of school buildings in sparsely populated regions of Indonesia significantly increased enrolments and attendance for primary education. The school building programme was implemented by the Indonesian government in collaboration with the World Bank and it is reported as one of the fastest primary school construction programs ever undertaken. It was designed explicitly to target children who had not previously been enrolled in schools. The number of schools to be constructed in each district was proportional to the number of children of primary school age not enrolled in school. The programme had the greatest impact in the poorest rural regions.

Summary

| Constraint                  |  |
|-----------------------------|--|---|
| Lack of education can be regarded as a gender-intensified constraint which can be further exacerbated by badly designed policies |  |
| **Forms of employment**     |  |
| Higher levels of education can help diversify into non-farm employment and may improve its stability and quality |  |
| Secondary and post-secondary education more relevant for access to formal wage work than to self-employment |  |
| Education increases women’s access to labour markets beyond their locality (migration); and enhances women’s resources and information to claim their rights. |  |
| Education is less relevant for agricultural self-employment |  |
| Well-designed extension services and training more important factor than |  |
education for improving productivity in agricultural work, but women’s access to such services often limited

| Geography | Gender gaps in educational attainment seem larger in Sub-Saharan Africa than in other regions. Reducing the gender gap in primary education priority for improving female access to decent work in agricultural-based countries. Improvements in secondary and tertiary education more relevant in transforming or urbanised countries with large rural non-farm sectors. |
| Policies | A policy mix that combines: (1) better design of curricula so to be more relevant to the technical knowledge required in agriculture; (2) encouraging girls to include technical subjects in their study plans and boys to join ‘home economics’ classes; (3) more and better designed vocational training for women; (4) gender training to teachers; (5) building new schools and improving physical access to them. |
2.3 Land

Land is the prime productive asset in most rural areas of developing countries. Owning land, using land owned by others and securing waged farm–work often depend on complex social and legal frameworks, many with gender dimensions. These institutional issues are key linkages to poverty and incomes, because of how they govern the allocation of labour and the distribution of the product from land. The specifics vary from place to place, but globally there is a marked bias against women’s control of land as a productive resource.

A key characteristic is that women seldom own the land that they cultivate. Whilst this is perhaps widely recognised, what is noteworthy is how substantial is the gender gap. In all countries for which data are available, women are less likely to own land, and own less amounts of land when they do own it (World Bank, 2007). In Tanzania and Congo, for example, the female share of landowners was 25 percent (Deere and Doss, 2006), and in Benin, where 11 percent of landowners are female, the average size of women’s holdings is about 1 hectare compared with 2 hectares for men’s holdings. In Pakistan women own less than 3 percent of plots, even though 67 percent of surveyed villages reported a woman’s right to inherit land (World Bank, 2007). In India, according to the 2000/2001 Agricultural Census (which provides information only on operational holdings and not on land ownership) only 12 percent of holdings covering 9 percent of the total area are operated by women (Srivastava and Srivastava, 2009). Even in Indian states that have some progressive gender indicators, when it comes to land, female shares remain low: in Kerala, women operated only 21 percent of the holdings. In Latin America, the female share of landowners ranged from 11 per cent in Brazil to 27 per cent in Paraguay (Deere and Doss, 2006).

Women’s control over land reflects deep–rooted land tenure norms and laws. These vary considerably and are difficult to generalise. Sub–Saharan Africa has the most diverse arrangements. Broadly, Latin America, Southeast Asia, matrilineal areas of Central Africa, parts of Muslim Africa, and East Africa have more favourable terms for women’s control of land, compared to South Asia (except Sri Lanka) and West and Southern Africa.

A major reason why generalisation is difficult – and previewing the policy discussion – is the gap between social–legal norms and actual practice, which varies from place to place. An example is Muslim Africa, viz. the coastal eastern region, Northern Nigeria, Northern Sudan, Chad, and the area from the Sahelian countries to Senegal. Islamic law entitles a daughter to inherit land amounting to half of what sons inherit (due to the view that a woman is provided for, whereas a man must provide). Also in some areas a woman can inherit one–eighth of her husband’s land. Whilst Muslim norms have been favourable relative to those in other parts of Africa such as the cocoa-producing regions of West Africa, many Islamic communities force women to surrender or sell inherited land to male relatives.

Under house–property systems, women have greater control of over land or livestock, but formal ownership is often not given. Thus women’s claims depend substantially on their status as daughters and wives, and may be weakened by claims by male relatives (see, for example, the study of Uganda by Dolan, 2002). Divorced women and widows are particularly vulnerable, especially in areas with high prevalence of HIV/AIDS (FAO, 2004 for Zambia; FAO, 2003 for Namibia; Strickland, 2004 for Lesotho, South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania and Malawi).
Inheritance norms constitute the main access to land. In South Asia this has been traditionally patrilineal (Agarwal, 2003; Allendorf, 2007). The significant exception is Sri Lanka where both sons and daughters can inherit, widows can inherit all of the deceased husband’s property in the absence of descendants, and married women have the right to acquire and dispose of their individually owned property (Grown and Gupta, 2005).

Across South East Asia in Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam and Indonesia, under both customary and formal law, men and women have equal rights to land (World Bank, 2005). Parents usually decide which children will inherit what property. Traditionally the youngest daughter remains home to care for elderly parents, even after marriage, and thereby inherits the family homestead.

Even in Latin America, with perhaps the most favourable legal framework, inheritance has been historically skewed toward men, in part because agriculture is defined as a male activity and in part because legal headship status confers male privilege in marriage (Deere and Leon, 2002).

Lack of land significantly limits women’s access to credit, water and grazing rights, and thereby constrains options for self-employment in agriculture. In Senegal and Kenya, for example, women are excluded from contract farming in high-value products because they lack statutory rights over land, have limited access to irrigation and infrastructure and weaker claims over family labour (Dolan 2001; Maertens and Swinnen, 2008). In India the absence of land titles significantly limits women farmers’ access to institutional credit (Srivastava and Srivastava 2009).

The lack of secure tenure limits women’s land use and cropping choices. In Guatemala women’s independent – but not joint – ownership of land was found to be a significant predictor of women’s participation in non-traditional agro-export production (Hamilton and Fischer, 2003). Previewing the later policy discussion, notice joint ownership appeared to have a less clear benefit. Still in Guatemala, Katz (1995) found that land ownership affected the degree of women’s control over the benefits from agro-export production.

Men’s control over family land strengthens their ability to command more of their wife’s labour time in order to maximise his income. In Zambia, for example, men were able to increase maize production by demanding greater labour inputs from their wives, whereas women producers were not able to exert similar claims over their husbands’ labour (Wold, 1997).

Women’s access to land can be a critical element in diversified livelihood systems. This can be due to greater own-produce, credit and non-farm earnings (Katz and Chamorro, 2003; Deere et al., 2004; Aspaas, 1998). In Peru, female land rights are positively associated with off-farm income. Most interesting is that female land rights are positively and significantly associated with higher off-farm income only in dual-headed households (where both adults are present) (Deere et al., 2004).

It is important to note that land is not always the most binding constraint. Whitehead (2008) argues that while in places like Uganda, land is a constraint to women’s farming, in...
other parts of Sub–Saharan Africa, other constraints play a larger role, such as inadequate access to labour and other inputs. According to Ann Whitehead the land constraint may be felt more heavily in places where agriculture is a more important source of livelihoods, where the gender bias in land ownership is more serious and land scarcity is a severe problem. In India, where growing land scarcity has intensified male competition and created additional constraints to women’s usufruct, trusteeship and ownership rights, women’s access to land seems to have become more constrained (Jackson and Rao, 2004). In India, the land question is crucial also because as a result of male out–migration women remain largely confined to agriculture and they are faced with the prime responsibility for farming, but without rights to the land they cultivate (Agarwal, 2003).

Even where land constraints are binding, it should be noted that this affects mainly farm–related employment and earnings, with education as the more important determining factor in non–farm employment (as discussed in a separate section).

2.3.1 Policy responses

Policy options to redress gender disparities in land rights may include: legal reforms and measures to ensure their implementation; joint titling programmes; and collective approaches.

Land legislation

Across Sub–Saharan Africa (e.g. Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Eritrea, Zimbabwe and South Africa), Asia (e.g. Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and India) and Latin America (e.g. Colombia, Nicaragua, Honduras and Brazil), governments have enacted legislation to guarantee women’s property and inheritance rights (see Grown and Gupta, 2005; FAO, 2006; UNIFEM, 2005; Deere and Doss, 2006). Tanzania’s 1999 Land Law, for example, provides co–ownership of land to both spouses and prohibits village councils from discriminating against women (Jacobs 2002). Uganda’s 1998 Land Action and Condominium Law recognises women’s equal right to buy and own land and housing (Grown and Gupta 2005). Tajikistan’s 2004 amendments to the Land Reform Act strengthen women’s legal entitlements (UNIFEM 2005).

Unfortunately women and men’s equal access to land continues not to be realised in practice. Statutory laws sometimes conflict with customary laws. In Namibia, for example, the Married Person Equality Act of 1996 states that, on the death of a spouse, both men and women are entitled to assets accumulated through marriage. However, women continue to face persistent discrimination arising from customary laws, as indicated by numerous cases of property grabbing among widows whose husbands had died from AIDS–related causes (FAO 2003). In South Africa the implementation of the land reform programme has been rather weak due a range of factors including: lack of clear lines of accountability of either policymakers in the national government or implementers at the provincial level with regard to the enforcement of the Land Reform Gender Policy Document issued in 1997; limited authority of the Gender Unity within the Ministry and Department of Land Affairs, a rather inflexible programme design, and limited involvement of grassroots movements which tend to be more vocal in urban areas (Walker, 2002).
**Joint titling**

Another option for redressing gender imbalances in access to land is joint titling. In the early 1990s, five Latin American countries (e.g. Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Honduras, and Nicaragua) passed agrarian legislation for joint adjudication or titling of land to couples. Similar initiatives have been taken in Cambodia, Vietnam, India and Indonesia (Lastarria, 2003). Joint titling can help to guard against capricious actions by one spouse and protects against the dispossession of women through abandonment, separation, or divorce (Grown and Gupta 2005).

Joint titling initiatives have produced mixed results. In Nicaragua the number of women landowners has increased as a result of joint titling programmes. Law 209, which came into effect in 1995, stated that men and women had the equal right to receive land titles and established the option for couples to apply for joint title to land. The principle of joint titling was strengthened in 1997 by making it compulsory for families receiving titles for land distributed under state agrarian reforms to be issued in the names of both spouses (Law 278, Article 49). As a result of this legislation and the dissemination campaign and training initiatives accompanying it, the number of women with legal rights to land dramatically increased. This success is also due to the active lobbying of well organized rural women (FAO, 2005).

Similar achievements are reported for Colombia, but not for other Latin American countries. In Honduras, for example, deeply rooted socio-cultural norms and the weakness of rural women’s organizations appear to have been the main factors limiting the success of the joint titling reform (Lastarria, 2003).

In Cambodia, a survey of 20,000 land titles issued since 2001, following new laws for joint titling, found that 78 percent were in the names of both women and men (LMAP, 2003). However, women’s rights to land may be denied in practice due to cultural and social factors. In principle, when land is jointly registered, both parties must sign to transfer land titles; in practice, however, this is not enforced, and women are vulnerable to losing control over such decisions and deferring to their husbands. Men often sell land without consent from their wives, and, as a result, women may also lose access to the proceeds of the sale. Women’s low literacy is an important factor limiting their access to information about land issues, sales and rights (IFAD, 2003 quoted in Asian Development Bank n.d.).

**Collective approaches**

An effective policy intervention could include what Agarwal (2003) calls a “collective approach”. This involves providing groups of landless women with credit for leasing or purchasing land, and encourage them to cultivating it jointly. While collective ownership and management can raise its own challenges, groups can help resolve many of the difficulties women face as individuals. Being part of a group helps in mobilizing funds for capital investment, exploiting economies of scale, and leads to labour sharing and cooperation in product marketing. This is a very innovative approach, examples of which can be found only on a small scale, for example in South Asia (see Box 2). The extent to which this type of programmes have been implemented elsewhere, and could be extended successfully to other contexts deserves further analysis.
Box 4. The Deccan Development Society (DDS) in Andhra Pradesh

The main objective of DDS is to ensure food security in an environmentally friendly fashion, through organic farming, multiple cropping and wasteland development to be achieved through collective farming. DDS helps poor, low–caste women, and particularly single women to organise into groups to lease in, purchase and cultivate land together.

Leasing land

The land leasing programme was introduced in 1989 and currently includes 629 women cultivating 623 acres across 52 villages. Initially, women leased on a sharecropping basis but are now moving to cash rents. Some 25 per cent of the rent is paid by sangam members themselves and the rest through interest–free loans from DDS. Very poor women can substitute their labour for cash. Today, most lease groups consist of 5–15 women, but in the past many had 30–40 and one even had 60 women leasing 40 acres. After paying the rent and other costs, as well as DDS’s loan and keeping aside grain for seeds, the remaining harvest is shared equally among the lease group members.

DDS also successfully lobbied the state government to allow women’s groups to use the money available via the Government’s poverty alleviation scheme, DWACRA (Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas), for leasing– in land, rather than for conventional uses such as tailoring, milk cattle and handicrafts.

Women’s Committees examine the lease proposals put forward by the women’s groups, assess the land’s quality, keep records of each woman’s work input, and ensure equitable distribution of wages and produce. In 1995, each woman participant received enough cereal and pulses to feed the whole family for a month, in addition to harvest wages.

Leasing also has disadvantages. If the crop fails it is the landlord, and not the tenant, who receives compensation. Also, women evidently feel less secure, and less motivated to invest in the land.

Land purchase

Since 1994, DDS is also supporting land purchase by groups of women, taking advantage of a lending scheme initiated by the Scheduled Caste Development Corporation (SCDC) of Andhra Pradesh. Leasing serves as a precursor to purchase, enabling women to judge the land’s quality and potential productivity. In some cases, good harvests have enabled women to accumulate enough funds for buying additional land. Each woman is registered as a plot owner. Today, 24 women’s groups in 14 villages are cultivating 474 acres of purchased land, each woman owning about one acre but cultivating it jointly with the other women. Finding land to purchase is difficult, since the desirable plots are often bought by others.

Benefits and challenges

By working together, women acquire many useful skills, they learn to survey and measure land, hire tractors or bullocks, travel to distant towns to meet government officials, obtain inputs and market the produce. Many women also find it useful to have the flexibility in labour input that collective cultivation allows. In addition, they can pool their differential skills to best effect, and share costs.

During peak seasons, when wage labour demand is high, absenteeism can negatively affect production. The sangams impose penalties (as agreed by the group collectively), and also call defaulters to account in their weekly meetings. The fact that women are all from the same village and are co–dependent in other ways, also creates peer pressure against default. A conflict of priorities may also arise if sangam women also own some family land. It may also be hard to motivate people to stay together when individual cultivation becomes more profitable.

Source: Agarwal, Bina, 2003
**Summary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constraint</th>
<th>Limited access to land is, like education, both a gender-intensified constraint and an imposed form of gender disadvantage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forms of employment</td>
<td>Land ownership is obviously most relevant to farm-related employment and earnings, with education as the more important determining factor in non-farm employment. Limited access to land also constraints access to other important productive assets (such as credit).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>In all countries for which data are available, women are less likely to own land, and own less amounts of land when they do own it. Women’s control over land reflects deep-rooted land tenure norms and laws, which vary considerably. Sub-Saharan Africa has the most diverse arrangements. Broadly, Latin America, Southeast Asia, matrilineal areas of Central Africa, parts of Muslim Africa, and East Africa have more favourable terms for women’s control of land, compared to South Asia (except Sri Lanka) and West and Southern Africa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policies</td>
<td>Policies need to focus not only on improving legislation and rights but especially on the enforcement of such rights. ‘Collective approaches’ focusing on integrated community-based programmes, that facilitate landless women’s group formation, mobilise credit and promote environmentally friendly farming practices, especially promising.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.4 Access to markets

Unequal access to markets is another important source of gender disadvantage likely to undermine the achievement of decent employment for women and men. Gender–differentiated access to markets results from gender inequalities in the control of resources such as capital, agricultural inputs and technology, information, education and land (these latter two constraints have been discussed separately in earlier sections — all these factors interact with each other). These forms of inequalities are rooted in households and societal norms and can be further exacerbated by badly designed public and private policies with respect to credit, land, marketing schemes and training. Women may also face barriers to membership in rural organisations and cooperatives, which may further inhibit a channel through which better access can be achieved. Both domestic and international markets are gendered institutions, but the focus of this section will be mostly on global markets.

Rural women and men can be involved in the production of goods traded in global markets either as farmers or as wage workers, or as intermediaries (processing or selling products) at any node of the value chain. Commercial agriculture can include both staple crops and high value products. High–value agriculture involves a wide range of products such as vegetables, fruits, shrimps, nuts, poultry and non–food products such as cut flowers. The list continues to expand as new uses or added values are found for traditional products. A great variety of institutional arrangements characterises production for export across regions, countries and even within a sector, or value chain.

Part I highlighted that women are found more frequently than men in the weakest nodes of many agricultural global value chains. In some instances women producers remain excluded entirely from international markets even when they would have the potential to fruitfully participate in them. As discussed in Part I, poor households, and particularly poor women, seem to be benefiting from incorporation into international trade more through labour markets (i.e. increased employment opportunities on estate farms or packing houses) than through product markets. The need to comply with increasingly strict standards tends to marginalise and exclude many small producers, and women find it especially difficult to become independently involved.

Global value chains could offer in principle an opportunity for generating quality employment for rural women and men, but they can also be channels for transferring costs and risks to the weakest nodes, especially to women. Evidence shows that, under pressure from investors, governments in developing countries often allow easy hiring and firing, shorter term contracts, and fewer benefits against basic labour rights (ILC, 2008 ), and that these are more poorly enforced among women workers (Fontana and Paciello, 2007). The growth of powerful supermarkets as dominant buyers within agricultural value chains may be intensifying this process.

Fresh fruit and vegetables are among the fastest growing of all traded agricultural exports. Their production is heavily concentrated among a few middle–income countries in Latin America: Argentina, Chile and Mexico. Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador and Mexico account for 43 percent of developing country export of fresh fruit while Argentina, Chile, Mexico and Syria provide 67 percent of fresh vegetables. Kenya and Guatemala are the main world producers of green peas (Best at al, 2008, quoted in ILC, 2008). A growing body of
research has been documenting various developments in these sectors and some of the studies (but not many) have also paid attention to their gender implications, most notably Dolan and Sorby (2003).

Depending on the type of goods produced and the characteristics of the chain, the institutional setting of the country and other factors, different policies are needed to facilitate integration of rural women and men into global markets. A useful step for designing adequate interventions to promote better access of poor producers and workers to markets should involve undertaking a thorough gender–aware value chain analysis so to identify where positive interventions to reduce inequalities can be made and by whom.\(^8\)

Different policies will be required to support market access depending on whether the women concerned are producers or wage workers. Policies aimed at producers should include: initiatives to improve market contacts and information on prices; strengthening of property rights; better access to credit; and technical assistance. Policies for wage workers should involve: extending labour legislation beyond permanent workers; measures to ensure better enforcement of labour laws; measures to create greater awareness of legal rights; and more training.

2.4.1 Policy responses

**Self–employed small–scale producers**

Studies show that high–value chains usually exclude asset–poor farmers (World Bank, 2007). Entry into high–value chains may require having the ability to invest in green–houses, irrigation and packing sheds. Dolan and Sorby (2003) find that contract farmers are more likely than non–contract farmers to own land and other assets and to have access to irrigation. Only few of the contract households reviewed in their study were headed by women: 6 percent in Guatemala and less than 1 percent in Kenya.

Moreover, smallholders in general, and women in particular, are likely to be in a weak position in negotiating terms and prices with powerful buyers because of limited experience and low levels of education.

An important avenue for smallholders to gain access to value chains is through involvement in producer organisations or cooperatives. Being part of an organisation increases the bargaining power of farmers and may be preferred also by the large companies contracting the work because it simplifies procedures. However women may not have easy access to these groups as many farmer organisations still tend to be male–dominated and oriented (Doss, 2001).

A policy response to these problems should involve support to women’s participation in agricultural cooperatives and trade unions. Measures to strengthen their property rights, including their entitlements to land (described in an earlier section) could also contribute to make their position relative to powerful actors in the chain stronger and to increase their chances to obtain loans to start cooperative or enterprises.
Better access to information and communication technologies can be used successfully to find market contacts and information on market prices — another channel to increase smallholders’ bargaining position. In Senegal, the Grand Coast Fishing Operators Union, an organization of women who market fish, set up a website to promote their produce, monitor export markets and negotiate prices with overseas buyers before they arrive in the country (Hafkin and Taggart, 2001, quoted in World Bank, IFAD and FAO, 2009). In Samoa, a local NGO, Women in Business Development Incorporated (WIBDI), provided technical support to 13 cooperatives to enable them to produce organic virgin coconut oil for export markets. Market contacts in Australia and New Zealand were made with the assistance of Internet (Cretney and Tafuna‘i, 2004).

An initiative by the Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) and the Entrepreneurship Career Development Institute (ECDI) implemented in 2004–07 in Baluchistan, Punjab and Sindh (Pakistan), provides an interesting example of how women in conservative areas can be better linked with more lucrative markets. Even though this case is neither linked with international trade nor focused on agricultural goods, more general useful insights can be learned. The project aimed at helping homebound women embroiderers in remote rural areas by both strengthening women’s linkages with richer markets in further away cities and adding value to their work by incorporating new designs. The project's activities were: a) recruitment and development of women sales agents to provide a package of embedded services to rural embroiderers which included product development and access to quality input supplies and higher–value markets; b) linking of sales agents to buyers and designers; and c) capacity building for sales agents in product development and design (MEDA, 2007). The project had clear value chain characteristics as it focused not only on inputs to the production process but also the linkages between homebound female workers in socially isolated parts of the country and market outlets (via female sales agents). According to MEDA’s own evaluation the income of about 9000 female rural embroiderers, the main beneficiaries of the programme, increased from approximately $9 to $22 per month. The report also provides examples of individuals to illustrate many less tangible benefits to women involved in the scheme.

Although data on the gender dimensions of smallholder contract farming is still sparse (an important knowledge gap that future research should aim to fill), it is known that companies usually contract with men. In Kenya, for instance, Dolan (1997) finds that more than 90 percent of export contracts were issued to male household members who controlled the household labour allocation and payment arrangements. It is also probable that when training and extension services are offered with contracts, the delivery of such services is also directed at men.

This calls for measures to ensure that technical assistance programmes and other extension services reach effectively women as well as men. It is also important that gender–focused agricultural development assistance does not target exclusively women heads of households, thus overlooking the vast majority of women who reside in male–headed households.
Wage workers

As described in earlier sections, women wage workers represent half or more of the employees of export-oriented high-value agriculture in many Latin American and Sub-Saharan African countries. For example, in Zimbabwe, women account for 79 percent of the workforce in floriculture (Dolan and Sorby, 2003) and in Brazil for 90 percent of the poultry workers (Gammage et al., 2006). We also noted that women predominate among the flexible and casual work force, due to a number of reasons including employers’ discrimination, low levels of education and other aspects of their life circumstances.

Achieving more equitable poverty reduction requires first of all that national labour legislations be extended beyond permanent workers. This is a necessary but not sufficient condition, though. Even when a piece of legislation is good, enforcement may be weak. Barrientos (2004) suggests that an effective approach to secure decent work for women and men employed in global agriculture may involve enhancing synergy between regulatory and voluntary approaches. South Africa offers a good example of how this synergy can achieved. It now has exemplary labour legislation, including the Employment Equity Act, and Basic Conditions of Employment Act which also covers labour brokers. It does also have a Wine Industry and Agriculture Ethical Trading Association (WIETA) which was set up to develop and monitor its own local code of labour practice based on ILO Conventions. WIETA members include trade unions, NGOs, producers, government and UK supermarkets. The inclusion of civil society organisations in WIETA has played an important role in ensuring the conditions of casual women workers are addressed in social audits.

There are other successful cases in which labour laws have been extended to vulnerable workers, such as temporary workers in agriculture, domestic workers and HIV-affected workers. For example a New Labour Act covering temporary workers was issued in Ghana in 2002 (Chen et al., 2004), Labour Relations (HIV/AIDS) Regulations were adopted in Zimbabwe in 1998 (Chartier 2005), and laws protecting women plantation workers were introduced in Brazil in the mid–1990s (World Bank, IFAD and FAO, 2009).

The Uganda Code of Practice for the horticulture sector appears to have led to an improvement in working conditions for women in flower farms. All workers have a stable contract, are entitled to 60 days paid maternity leave, and have easy access to basic medical assistance (World Bank, IFAD and FAO, 2009). More research would be required to understand the success factors in this initiative.

Unfortunately the problem of enforcement remains severe in most cases. Codes of conduct can be useful in supporting national legislation but have more limitations than labour laws, as they are voluntary, not well monitored and apply to just a small fraction of the workforce (ILO, 2003; Barrientos and Smith, 2006; Lund, 2007).

Programmes to make workers aware of their legal rights are also essential so that they can organise to demand them in an effective way. New labour movements and sympathetic trade unions should be encouraged to reach out to them. In Tanzania, Kenya, Zambia and Uganda, Women Working Worldwide, a UK-based network organisation, together with local Trade Unions, trained 6000 both permanent and casual on their rights. Training has resulted in increasing women’s confidence and their ability to negotiate with employers, translating
into greater women’s unionisation and formation of new women’s committees. In Tanzania, farm management was trained about workers rights, particularly with regard to women, leading to a general improvement in worker/management relations a greater space for gender concerns into collective bargaining agreements (Women Working Worldwide, 2008).

The case of the National Union of Plantation and Agricultural Workers (NUPAWU) in Uganda suggests that existing trade unions can play a relevant role to advance women wage workers’ rights, provided that women are fully integrated in the management and decision making structures (see Box 5).

Box 5. The National Union of Plantation and Agricultural Workers (NUPAWU) in Uganda

NUPAWU represents workers in the tea and sugar plantations and general agriculture, including flower farms, rice and other agriculture-related industries where women comprise the majority of workers. It has now some 15,000 women members, comprising approximately 32 per cent of current membership. The union has supported women’s concerns since the 1970s when over 100 women workers organised to demand clean water in the fields where sugar plantation workers and their families were housed. In the 1980s’ branch–level women’s committees elected by women members were formed on two sugar plantations. These committees were further extended and mainstreamed throughout the organisation with the support, among others, of an ILO/IFPAAW initiative for strengthening women in rural workers’ organizations. NUPAWU established a Women Workers’ Department in 1996, headed by a full–time National Coordinator paid by the union. Six women coordinators at regional level, covering the three sectors (tea, sugar and general agriculture), were also established and paid by the union. In 2001, NUPAWU amended its constitution to provide women’s members with two permanent seats on the National Executive Council and guarantee positions for women on each branch executive committee. NUPAWU’s policy is that women should comprise 30 per cent of any trade union training programme, which is an institutional commitment to the further development of women trade union leaders.

NUPAWU national campaigns include mobilising against child labour, sexual harassment and chemical pesticide hazards, and in support of reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, minimum wages and decent work. These campaigns receive tremendous support through the Women’s Committee, which handles specific grievances from women and submits proposals. The Women’s Committee mobilizes women around immunization programmes for children and improved hygiene and environmental conditions in the fields. Women’s needs are reflected in the provisions of the “Collective Bargaining Agreement” (CBA), which includes a period of 60 days’ maternity leave, seven days’ paternity leave, one–hour nursing breaks, prohibition of sexual harassment at the workplace, and prohibition of employment of children below the age of 18 years.

Other activities supported by NUPAWU include the Women’s Drama Group, which uses the effective tool of theatre to run awareness campaigns in the government, enterprises and plantation communities, and courses for women activists.

Source: ILO 2003, ILO 2001

When women face significant obstacles to participating in mixed (male dominated) groups, women based groups may be the only alternative to represent female workers and help them in mobilising. SEWA in India offers the best example of organising women in both rural and urban areas. SEWA combines different forms of organisation strategies: trade union activism, cooperative formation and provision of services such as health care, child care, insurance and housing to its members (Kabeer, 2008). But it is not clear how easily the SEWA model could be replicated elsewhere.
To prevent the possibility that upgrading technology may cause the displacement of female workers (as it seems to be occurring in some of the earlier Export Processing Zones producing textiles in Mexico, Malaysia, Singapore and other countries), women should be given more training opportunities so to participate more fully. Opportunities for training and promotion are more common among technicians, management, and administrative staff who tend to be men (Dolan and Sorby, 2003). There are only a few examples of good practice in training. In Thailand's Sun Valley poultry firm, employees are trained to perform multiple jobs to avoid repetitive stress injuries. The company also offers an educational plan to assist employees (mainly female) to advance within the company (Lawler and Atmananda, 1999 in Dolan and Sorby, 2003).

Health and safety training together with information about workers’ rights should also be provided for the purpose of prevention and control of health hazards at the workplace. In Uganda, flower workers can acquire a number of skills in tackling pests and diseases, fumigation, and grading (Asea and Kaija, 2000).

**Summary**

| Constraint | Restricted access to markets (both domestic and international markets) results from gender inequalities in the control of resources such as capital, agricultural inputs, technology, information, education and land |
| Form of employment | Limited access to international markets undermines opportunities for decent work in both self-employment and wage work, in agricultural sectors and non-agricultural sectors. Fresh fruit and vegetables among the fastest growing of all traded agricultural exports, concentrated among a few Latin American middle-income countries. Offer opportunity for generating quality employment for rural women and men, but they can also have risks, especially for women, often weakest nodes in the chain. |
| Policies | Different policies required to support market access depending on whether the women and men concerned are producers or wage workers. Policies aimed at producers should include: initiatives to improve market contacts and information on prices; strengthening of property rights; better access to credit; and technical assistance. Policies for wage workers should involve: extending labour legislation beyond permanent workers; measures to ensure better enforcement of labour laws; measures to create greater awareness of legal rights; and more training. |
POLICY LESSONS

Pathways out of poverty vary for rural women and men depending on socio-economic structures and institutional settings. A different policy mix will be required in each country to generate decent jobs and facilitate women and men’s equal access to them. Some broad policies are needed across the board, but their design and implementation will still be context specific.

The recent World Bank’s World Development Report on agriculture (World Bank, 2007) suggests that different groups of countries may follow different poverty reduction strategies. For instance, increasing the productivity of staple food production and enabling integration of landless labourers into dynamic agricultural export sectors are strategies most relevant for agricultural-based countries. A policy approach focused on encouraging workers’ shift out of the agricultural sector into off-farm activities, possibly through secondary education and training, may be more appropriate for transforming and urbanised countries. The formulation of these broad strategies should give consideration to the gender constraints discussed in the earlier sections and include a number of policies aimed at overcoming them. These policies should combine measures to create more gender equitable employment, to enforce workers’ rights to extend coverage of social protection, and to give rural women and men voice, in the spirit of the ILO Decent Work Agenda. The evidence reviewed in this paper suggests that:

- In all circumstances, countries and settings, there is an urgent need to implement measures for reducing and redistributing the burden of unpaid work—an essential step for promoting gender equitable poverty reduction in rural areas since the burden of this work falls disproportionately on female workers. Unpaid work limits women’s access to all forms of rural paid employment. A combined approach that addresses weaknesses in both physical and social infrastructure is required.

- Public works programmes can be effectively used to support gender equality in rural employment, especially if genuine efforts are made to involve beneficiaries in the design of programmes from the outset. A truly gender–aware employment guarantee scheme (EGS) is one that fulfils the two objectives of (1) making it easier for women to participate on equal terms as men (for example by providing childcare on site) and (2) creating useful assets that reduce aspects of women’s domestic workloads (such as water pipes or similar). Public works do not have to be confined to physical infrastructure projects but can also offer social services and care for the community. However, if care services are provided through EGSs, special attention should be paid to ensure the quality and regularity of such services. Some of the most promising public works initiatives (from a gender perspective) can be found in India, South Africa and Argentina. A better understanding of the key determinants of success is required. Participation in an EGS can be an effective first step out of poverty for rural women only if their employability effectively improves once the scheme ends. The record on this aspect so far appears rather weak across countries. There may be the risk that EGSs reinforce women’s subordinate position in the rural labour market. Finding ways to strengthening the ‘skill training’ component of these programmes should therefore be an important policy priority.
Promoting female education in rural areas and trying to reduce gender educational gaps at both primary and secondary levels is obviously important for a number of reasons in addition to the objective of improving access to decent employment. Greater attention should be paid to the type and quality of education, rather than to education per se. Formal education appears to be a more significant pathway out of poverty in transforming and urbanised countries (such as some Latin American and South East Asian countries), and in relation to non-agricultural work. Appropriately designed gender-aware extension services are more important determinants of labour productivity in agriculture–based contexts, especially in Africa. In both formal and non–formal education, rural girls and boys are treated differently and often channelled into different subject areas, reinforcing gender labour market segregation, another important bias that needs to be challenged through innovative teaching methods, training of teachers and similar initiatives.

Rural non–agricultural employment is a potential income source and a possible pathway out of rural poverty but it is important to understand better under what circumstances it can lead to greater gender equality. Rural non–agricultural employment on average pays better than agriculture; tends to be dominated by small–scale manufacturing (such as processing of food and other agricultural products), commerce and various forms of services (Haggblade et al, 2007). In the urbanised countries of Latin America, rural non–agricultural employment appears to be more prevalent among women than men but women tend to be in the lowest paid and most vulnerable forms of work, such as domestic services (domestic services in Brazil, for example, pay below the agricultural wage rate in most cases). When this is the case, non-agricultural employment is evidently not a route out of rural poverty but rather can contribute to reinforcing gender inequalities and stereotypes. Policies must avoid to simply shifting low–productive agricultural employment into low productive non agricultural employment. Education is a key determinant of access to high–productivity rural non–agricultural employment, especially for female workers. Promotion of rural non–agricultural employment is a more viable option in countries with well–developed markets for non–agricultural goods and services.

Constraints in access to land, credit and technology are mutually interdependent. Lack of access to land is not necessarily the most binding constraint for women’s agricultural productivity, especially in land abundant countries. In land scarce countries, such as India, innovative approaches involving small integrated programmes supporting landless women’s collective purchase of land, together with credit mobilisation and environmentally friendly farming practices, appear especially promising but implementation is still limited to a few cases.

Non–traditional agricultural exports offer an opportunity for generating quality employment for rural women and men, but there are also risks, especially for women who are often the weakest nodes in the supply value chain. NTAEs are mostly developing in Latin America. Some NTAEs production can be found in Sub-Saharan Africa too but usually involving only a small share of the rural labour force. Rural women, and most smallholders more in general, seem able to benefit from increased international trade more through the labour market than through the product market. The formation of cooperatives should be encouraged among smallholders and women’s participation (still rather limited) in them must be supported. Promoting synergies between labour legislation and voluntary codes of conduct appears a promising approach for maximising
women’s employment gains from wage work in non–traditional agricultural export. South Africa offers a good example of how this can be successfully accomplished, but enforcement of labour standards, especially among female workers and migrant workers, appears to be very weak in most countries. It remains a serious obstacle to the achievement of decent work.

- The introduction of new technology, either in NTAEs plants or in other rural sectors, including in response to the need to protect the environment, may constitute a potential risk for the job security of rural women unless concerted efforts are made to provide skill upgrading and to ensure that employers retain their female labour force and are committed to invest in their training.

- Rural organisations that mobilise and represent women are essential to create awareness around rights and give women greater voice and bargaining power relative to both their employers and their family members. A range of organisation strategies exist and it is difficult to say what works best in each particular context. SEWA in India is very well known and offers a very successful example that combines trade union activism, cooperative formation and provision of health care, child care and insurance. The extent to which the SEWA model could be replicated elsewhere deserves further exploration.
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Notes

1 It is important to stress that the data reported in Table 1 refer only to what is reported by the respondents as their main job, and hence does not fully capture the full range of employment activities individuals may be engaged in.

2 Please note these ILO data refer to the overall labour force, though, including both rural and urban employment.

3 The data were collected in a few districts in each country and thus are not nationally representative.

4 ‘Work’ is defined in this study as what is recognised by the United Nations System of National Accounts as productive work. The UN System of National Accounts (SNA) recognises as productive work the following categories: employment for establishments; primary production activities not for establishments such as agriculture, animal husbandry, fishing, forestry, fetching of water and collection of fuel wood; services for income and other production of goods not for establishments such as food processing, trade, business and other services. Water and fuel collection have been included only since 1993. Household maintenance, management and shopping for own household; care for children, the sick, the elderly and disabled; community services and help to other households are still considered ‘non-productive’ activities hence not recorded. Only some countries record these activities but as separate ‘satellite accounts’. It is these activities that most gender-aware literature calls non-SNA work or extended-SNA work.

5 To note that Andhra Pradesh is a strong performing state in India and classified by the World Bank (2007: Box 1.3) as in between a ‘transforming’ and ‘urbanised’ economy.

6 The study cannot however establish conclusively causality. It is possible that poor rural women in informal employment spend significant amount of their time on water collection because, unable to access more regular employment, have much time at their disposal. An alternative explanation could be that these women may be unable to engage longer hours in more profitable income–generating work precisely because of their heavy unpaid work burden.

7 For further discussion of these issues in Uganda and Eritrea see Grown and Gupta, 2005; for Tanzania, see Jacobs, 2002; for Namibia, FAO, 2003; for Brazil, Deere and Doss 2006.

8 An increasing number of value chain interventions are being promoted by a variety of institutions, from international donors to local NGOs. There is a lot of anecdotal evidence about the benefits of value chain interventions for the poor, but the number of thorough and independent impact assessments is very small (Humphrey and Navas–Alemann, forthcoming). For an excellent introduction to gender value chain analysis see Barrientos, S., Dolan, Catherine and A. Tallontire, 2003, ‘A Gendered Value Chain Approach to Codes of Conduct in African Horticulture’ World Development 31(9): 1511–1526.