



## List of abstracts of the papers

submitted to the FAO-IFAD-ILO workshop on

*‘Gaps, trends and current research  
in gender dimensions of agricultural and rural employment:  
differentiated pathways out of poverty’*

*Rome, 31 March - 2 April 2009*



*These abstracts and their relative papers represent work in progress and are circulated for discussion and comment. Views and opinions expressed here are those of the authors, and do not represent official positions or endorsement of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), or the International Labour Office (ILO).*

[ALIMDJANOVA Dinara](#). *‘Gender aspects of agricultural and rural employment: application for Uzbekistan’*. Gender Study Center (Uzbekistan).

The paper reviews the positive and negative impacts of key agricultural policy reforms in Uzbekistan from a gender perspective. The process of decline in women’s employment in rural areas as a result of decreasing job opportunities in the formal sector is noted. The government is paying special attention to the development of rural women’s entrepreneurship and agricultural work. However, the level of women’s participation in rural economic development is still limited and further measures are needed to increase the number of female farmers and improve living standards in rural areas.

The paper includes a socio-economic and gender analysis of the current development of the agricultural sector in Uzbekistan with a focus on women’s status. Gender aspects of the labour market, and women’s economic participation are explored drawing on findings from a comparative analysis of official statistics and focus group discussions with women farmers in different areas of Uzbekistan.

[ANDERSON Leigh](#), CULLEN A., FLETSCHNER D., GOCKEL R., GORDON A., NGUYEN M.. *‘Decision Making and Tensions between Gender and Market Approaches to Rural Development Policy’*. University of Washington (USA), Institute for Family and Gender Studies (Vietnam).

The paper examines whether male/female preference differences exist in attributes relevant to market participation: attitudes toward risk, willingness to compete, and sensitivity to inequality and relative position. Our focus stems from the current emphasis on market-led approaches to poverty alleviation and growth and strategies to make “markets work for the poor.” If men and women exhibit systematic differences in these preference parameters, there may be a tension between the goals of increasing women’s participation in economic decision-making and promoting market access for rural development.

Preliminary results using original data from 1165 individuals in 637 households in rural Vietnam suggest stark differences between men and women, and that these differences are most pronounced in lower income households. We find that women in households classified as below or at average commune levels are significantly more risk averse over gains than are men, though not in gambles to avoid losses. Across all income categories, men were noticeably more likely to report being very confident both when making decisions and when negotiating.

Whether these gender-based differences are innate or socially derived, their presence signals a need for caution in “mainstreaming” women into market and other institutions which have largely evolved in line with male preferences. Significant attitudinal differences support more ex-ante tailored market interventions for women rather than attempting to ex-post attract women to programmes designed according to male preferences.

[APPENDINI Kirsten](#). *‘Gender dimensions of change: livelihood strategies in rural Mexico’*. El Colegio de México (Mexico).

The paper focuses on changes in rural livelihoods and their gender dimensions in small farmer households in rural Mexico in the context of economic liberalization. Three trends that frame these changes were addressed: 1) the decline of smallholder agriculture in the context of economic liberalization; 2) changes in rural employment and its impact on households; and 3) the importance of private and public transfer payments for rural households.

Macro-level statistical data and three case studies indicated that there has been a decline in agricultural occupations and an increase in non-farm occupations. Women’s role in agriculture has been reduced to subsistence; women are increasing their participation in non-farm occupations, with a ‘feminization’ of non-farm rural activities. The study also considered the effect on women of transfer incomes from migrant husbands and/or of public programmes. Finally, it identified factors that contribute to autonomy and negotiating power within the family, viz education, earning an income, responsibilities due to migration of spouses, right to inheritance and participation in community decisions. However, changes in gender relations evolve slowly and the prevailing male dominated gender ideology inhibits women’s empowerment.

Public development programmes have improved livelihoods in central rural Mexico and had a positive impact on women’s domestic work, educational opportunities and health. However, though social programmes for poverty alleviation have been enhanced, the abandonment of economic and productive investment in rural localities has constrained employment opportunities for both men and women. That this is the main issue in rural Mexico was also confirmed by the women themselves.

[ASHRAFI Hedayatullah](#). *‘Gender dimension of agriculture and rural employment specially focus on afghan rural women’s access to agriculture and rural development sector’*. Afghanistan National Development Strategy, Office of the Prime Minister Compound (Afghanistan).

While women in Afghanistan are involved in a variety of agricultural and livestock activities, relatively few women own land and livestock. Married women are often reluctant to claim their inheritance rights. However, a 2002 study of rural livelihoods undertaken in a number of villages found that widows and single women were more likely to take up their rights, with poverty and/or lack of family support cited as the main reasons. Most of them were able to use these assets productively, though their level of control over the asset varied. The paper concludes with suggestions for improving women’s access to and ownership of these assets.

**CHOWDHURY Jahangir Alam**, *‘Microcredit, Microenterprises, and Self-employment of Women: experience from the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh’*. University of Dhaka (Bangladesh).

The study assesses the impact of participation in the microcredit programme of the Grameen Bank on women’s self-employment in rural areas of Bangladesh. The main objective is to see whether participation in the microcredit programme helps participating women start their own microenterprises. The results of a survey of 570 households indicate that participation in the Grameen Bank’s microcredit programme does not promote self-employment of women at the household level. But, the results indicate that the same participation significantly creates self-employment opportunities for husbands of participating women and significantly increases capital of existing businesses of participating households.

**DE LANGE Albertine**, *‘Gender dimensions of rural child labour in Africa’*. FAO Regional Office for Africa (Ghana).

The paper discusses differences in participation in agriculture between boys and girls, with particular reference to Africa where 90% of child work consists of unpaid work in their parents’ fields, fishing enterprise or household. Available data suggest that more boys than girls work in agriculture and that boys are more exposed to hazards and long work hours in agriculture, yet it is argued that these conclusions are largely based on data on children’s activities in export crop farming, rather than local food crop farming which is often the domain of women and probably girls. Surveys that take into account children’s economic and non-economic work indicate that on average, rural girls have longer working days, which is likely to have a negative effect on their education. It is concluded that researchers and policymakers need to consider children’s non-economic work as well as their work in local food crop farming in order to address child labour among boys *and* girls in rural Africa.

**DOSS Cheryl**, GROWN Caren, DEERE Carmen Diana. *‘Collecting individual level asset data for gender analysis of poverty and rural employment’*. Yale University (USA), American University (USA), University of Florida (USA).

Ownership and control over assets such as land and housing provide multiple benefits to individuals and households, including a secure place to live, livelihoods, protection during emergencies, and collateral. Many studies demonstrate the important relationship between asset ownership, poverty reduction, and growth. Unfortunately, few studies – either at the micro or macro levels– examine the gender dimensions of asset ownership. And without information on the gender dimensions of asset ownership, it is difficult to determine the impact of the gender distribution of assets on rural employment and opportunities for women to move out of poverty. This paper discusses the best practices on data collection of assets at the individual level with a focus on understanding how ownership and control over assets impacts rural women’s employment opportunities.

Adding very few additional questions to large, multi-purpose household surveys could allow researchers and policymakers to calculate the gender-asset gap, to understand better the patterns of asset accumulation and use, and to develop policies that recognize the relationships between

household formation and dissolution and asset accumulation and poverty. This is critical in order to document and demonstrate the magnitudes of these effects to policy makers and to develop effective strategies for women's rural employment.

[ESIM Simej](#) and OMEIRA Mansour. *'Rural Women Producers and Cooperatives in Conflict Settings in Arab States'*. ILO, Regional Office for Arab States (Lebanon).

Ongoing violent conflicts accentuate the challenges that women and men face in the rural areas of Iraq, Lebanon, and the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The potential of cooperatives for sharing risk, pooling resources, learning together, generating income, and balancing work and family responsibilities, has yet to be actualized. Cooperatives in the three countries remain marginal, and often organizations labelled as cooperatives do not adhere by cooperative principles. Since donor dependency has become pervasive, interventions should focus on skills development for the sustainability of cooperatives. Training needs adaptation to the local context, and gender responsiveness is necessary for the success of interventions.

[FIGUEIREDO Nelly and BRANCHI Bruna](#). *"Evolution of poverty and income distribution among Brazilian agricultural workers and families: an analysis by gender between 1992 and 2007"*- Pontificia Universidade Católica de Campinas (Brazil).

This paper focuses on income distribution and poverty among Brazilian agricultural workers and their families between 1992 and 2007. The hypothesis is that despite the presence of gender discrimination, agricultural modernization in the last 15 years has led to a "defeminization" of poverty in Brazilian agriculture. National household survey data indicate that women improved their position relative to men's with regard to the illiteracy rate, number of years in school, and the informality rate. Women are increasingly occupying positions of responsibility in family and agricultural enterprises. Analysis of incomes confirms gender discrimination (female labour earnings averaged 61% of male earnings) and shows an increasing share of government transfers in total income, especially for female workers. Income inequality and poverty fell in this period. In addition to the expected results (higher odds of poverty if female, illiterate, informal worker, etc.), logit models indicate that the chances of being poor are lower for those aged 60 or more (showing the importance of retirement benefits) and higher for heads of family (probably because of lower average incomes in agriculture).

The paper also investigates income distribution and poverty among families whose head was engaged in agriculture. First, income inequality and poverty did not follow the decline recorded with the individual as the unit of analysis. This can, in part, be explained by the fact that female family heads tend to be older, less educated and with higher illiteracy rates. Informality rose to 88% in 2007 and the proportion of women working as employers or self-employed fell. Second, slightly more than 80% of female headed families depended entirely on agriculture for labour income, a percentage that had more than doubled since 1999. However, data on total income composition in 2007 indicated that more than 40% of their income came from pensions and retirement benefits. Generally, female-headed families recorded lower income inequality than male- and couple-headed families. The proportion of poor families fell among female-headed families, but the intensity of poverty and inequality among the poor increased.

[FONTANA Marzia and PACIELLO Cristina](#) *“Gender Dimensions of rural and agricultural employment: differentiated pathways out of poverty – A global perspective”*- Institute of Development Studies at Sussex (England).

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.

The first part of the paper documents gender differences in the quantity and quality of rural employment 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. The second part of the paper identifies some key gender related constraints in the rural economy and suggests, for each constraint, a number of possible policy responses. The reasons for gender differences in rural employment are many, and are often intertwined. Policies that can redress these differences in rural employment 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 policies need to be designed as a package of reinforcing measures. 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.

[GEORGE Christy](#). *‘Land tenure system – an obstacle to gender sensitive poverty alleviation in the oil rich rural Niger Delta’*. Kate Bee Foundation (Nigeria).

Traditional land tenure systems with their inherent discriminatory tendencies biased against women constitute an obstacle to sustainable poverty alleviation. This paper analyzes the land tenure practice in the oil-rich Niger Delta region of Nigeria based on field research. It focuses on how patriarchal traditional practices have been integrated into compensation policies of oil companies and how this affects pathways for poverty alleviation available to male and female residents.

The findings show that land hitherto used for agriculture by both men and women is sold to oil companies by male community members and how compensation proceeds are shared directly among male residents with limited trickle down to women. Moreover, while the acquisition of farm land by oil companies deprives both men and women of their plots, men have an advantage over women in accessing the few available employment opportunities open to host communities as part of the compensation package of oil companies. The paper concludes by proposing a partnership framework for ensuring that all parties, both male and female, have direct access to compensation and benefits from mentoring mechanisms to enable them put such money to beneficial uses. This is against the backdrop that such money is capable of translating the lives of beneficiaries from poverty to the attainment of sustainable livelihoods.

[GURKAN Ceren and SANOGO Issa](#), *‘Food poverty, livelihoods and employment constraints: the structural differences between rural poverty in female- and male-headed households’*. World Food Programme (Italy).

This paper attempts to provide some evidence related to the ‘feminization of poverty’, specifically quantitative evidence related to the greater prevalence of poverty and vulnerability among female-headed households (FHHs) than male-headed households (MHHs). It draws on household-level data from Cameroon, Laos, Madagascar, Mauritania, and Tanzania from WFP’s Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analyses (CFSVA) to understand whether factors related to rural employment status impact the level of poverty of FHHs compared to MHHs. Food poverty is used as a proxy for poverty. Preliminary results show that while FHHs are more likely to be food poor compared to MHHs in the full sample, this trend becomes less clear when looking only at food poor households. Both types of food poor households face the same obstacles; namely, barriers to access to land, productive assets, education, remittances and in some cases over-dependence on subsistence agriculture. There appear to be common causes to food poverty that transcend gender differences. This does not mean that MHHs and FHHs follow the same route to this trap. Further research is required to see whether different modalities apply to MHHs and FHHs given the different social, cultural, political and economic factors that prove to be obstacles. Nonetheless, it is also clear that greater attention needs to be paid to long-term policies and investments that ensure sufficient access to education, land and other assets for all food insecure households, without necessarily only targeting FHHs to the possible detriment of food poor MHHs. In particular, policies such as food-for-assets and school feeding can provide important short-term springboards for larger-scale changes in national policies in terms of ensuring access for all to the human, social, physical, financial and natural assets that are central to escaping this trap.

[GUTIERREZ Maria Teresa](#), *‘Gender participation in labour-based projects: an approach to the project cycle’*. ILO EMP/INVEST

The paper relates how women and vulnerable groups participate in different phases of public works’ projects. Investments in rural infrastructure or activities in crisis recovery situations constitute an opportunity for rural employment generation, reaching generally isolated rural areas, and benefiting vulnerable populations among them indigenous people, and rural women. The background of the study is linked to gender, poverty and the ILO’s declarations and conventions that call for equity in opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work, in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity, and the role of the Employment Intensive Investment Program (EIIP) in promoting and influencing its constituents to fulfil these objectives.

This program with more than 30 years promoting labour-based investments collaborates at macro level with governments promoting employment impact assessments and policies, and at meso level with regional governments and enterprises. Using a holistic approach, it has developed strategies, methodologies and tools that are analysed from a gender perspective to show weaknesses, strengths and initiatives for women's participation in four main areas: accessibility planning, labour based technology, small scale contracting and infrastructure maintenance.

The paper shows how women's reproductive and productive roles make it harder for them to reach distant places to work, especially for maintenance works; the need for better understanding by planners to bring services closer to women and disabled people; and the need for constant training on HIV AIDS for workers in roads construction and friendly rules and procurement to allow the poor to enter the formal labour market. Illustrative case studies are given for Africa, Asia and Latin America, with special emphasis the process of mainstreaming gender in the rural roads program.

**HAMBLY Helen** and **SARAPURA Silvia**. *'Ensuring gender equality in capacity development – opportunities for rural employment and sustainable development'*. University of Guelph (Canada).

Capacity development has emerged as a viable approach to getting at the crux of the need for systemic change in development processes whereby no institutional, organizational or individual responsibility for transformation is neglected. Capacity development is *the process whereby individuals, groups and organizations enhance their abilities to mobilize and use resources in order to achieve their objectives on a sustainable basis*. Efforts to strengthen abilities of individuals, groups and organizations can comprise a culmination of i) change at the level of the individual, including human skills, knowledge and attitudinal development, ii) changes in organizations, networks and sectors, and iii) systemic changes in institutions and governance. National and international institutions have embraced the concept of capacity development considering it to be superior to capacity *building* approaches that were on models of human resource development and technology transfer. Gender equality should feature more strongly in capacity development frameworks. In this paper we present areas where understanding of gender issues in sustainable development and specifically, rural employment can converge with capacity development. Relevant examples from Peru, Kenya and Ghana are highlighted. Opening capacity development up to gender equality ensures that interlocking individual, organizational and system level capacities underpin good policy and strategies for sustainable development and rural employment.

**HARTL Maria**. *'Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and skills development for poverty reduction – do rural women benefit?'*. IFAD (Italy)

This paper discusses technical and vocational education and training (TVET) as well as skills development in rural areas, mainly pertaining to agriculture and related activities and explores existing gender differences. TVET has suffered from a focus on basic, and especially primary education, which led to the neglect of post-basic education and training and their non-inclusion in the UN Millennium Development Goals. Recently, there has been a renewed interest in training and skills development because of increased evidence that a minimalist approach to micro-finance for poverty reduction and enterprise development did not lead to sustainable growth.

The paper argues that many training interventions do not cater for the specific needs of women who are under-represented in formal training programmes and are often directed towards typical female occupations. It reviews vocational and skills training in several IFAD-supported programmes and explores how these target the poor and most vulnerable and to what extent gender differences in training provision, methodology, training content and transition to labour markets have been taken into account.

[HERTZ Tom](#), WINTERS Paul, DE LA O Ana Paula, QUIÑONES Esteban J., AZZARRI, Carlo, DAVIS Benjamin and ZEZZA Alberto. *‘Wage inequality in international perspective: effects of location, sector, and gender’*. FAO (Italy)

This paper uses the well-known Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition technique to understand the determinants of wage-gaps between men and women, between urban and rural workers, and between those employed in the rural agricultural versus the rural non-agricultural sectors, for the 14 developing and transition economies in the RIGA-L dataset. The unexplained male female wage gaps (i.e. the gaps that remain after controlling for a host of observable characteristics of the job and the worker) provide estimates of labour market discrimination against women that are consistent with prior estimates from other countries, and are generally similar in rural and urban areas.

We argue that countries with large unexplained urban-rural gaps, such as Tajikistan and Malawi, are those in which rural to urban migration is likely to persist even in face of high urban unemployment rates. Furthermore, we find that large unexplained wage gaps in favour of non-farm employment, versus paid labour in farming, exist in Tajikistan (53%), Ecuador (44%), Nepal (36%), Nicaragua (32%), and Nigeria (30%); these would then appear to be the countries for which a shift of existing workers, with their current attributes, from the farm to the non-farm sector would have the largest impact on rural incomes.

[JÜTTING Johannes](#) and MORRISSON Christian. *‘Women, bad jobs, rural area: what can "SIGI" tell us?’*. OECD (France).

This paper addresses the increasingly important issue of a “feminization” of bad jobs in rural areas of developing countries. While in many rural regions of the world, an impressive number of new jobs have been created in the last decades, many of these new jobs are of low quality and in the informal sector. These “bad jobs” are characterized by insecurity, a low level of pay, no access to formal social security and limited chances to climb up the social level. A majority of these “new” jobs have been taken up by women in particular as domestic workers. The paper finds that social institutions, social and legal norms as well as cultural practices are the underlying determinants for explaining employment outcomes in rural areas in developing countries. Using the recently published OECD

Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) which is based on 12 institutional variables, we show a strong correlation between employment outcomes and scoring values of the SIGI; further regression analysis suggests that there is a causal relation between high discrimination in social institutions for the traditional agricultural as well as more modern non-agricultural retail sector. Policy recommendations for donors are discussed that could potentially help reduce endemic discrimination and promote greater equality of opportunity between men and women in rural areas.

[KELKAR Govind](#). *‘Gender and productive assets: Implications of national rural employment guarantee for women’s agency and productivity’*. UNIFEM consultant (India)

This study is an attempt at drawing policy attention to the complex inter-relationships between gender and income and productive assets, through an analysis of some experiences in implementing the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA). NREGA’s aim is both income redistribution and asset creation. The paper addresses the questions: What have been NREGA’s policy components to overcome gender discrimination and inequality which are a fundamental features of Asian employment and production systems? Has the NREGA programme been indifferent to women workers’ needs and interests and, in turn, reproduced the institutional norms and behaviour that treat women as a dependent category? To what extent have rural workers, and women workers in particular, enhanced their agency and productivity through their employment-based income and creation of productive assets? Evidence suggests that the objective of government and non-government agencies has been to reduce poverty and build the productive capacity of the rural economy. The dynamic of pervasive gender and social inequality has not been a major concern. The challenge, therefore, is: how can a programme for employment generation and creation of productive assets be directed to reduce both poverty and gender inequality? Four important policy considerations include: measures for women’s unmediated ownership and control rights to productive assets; research and social understanding on economic implications of gendered asset inequality; and building capacities of (women) farmers in new technologies; and rearranging institutional norms for elimination of gendered poverty and inequality.

[KIMHI Ayal](#), *‘Rural non-farm employment and income inequality in southern Ethiopia: the gender dimension’*. The Hebrew University (Israel).

This article deals with the importance of non-farm income to per-capita income inequality among Ensete-growing households in southern Ethiopia, with an emphasis on the gender dimension. Female non-farm labour income is the only income source that significantly reduces per-capita income inequality. More precisely, a uniform increase in female non-farm labour income, among households that already have income from this source, reduces inequality. Encouraging women to devote more time to non-farm income-generating activities, and creating market mechanisms that increase earnings in these activities, could potentially lift households out of poverty and at the same time reduce income inequality as a whole. The impact on inequality could be stronger if policies are directed at asset-poor households and less-educated households in particular. One of the policies that could be useful in this regard is female educational enhancements. This could open more opportunities for women in the hired labour market, improve women's position within the household, and promote overall income inequality as well as gender equality.

[KING DEJARDIN Amelita](#) and **BIGOTTA**, Maurizio. *‘Paid work and gender: rural-urban and regional dimensions’*. ILO (Switzerland).

The objective of this paper is to provide empirical evidence on the role of gender relations and inequalities in shaping men's and women's labour market outcomes, and to identify issues that should be addressed by policy in order to enhance women's wage employment opportunities and gender equality in employment outcomes, with particular attention to rural areas. These issues are addressed with reference to Philippines, Vietnam and Thailand which share some common features: their location in the most dynamic region of the global economy; their reliance on exports to drive their economic growth; and women's wage employment expansion due to export growth. Yet, the bulk of their workforce is still in agriculture. At the same time, the three countries differ in a number of ways. Unlike Thailand and the Philippines, Vietnam is not a fully market economy; a big part of its economy is state and collectively-owned; and her entry into the global economy is fairly recent. Drawing on national survey data, the paper focuses on wage employment outcomes, comparing rural and urban areas, and agriculture-based and non-agriculture-based regions in the three countries. It investigates the patterns of gender inequalities with regards to employment status, occupation and pay. What conditions affect women's access to wage employment and explain the pay gaps between men and women? The conventional and predominant labour market explanation is that inequalities reflect differences in human capital (education, skills, and work experience) and thus in productivity and the price of men's and women's labour. Under this framework, labour market outcomes are the result of the market's efficient allocation of labour resources. However, the research literature on gender pay gaps, including the author's recent study of occupational pay gaps in Thailand and the Philippines, show the impact of gender-based discrimination. The paper highlights the role of gender discrimination and unpaid care work on access to wage work and on pay. It also explores the interconnections between gender inequalities in labour markets and territorial inequalities. The paper also looks at the role of nonagricultural and wage income in improving household income, and interconnections between women's and men's wage work and poverty. Finally, the paper suggests some policy directions that may be considered for rural employment, women's employment and gender equality. The implications for policy in the light of the current global crisis and lessons from the 1997 Asian crisis are highlighted.

[MAERTENS Miet](#) and SWINNEN Johan F.M.. *‘Are modern supply chains bearers of gender inequality?’*. Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (Belgium).

While there is consensus that the emergence and spread of modern food supply chains are profoundly changing the way food is produced and traded in developing countries, there is still debate on the welfare implications. The paper examines the gender implications in modern horticulture supply chains with a focus on Africa. Quantitative evidence from 2 studies of high-value supply chains in Senegal suggest that the growth of modern horticulture supply chains has been associated with direct beneficial effects for rural women and reduced gender inequalities in rural areas. The results indicate that women benefit more and more directly from large-scale estate production and agro-industrial processing, and the creation of employment in these modern agro-industries than from high-value smallholder contract-farming. The paper identifies several unresolved issues where conclusive empirical evidence is still lacking, or where complex causal links of direct and indirect effects are not yet completely understood.

[MASHIRI Mac](#), CHAKWIZIRA James and NHEMACHENA Charles. *‘Gender dimensions of rural employment in agriculture and public works programmes – experiences from South Africa: Differentiated pathways out of poverty’*. CSIR Built Environment (South Africa).

Based on five case studies in rural South Africa, the paper discusses impacts of public programmes to strengthen agriculture and rural infrastructure provision through employment-intensive projects most of which fall under the banner of the Expanded Public Works Programme. Gender differentiated impacts of rural employment on women, child-headed households and men are unpacked. The extent to which these programmes enhance the self-esteem of women, act as a seed for rural enterprise development, are accessible and gender-sensitive and build community assets and eventually community development, are examined. Working conditions, incomes earned and their use, and contracting and sub-contracting issues are also discussed. The impacts and implications of agriculture and transport projects in terms of increasing women’s income, children’s education, mortality, health and nutritional status through to impacts on disease control, human capital development, productivity and local economic development are chronicled. Conclusions address the issue of mechanisms to entrench and scale-up such employment-intensive initiatives.

[MURRAY Una](#) and HURST Peter. *‘Mainstreaming responses to the girl child in agriculture’*. University College Cork (Ireland), ILO (Switzerland).

The paper focuses on strategies for combating child labour in agriculture and rural employment, with particular attention to the girl child labourer. It is argued that gender equality is important in the general context of combating child labour in view of the discrimination faced by girl child labourers; the vulnerability of girls to sexual exploitation; and the fact that girls often face a double burden of economic work and unpaid household chores. It is noted that the call to integrate child labour concerns into mainstream policy has gained momentum in order to ensure more “joined-up thinking” amongst all involved in efforts to combat child labour. This paper reviews some current thinking on approaches to mainstream responses to child labour, focusing on agriculture and the rural girl-child.

MUZA Olivia. *‘Informal employment, gender and vulnerability in agriculture-based rural economies: evidence from Zimbabwe’*. Consultant (Zimbabwe).

Over the last decade, the Zimbabwean economy has experienced a significant meltdown with strong negative impacts on unemployment and vulnerability. Dramatic changes in livelihoods across gender and class include shifts from formal to informal employment and ruralization. To survive, the once self-sufficient farmers must negotiate the risky environment and resort to once peripheral means of livelihoods and devise new coping strategies to offset agricultural income shortfalls. Yet, the accompanying gender-specific responses and poverty outcomes remain under-researched and invisible to policy formulation. Using data from a household survey conducted from November 2008-January 2009 in a subsistence agriculture-based rural economy in Masvingo Province, findings confirm the incidence of gender inequality in informal employment opportunities and outcomes. Over a 5 year period, on-farm and off-farm income for men is greater than it is for women. Across age, the difference in income contributions between the active population and the dependent population is substantial. Furthermore, in negotiating a secure livelihood, subsistence farmers are confronted by a multiplicity of social constraints for instance, unfavourable working conditions. A holistic approach in promoting rural-urban and transnational linkages is recommended, particularly with respect to (i) redressing sector-specific challenges, (ii) addressing gender-specific constraints, and (iii) nurturing the links and interrelationships for rural poverty eradication.

NANAVATY Reema. *‘Livelihood and Agriculture Finance A Vital Tool to Fight Poverty -The SEWA Experience’*. SEWA (India)

SEWA is a member-based organization of more than 1 million poor women informal economy workers. SEWA tries to increase their collective strength and bargaining power by creating alternative employment opportunities and strengthening their organizations. It follows a need- based, demand-driven and integrated approach. SEWA strongly believes that micro credit, as a one-point intervention, in most situations, is not enough to pull a poor household out of poverty. It recognizes that women’s active economic roles are essential for households to escape poverty. SEWA also believes in the primacy of local ownership and knowledge and therefore works to build members’ own economic organizations. Based on its experience in organizing the rural poor for their livelihood security, SEWA has adopted a “Livelihood Finance” approach. This involves supporting both on-farm and non-farm activities, depending on the available local skill base and resources. The paper discusses SEWA’s experience in using Livelihood and Agriculture Finance in organizing the poor women, through case studies of households which have clearly come out of poverty. It summarizes SEWA’s experience in some major rural trades viz. salt farming, weaving, handicrafts and agriculture. Because agriculture is the major occupation of two-thirds of the rural workers, the paper also describes SEWA’s ongoing agriculture campaign that helps small and marginal farmers to acquire market information, linkages, and access, and also to develop bargaining power to get a fair price. The paper also estimates the time and cost required for a complete livelihood finance intervention. It has usually taken SEWA 7 to 11 years to put the infrastructure and systems in place to help households help themselves. The higher end of the range may be because SEWA’s purpose in many districts was totally different to begin with, and it grew into its new roles

gradually in response to members' demands. Therefore, it might be possible to achieve this more quickly in other situations if there were a pre-conceived design, unconstrained funds and a large team of workers.

[NAYAK Nandini](#) and KHERA Reetika. *'Women workers and perceptions of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in India'*. School of Oriental and African Studies (United Kingdom) and Centre for Development Economics, Delhi School of Economics (India).

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) was enacted in India in 2005. This Act guarantees 100 days of work at the statutory minimum wage to all rural households whose members are willing to perform unskilled manual labour. The paper is based on a survey of 1060 NREGA workers conducted in May-June 2008 in six Hindi-speaking states of North India. The paper focuses on the female workers in the sample to highlight the impact of the NREGA in the lives of women workers. Significant benefits reported by the women include increased food security and a better ability to avoid hazardous work. The availability of local wage employment at the statutory minimum wage *for women* is a new development associated with the NREGA in many of the areas covered by the survey. However, the participation of women varies widely across the survey regions. The paper ends by identifying some of the barriers to women's participation in the NREGA.

[PARIS Thelma](#), ROLA-RUBZEN Maria Fay, LUIS Joyce, NGOC CHI Truong Thi, WONGSANUM Chaicharn and VILLANUEVA Donald. *'The impact of labor out migration on rice farming households and gender roles: synthesis of findings in Thailand, The Philippines and Vietnam'*. International Rice Research Institute (The Philippines), Curtin University of Technology (Australia), Cuu Long Delta Rice Research Institute (Vietnam), and Khon Kaen University (Thailand).

This research describes the migration trends in three case study countries (Thailand, Philippines and Vietnam) with regards to the effect on household labour allocation, agricultural outcomes and the use of remittances. The findings reveal that remittances help ensure food security, reduce poverty, provide more children's education, ease credit constraints in farming, pay for farm inputs and repay debts. Principal females in northeast Thailand continue to contribute significantly as unpaid field workers in rice cultivation. In Vietnam, particularly in the North, a higher proportion of principal females are left behind and take over traditional male tasks such as irrigating the fields, spraying chemicals, and hauling and marketing of farm products. In the Philippines, principal females' field activities drastically declined. However, their responsibilities in managing their farms increased. In the case of principal male migration, the pressure of maintaining and increasing rice productivity falls on the principal females and other family members left behind. Programmes to improve their access to technologies and technical knowledge helped them improve rice production, increase efficiency of inputs, and reduce the use of expensive inputs to increase rice profitability. Programmes are also being implemented to enhance women's technical knowledge and skills, and reduce gender inequalities in access to resources.

**PELLIZZOLI Roberta.** *‘Gender, agriculture, and the “efficient producer” discourse: a case study from Mozambique, and lessons from South Africa’.* University of Bologna (Italy).

The paper studies 2 irrigation schemes (Mozambique and South Africa), where local governments are endorsing the development of commercial agriculture through partnerships with international cooperation agencies or joint-ventures with private investors. These initiatives are backed by a strong “efficiency” discourse that opposes the use of irrigated land for subsistence agriculture, a major livelihood strategy in both areas. While these business models can sometimes lead to positive outcomes in terms of poverty alleviation, it is important to recognize that in the context of financial and political crises, adequate resources to manage irrigation systems efficiently are often lacking. Failure to take prevailing gender inequalities and discrimination into consideration when designing these schemes has reinforced the risk that these types of business models will accelerate processes of social and economic marginalization, including landlessness, of poor rural women who mainly use irrigated land for subsistence production.

**SALAZAR Lina** and **QUISUMBING Agnes.** *‘Assessing the impact of gendered labour markets in the rural Philippines’.* American University (USA) and the International Food Policy Research Institute (USA).

This paper aims to conduct an intergenerational analysis of the relationship between women’s participation in off-farm paid activities and children’s wellbeing by considering the two main hypotheses that have been considered in the literature. The first hypothesis suggests that mother’s allocation of labor in paid activities has a negative effect on children’s wellbeing due to a reduction in the time available to spend in unpaid house chores associated with the healthy development of children particularly, childcare. In contrast, the second hypothesis suggests that the income accrued by mothers who participate in paid activities has a direct positive effect on children’s wellbeing because income controlled by women is more likely to be allocated on expenditures that benefit children’s development. Our preliminary results from instrumental variables regressions provide substantial evidence to confirm that woman’s participation in off-farm paid activities serves as a tool to break the inter-generational transmission of poverty by improving children’s health. In addition, the vertical transmission of wealth and bargaining power as well as the horizontal transmission of social norms do indirectly affect children’s welfare by increasing the probability of their mothers’ participating in off-farm paid activities.

**SANCAR Annemarie** and **BIERI Sabin.** *‘Power and poverty. Reducing gender inequality by ways of rural employment?’.* Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, SDC (Switzerland).

This contribution discusses options and constraints of gender sensitive interventions for income generation and poverty alleviation in rural areas. We challenge the popularised imagery of the economically empowered woman who has turned herself into a successful entrepreneur. We do so by discussing the potential of measures and instruments commonly applied by development programmes to assess shifts in gender roles and responsibilities. In this paper, we pursue two main objectives. The first aims at reframing measures of economic development in a gender equality perspective. Our reflections are based on project evaluations undertaken by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). The second objective aims at strengthening gender equality performance using improved project instruments such as monitoring and evaluation. We illustrate how projects and programmes are implemented following the logic of

economic empowerment and we argue that the conventional understanding of poverty and gender roles limits the monitoring for qualitative change. Modifications of concepts are suggested with reference to project management tools. We aim at discussing the performance of development interventions on the one hand while attempting to contribute to a theoretical debate on economic development and empowerment from a practical perspective.

[SERRA Renata](#). *“Gender, farm and off-farm activities in Africa: the role of time poverty and associated risk”*. University of Florida (USA).

Interventions to give African rural women better access to credit, land or other inputs have at times failed to encourage women to take up more profitable productive activities – the main constraint being the inability to mobilize sufficient labour resources to make these options worthwhile. The paper proposes a theoretical model that shows women’s choices may be critically constrained by the rigidities governing their time use. These are partly governed by social norms that regard certain tasks as being purely female. Policies that provide high return work opportunities for women but are oblivious to their overall time constraints, may actually deteriorate women’s living conditions. There is a need to make household production more visible when addressing the question of increased rural incomes or economic diversification.

[SONG Yiching](#), Linxiu Zhang, SUN Dajiang, SUN Qiu and JIGGINS Janice. *“Feminization of agriculture and ageing of agricultural producers in rapidly changing China: policy implications and alternatives for equitable growth and sustainable development”*. Center for Chinese Agricultural Policy (China), Yuan Academy of Social Science (China), Guizhou Academy of Agricultural Science (China), Wageningen University (The Netherlands).

The paper explores the causes, implications and possible solutions to the feminization of agriculture. Based on a study in South-west China, in the context of rapid processes of agrarian change, the findings are: 1) the subsistence farming is undergoing transformation or crises, agricultural income is declining as a percentage of rural household income, farmers are losing interest in farming, feminization and ageing of agricultural labor is severe and increasing, women and old people have become the key agricultural cultivators. 2) Due to these changes gender inequalities in resource and opportunity access are increasing, reinforced by conservative cultural norms, existing institutional systems, and the impact of globalization and the market economy. 3) Gender-neutral policies like land tenure and gender insensitive support services like extension and credit have undermined women’s equal employment in and benefit from the economic growth. 4) With appropriate support, farming women can be organized into effective women’s groups which contribute to their empowerment and increased, sustainable access to technology, credit and markets.

[SRIVASTAVA Nisha](#) and SRIVASTAVA Ravi. *“Women, work, and employment outcomes in rural India”*. University of Allahabad (India), Jawaharlal Nehru University (India).

This paper analyses the trends and pattern of women’s employment in rural India. Data from two types of large scale surveys show that while rural women’s employment has grown over the decades, there has been little improvement in outcomes. Women are still largely concentrated in agriculture as self-employed or casual labour. Women workers face various forms of

discrimination, including job-typing that pushes them into low paying jobs. Higher work participation *per se* does not lead to better employment outcomes unless accompanied by higher education, and/or assets. Further, education may not positively influence a woman's participation in work, but for women who are in the workforce, education is the most important determinant of better quality non-agricultural work. Along with education, women's autonomy measured in terms of access to and control of land, mobility, and willingness to join self help groups enables them to move into non-agricultural jobs.

The paper argues for policy interventions to provide work opportunities and better wages to rural women workers and builds the case for improving the education, information and skill level of women workers, promoting women's control over assets and increasing their autonomy. It also recommends policy initiatives and research to tackle the iniquitous functioning of the labour market in India, particularly with respect to valuing women's work, fixing minimum wages for home-based work and looking at the needs of women workers from the most disadvantaged social groups.

**THINH Ba Hoang** *'Rural employment and life: Challenges to gender role in Vietnam's agriculture at present'*. Research Centre for Gender, Family and Environment in Development (Vietnam).

Urbanization, industrialization and changes in the rural economic structure in Vietnam has led, inter alia, to loss of farm land to industrial estates. This has made thousands of households landless, resulting in increased migration, especially of men, to towns and industrial estates, and women abroad or marrying foreigners. While the paper discusses the feminization of agriculture, it also addresses gender inequalities in rural non-farm employment and in employment in the industrial estates, and some related social issues. It concludes with recommendations for vocational training and social policy.

**TIBBO Markos**, ABDELALI-MARTINI M., TARIQ B., SALEHY P., KHAN M.A., ANWAR M. Z., MANAN A.R., RISCHKOWSKY B., and AW-HASSAN, A. *'Gender sensitive research enhances agricultural employment in conservative societies: the case of women livelihoods and dairy goat programme in Afghanistan and Pakistan'*. International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (Syria), Social Sciences Institute (Pakistan).

Frequent information gaps on gender roles in agricultural activities in the developing world where agriculture accounts for 80% of employment, can affect the success of agricultural development interventions. This paper reports results from participatory gender-sensitive research undertaken in Afghanistan and Pakistan where a different approach had to be used to unravel gender roles in agricultural activities in conservative societies. It explains how this information was used to inform the implementation of research and development activities in the communities leading to enhanced agricultural employment. Results indicate that in general, females have greater involvement in livestock-related activities compared to males in the two countries. Males on the other hand are more involved in crop-related activities than females. Males have more access to and control over agricultural resources, incomes and decision-making, though there are variations between and within the two countries.

The cultural norms in these two conservative societies, particularly in Afghanistan, do not allow women to move out of their home without their guardian, limiting hired agricultural jobs for women. This is particularly important as more women-headed households are landless with severe resource poverty. Research and development interventions that target this vulnerable group of the society therefore should consider such variations. A project, funded by IFAD, has demonstrated that village women can be organized into effective women's groups. Such interventions can increase women's access to markets and improved production technologies, enhance the production of nutritious food for their families and generate income on a sustainable basis.

[TOLSTOKOROVA Alissa](#), *“Multiple marginalities: gender dimension of rural poverty, unemployment and labour migration in Ukraine”*. International School for Equal Opportunities Kyiv (Ukraine).

Most studies on agricultural and rural development in Ukraine are gender-blind and the issue of equal opportunities promotion for rural women and men is absent from the political agenda. Therefore, the paper calls for analysis of gender-differentiated impacts of processes of economic change and the gender biases in agricultural institutions that affect the implementation and outcomes of reform policies. The paper argues that feminization of rural poverty in Ukraine is caused by structural gender inequalities in the Ukrainian labour market, earning inequalities, and career differences between women and men, which serve as push factors and incentives for external labour migration of rural women. The paper proposes a “dual-track approach” to advance equal rights and opportunities of both genders, implying a combination of *gender mainstreaming principle* with *specific actions* in favour of women. It is proposed that Ukraine should use the EC theoretical framework, grounded on four main pillars: active labour market policies, gender pay gap, reconciliation policies, flexicurity policies. Drawing upon the above theoretical framework, the paper aims to analyze a gender dimension of rural poverty and more specifically, the key factors leading to its feminization; analyze gender inequalities in the labour market; identify current gaps in research on gender dimensions of rural poverty and unemployment in Ukraine; and make policy proposals aimed at mainstreaming a gender perspective into agricultural employment policies.

[VIGNERI Marcella](#) and HOLMES Rebecca. *‘When being more productive still doesn't pay: gender inequality and socio-economic constraints in Ghana's cocoa sector’*. Overseas Development Institute (United Kingdom).

Ghana's cocoa sector has recently been heralded as a success story for its economic growth and poverty reduction impact on smallholder producers. Female farmers' participation in the sector, however, remains extremely low as a result of persistent gender inequalities in the production conditions: on average, women manage smaller land holdings and have less access to productive inputs. This paper shows that if these gender inequalities are addressed, women's economic and social benefits from cocoa may increase substantially, a necessary condition for Ghana's poverty reduction efforts to reach middle income status by 2015. Using a panel of farmers for the years of a major production boom - 2002 to 2004 - we find that: (i) there are no significant differences between women's and men's yields; and (ii) if women were to use the same level of fertilizer and insecticide as men, their land productivity could be further raised. This proves that women have the potential of being better farm managers in the cultivation of this export cash crop. Our results hold for a sample of predominantly owner-farmers (both male and female), however the policy implications are clear. The cocoa sector can provide an important avenue for women's economic socio-economic empowerment if institutional reforms on land acquisition and market reforms for accessing productive inputs generate gender-balanced opportunities. The second message of the paper has important policy implications for the cocoa sector as a whole: female farmers use hired labor and land more efficiently than men, proving both the feasibility and the desirability for all smallholders to shift to a more effective allocation of their scarce resources. This is a key finding in the context of Ghana's near exhausted forest reserve.

[WEERATUNGE Nireka](#) and SNYDER Katherine. *'Gleaner, fisher, trader, processor: understanding gendered employment in the fisheries and aquaculture sector'*. World Fish Center (Malaysia, Malawi).

Based on a global literature review, the paper uses a livelihoods approach to improve understanding of how employment in the fisheries/aquaculture sector is embedded in other social, cultural, economic, political and ecological structures/processes that shape gender inequities and how these might be reduced. Four thematic areas - markets and migration, capabilities and well-being, networks and identities, governance and rights - are offered as analytical entry points to discuss research gaps, and impacts of development processes and socio-ecological changes on gendered employment trends. The paper also considers the inter-relationships between women's productive and reproductive roles.

[WICKRAMASINGHE Anoja](#). *'Agricultural Commercialization in Tackling Issues of Poverty and Gender Inequality in Rural Agrarian Economies: a case study'*. University of Peradeniya (Sri Lanka).

The paper analyses the impact of an IFAD project in Sri Lanka - "Matale Regional Economic Advancement Project" (2001-2007) - which encouraged a shift from subsistence farming to agricultural commercialization. Through the provision of improved technologies, micro-credit, enterprise development, and capacity-building and vocational training, and support for strengthening women's social capital, the project aimed to help women improve their agricultural production, employment and incomes. Household survey data and participatory appraisals indicated positive outcomes for women. Findings reveal that project financing, capacity building and vocational training, and women's social capital provided a 'triple lane pathway' for women to tackle poverty and gender gaps. Finance, modern technologies - the agro-wells, conservation

measures and irrigation – enable women to expand the area under cultivation, increase production, reduce risk, and increase control over market crop production and the income. The direct results of the interventions as perceived by women themselves include 80 percent enhancement in solidarity, self-confidence and social recognition; 70 percent increase in knowledge and awareness of technology and markets; 60 percent increase in financial strength, income and management capacities; and 50 percent increase in entrepreneurial skills. Findings suggest that the ‘triple lane pathway’ provides a package for reducing poverty and gender gaps in the rural agrarian economies.