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Putting Gender Back in the Picture: Rethinking Women's Economic Empowerment

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Executive Summary

Current momentum around women's economic empowerment offers huge scope for bringing about real changes in women's lives. But earning an income or having access to credit cannot be assumed to bring automatic benefits for women. We need to ask critical questions about how increased access to resources can be translated into changes in the strategic choices that women are able to make – at the level of the household and community, as well as at work. What of the terms on which women gain access to resources – are these empowering or exploitative? And what are the impacts of women's greater access to resources on gender relations and norms more broadly?

The first section of this overview explores the dominant analysis taking hold around women's economic empowerment and highlights critical issues that remain as yet on the margins of debate and action. It seeks to promote a nuanced understanding of the gendered barriers that prevent some women from benefiting from economic opportunities or from being empowered despite access to these opportunities. It goes on to suggest a practical starting point for overcoming some of these barriers: tackling the 'double burden' of paid work and care work that is shouldered by so many women. The second section provides an annotated bibliography of useful, relevant and timely resources related to the issues covered in the overview. Summaries and publication details of each resource are included in the bibliography.

Section one: an overview

1. Introduction

Current momentum around women's economic empowerment offers huge scope for bringing about real changes in women's lives. Numerous studies have revealed the positive impacts of improving women's access to credit or facilitating their entry into paid work (for example Kabeer 1998, 2001, 2005a; UN-INSTRAW 2006; UNFPA 2006). Earning an income can increase women's autonomy and enhance their economic and social status. It can also shift power relations between women and men, including at the household level – for example by increasing women's control over how household budgets are spent.

Improving women's economic opportunities is also key to poverty reduction and economic growth. The World Bank's Gender Equality Action Plan for 2007-2010 – *Gender Equality as Smart Economics* – explicitly recognises the broad development benefits of women's economic empowerment:

'The global community must renew its attention to women's economic empowerment and increase investments in women...Increased women's labour force participation and earnings are associated with reduced poverty and faster growth; women will benefit from their economic empowerment, but so too will men, children and society as a whole...'

(World Bank's Gender Equality Action Plan 2007-10: 2)

These efforts by the World Bank and partners to make the broad *economic* case for gender equality have created exciting possibilities for improving women's economic status and making progress towards gender equality. But earning an income or having access to credit cannot be assumed to bring automatic benefits for women. We need to ask critical questions about *how* increased access to resources can be translated into changes in the strategic choices that women are able to make – at the level of the household and community, as well as at work. What of the *terms* on which women gain access to resources – are these empowering or exploitative? And how does women's greater access to resources impact on gender relations and norms more broadly?

These questions point to the complexities of any process of empowerment and the subsequent necessity of adopting a holistic approach which recognises the multiple factors affecting the choices women make about their lives. This requires that we go beyond a focus on women's access to and control over conventional economic resources, to grapple with the complex realm of social norms, roles and responsibilities which dictate women's relationship to work and their sense of self-worth and well-being more broadly. How do gendered norms and power relations dictate what constitutes "men's work" and "women's work"? How does this shape the roles that men and women are expected to fulfil, the conditions in which they work, and the value attributed to their work? How do these factors shape

women's ability to carry out their work with dignity? These questions should be *central* – not tangential – to any discussion of women's economic empowerment, yet emerging discussions are strikingly not gendered and the social analysis is largely absent.

Addressing this requires that we put *men* back into the picture. The inadequacies of focusing on women in isolation have long been recognised¹: women live in communities, they live in families, they live with men. Abstracting women from their social realities eclipses the relational nature of gendered power and the interdependency of women and men, and paints a distorted picture of women's motivations, choices and possibilities. This is exacerbated by a tendency to treat women as a homogeneous, undifferentiated group. It is crucial that policies and initiatives to promote women's economic empowerment keep sight of the multiple forms of oppression women face, and the way in which these different oppressions (race, ethnicity, class and so on) interact to enable or deny women certain possibilities.

Moreover, as noted by numerous scholars, empowerment is a *multidimensional* process, comprised of economic, civil, political, social and cultural dimensions (Moghadam and Senftova 2005, in Esplen, Heerah and Hunter 2006). To bring about empowerment in all its dimensions, economic opportunity cannot be understood or pursued in isolation. Women's empowerment is about more than financial gain; it is about enabling women to live lives of well-being and dignity, based on equality, rights and justice.

This paper will explore the dominant analysis taking hold around women's economic empowerment and highlight critical issues that remain as yet on the margins of debate and action. It will seek to promote a nuanced understanding of the gendered barriers that prevent some women from benefiting from economic opportunities, or from being empowered despite access to these opportunities. It will then go on to suggest a practical starting point for overcoming some of these barriers: tackling the 'double burden' of paid work and care work that is shouldered by so many women. Unless action is taken to challenge the unequal distribution of care between women and men and improve state provision of care, efforts to enhance women's economic participation and bring about their empowerment will be persistently undermined.

Key readings²:

Kabeer, N. (1999) 'Resources, Agency, Achievements: Reflections on the Measurement of Women's Empowerment', *Development and Change*, 30: 3, July 1999, Blackwell Publishing

Grown, C., Rao Gupta, G. and Kes, A. (2005) *Taking Action: Achieving Gender Equality and Empowering Women*, United Nations Millennium Project Task Force on Education and Gender Equality, Earthscan, London <http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/documents/Gender-complete.pdf>

¹ Recognition of the need to place women's concerns and needs in the context of their relationships with men and within society was born out of the conceptual shift in the 1980s from Women in Development (WID) to Gender and Development (GAD). The shift was largely inspired by the work of the Subordination of Women (SOW) group formed at the IDS in 1981. There has been much scholarship on this shift: see for example Razavi and Miller 1995 and Jackson and Pearson 1998.

² All the key readings recommended in the overview are summarised in the bibliography in Section Two. Where these documents cannot be accessed online, details about how to get hold of them can be found in the bibliography.

2. Financial gain and women's empowerment: exploring the gendered dimensions

This section will look at financial gain as a mode of women's empowerment, exploring the literature in three key areas: access to credit and entrepreneurship; globalisation, trade liberalisation and the 'feminisation of labour'; and migration for work. It will seek to make visible the linkages between financial gain and women's empowerment, while also highlighting gaps in existing discussions around women's economic empowerment and raising critical questions about the *gendered* constraints to women's empowerment.

2.1 Access to credit and entrepreneurship

Excitement around the empowerment potential of improving women's access to credit is not new. Since the 1990s, microfinance has been heralded by some as a "magic bullet for women's empowerment" – a claim which has been a source of much debate (Goetz and Gupta 1996; Johnson and Rogaly 1997; Kabeer 1998, 2001, 2005b; Mayoux 2005). Based on research into the impact of credit programmes in Bangladesh, advocates have argued that women's access to credit strengthens their bargaining power within the household, improves their perception of self worth and can lead to a long-term decrease in domestic violence (Hashemi et al 1996; Kabeer 1998, 2001, 2005b). Critics, by contrast, have claimed that women's loans are often controlled and invested by male relatives, while women borrowers bear the liability for repayment (Goetz and Gupta 1996). In cases where men invest loans badly, this can undermine household survival strategies, forcing women to mobilise repayment funds from resources which would otherwise be used for consumption or saving purposes (*ibid*) or – in some cases – to borrow more money from other sources, thus falling into vicious cycles of debt. According to this analysis, loans to women do little to alter their subordinate position within the household and may lead to heightened levels of violence against women due to conflicts over loan repayments.

Disagreement over the benefits of microcredit programmes – in terms of women's own empowerment and their contribution to broader development goals – is partly due to different ways of measuring impact. For example, the assumption that microfinance is a successful and empowering strategy for women has often been based on an assessment of financial indicators. The logic is that if women are able to repay their credit with interest every month, it follows that they must be running effective small businesses and managing their domestic finances – both empowering processes. However, others have argued that financial indicators do not capture the social context in which these activities are taking place, nor do they tell us who is making decisions about expenditure within households or controlling use of credit. In response, there is a movement towards culturally relevant social indicators that can capture how and if women's access to credit has a positive impact on their lives (see for example Brody et al eds. 2005; Copestake et. al., 2005). Analysts drawing connections between women's economic access and empowerment can learn much from these insights, which could and should be applied to impact assessments of women in the waged and informal sectors.

Key readings:

Goetz, A. and Gupta, R. (1996) 'Who Takes the Credit? Gender, Power and Control Over Loan Use in Rural Bangladesh', *World Development*, 24: 1

Kabeer, N. (1998) 'Money Can't Buy Me Love?': Re-evaluating Gender, Credit and Empowerment in Rural Bangladesh', *IDS Discussion Paper No. 363*, Institute of Development Studies, Brighton
www.ids.ac.uk/ids/bookshop/dp/Dp363.pdf

2.2 Globalisation, trade liberalisation and the 'feminisation of labour'

In the light of government commitments to the third Millennium Development Goal on gender equality and women's empowerment (MDG3) – with its indicator on the *share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector* – growing attention is being given to increasing women's participation in the wage labour market. In fact, women's labour force participation rates have been rising over the past 40 to 50 years in almost all developing regions (Fontana et al 1998), a trend often referred to as the 'feminisation of labour'. This is partly due to the increased employment opportunities generated by trade liberalisation, especially in certain types of informal employment such as clothing and textiles, non-traditional agriculture (such as cut flowers), the service sectors, and in the electronics-oriented Export Processing Zones (EPZs). Because young women in particular are cheaper than men to employ due to assumptions that they are less skilled and are not the primary earners, women are attractive to employers (Randriamaro 2006). Women are also supposedly more 'docile' and less likely to complain than men (see Elson and Pearson 1981).

In some countries, the regularity of the wages from factory jobs and the opportunity to work outside the sphere of control of male relatives has empowered women and increased their influence on household decision-making (Fontana et al 1998, Kabeer 2005a). In Bangladesh, for example, women workers in the export garment industry expressed satisfaction at having a 'proper' job and regular wages, compared with the casual, poorly paid forms of employment previously available to them (Kabeer 2005a). They were able to use their wages to postpone marriage, challenge the practice of dowry, renegotiate their relationships within marriage, and/or leave abusive relationships. In addition to export-oriented manufacturing, the rise of non-traditional agricultural export production in several African and Latin American countries – such as the cut flower industry of Mexico and the Kenyan vegetable industry – has generated new opportunities for women to earn and control their own income. A study in Ecuador found that more than 80 percent of women in the flower industry managed their own wages (Kabeer 2005a). In many cases, this has translated into greater independence in household decision making.

Yet huge gender gaps in labour force participation rates persist, especially in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East and North Africa, and South Asia. In Latin America and the Caribbean,

despite great success in eliminating the gender gap in schooling, male labour force participation rates remain between 1.5 and 2 times the female labour force participation rates for 20-24 year olds (Global monitoring Report 2007). As a recent Department for International Development (DFID) report notes: “higher enrolment [in schools] is not translating into marketable human capital and labour market participation to as high a degree as expected” (DFID 2007: 7).

2.2.1 Constraints on mobility

In some parts of the world, controls on women’s and girls’ mobility create powerful barriers to their economic participation in paid work, entrepreneurship, or credit programmes. In South Asia, research has revealed the tradeoff that many women have to make between economic and social costs – between the need to earn a livelihood and the importance of preserving honour and social status in a context where social norms prescribe female seclusion (*purdah*) (Kabeer 1998). Some women opt to pay the economic cost – ‘starving invisibly at home or taking on badly paid work in other people’s homes ‘where nobody would see’ (Kabeer 1998: 66).

What, then, are the implications of this for the current drive to get women into work in the formal labour force? What does this mean for the World Bank’s goal of “empowering women to compete in markets”? (World Bank 2006). In contexts where women are *excluding themselves* from the market because of its associations with dishonour and shame, initiatives designed to improve women’s access to the labour market, for example by strengthening infrastructure, are unlikely to meet with much success.

With the rise of new religious fundamentalist movements in the Middle East and South Asia, restrictions on women’s mobility in public places are increasing, pushing women out of the formal labour market (AWID 2004). Innovative programmes to challenge the norms around women’s sexuality which underpin restrictions on women’s movement are thus critical to achieving meaningful, accepted and long-term change.

2.3 The realities of women in the workplace

Even where women are accessing the labour market, the mere *presence* of work does not guarantee empowerment. Questions need to be asked about the *quality* of women’s employment: about the earnings, benefits and conditions that accompany it. This section will explore the realities of women in the workplace, exposing the entrenched inequalities and discrimination that persists.

‘Women’s access to paid work may give them a greater sense of self-reliance and greater purchasing power, but if it is undertaken in conditions that erode their health and exploit their labour, its costs may outweigh its benefits’

(Kabeer 2005a: 24)

2.3.1 The gender pay gap

Despite advances in women's and girls' educational attainments, a gender gap in earnings persists across almost all employment categories, including informal wage employment and self-employment (ILO 2007). *Time for equality at work*, the ILO's first Global Report on discrimination in 2003, described gender inequalities in pay as being among the most resilient features of labour markets across the world (ILO 2007: 20) At the end of 2007 this remains the case. Even in the UK, women working full-time earn, on average, 17 percent less an hour than men working full time – equivalent to men getting paid all year and women working for free for two months (Fawcett Society website).

The gender pay gap is underpinned by gendered norms which assume that men are primary breadwinners and women are secondary or supplementary earners, meaning that women's work is accorded less recognition and value than the work done by men. Entrenched assumptions that men are more skilled or educated than women also serve to legitimise and perpetuate inequities in pay. This is in spite of the huge advances in women's educational attainments relative to men in many countries which suggests that pay differentials result not from differences in education or training, but from discrimination.

Trade liberalisation is exacerbating wage differentials, as increasing numbers of women are working in export industries where the need to be competitive means that cheapness of labour is paramount. Yet industries that begin by employing women workers may adopt new technologies and only train men in using these technologies. This is because men are considered to be more receptive to skills acquisition and because their training is considered a longer-term investment, since they are less likely than women to take extended leave in order to raise children. Women, meanwhile, are more likely to be made redundant with the introduction of these technologies (Randriamaro 2006). Where women often work in low-status, precarious jobs, doing work that is de-valued or working for less money than men, it seems unlikely that they will experience this work as empowering. Coupled with this lack of career progression at lower levels is the well-documented reality that many women with managerial potential are likely to hit a 'glass ceiling'³ that prevents their access to top level executive positions.

2.3.2 Unregulated, uncontracted or subcontracted labour

With increasing 'informalisation' of the labour force over the past few decades and the growth of flexible labour markets and outsourcing of production, women are increasingly engaged in unregulated, uncontracted work which is often casual or temporary, including a growth in subcontracted home-based work (UNICEF 2002). As a consequence of these informal work arrangements, women have little bargaining power, particularly with regard to negotiating better conditions of work, such as shorter hours (Seguino 2006). This kind of work is characterised by a *lack* of choices and may not be seen as empowering by the women doing the work.

³ The term 'glass ceiling' is often used to describe very real but often not formally recognised barriers that many women face in moving up and reaching positions of leadership within companies, government or organisations.

2.3.3 Discrimination and harassment

Gender-based workplace discrimination has other manifestations, including violation of childcare and maternity rights – for example when women are dismissed from work for being pregnant. A recent ILO study of women workers in the garment industry in Cambodia revealed that women faced regular harassment from supervisors, as well as unfair working conditions, such as lack of sick or holiday pay, being refused permission for leave, having to do forced overtime, and receiving irregular salaries (ILO 2006). Workers described how factories rarely recruit male workers because they are perceived to be strong and prone to going on strike, whereas female workers “dare not complain” (ibid, 23). Steps should be taken to address sexual harassment in the workplace, such as employing more women in supervisory and management roles, creating opportunities for women to safely report incidents, and adopting zero tolerance policies towards perpetrators (Prieto-Carron 2006).

Young and older persons also suffer disproportionately from discrimination and stigma in the workplace. So too do people with disabilities, migrants, those living with HIV, people from ethnic minorities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people. When they are also female, they may face double or triple discrimination. The discrimination faced by lesbians in the job market was brought to light in a 2006 study by the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC) in Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico and Honduras (ADEIM-Simbiosis et al. 2006). The study showed how discrimination based on gender and sexual orientation permeates the lives of lesbians and significantly undermines their economic security. Discrimination exacerbates the sexism that lesbians already experience as women, and the racism faced by people of indigenous or African descent or members of other racially/ethnically marginalised groups. In cases like this, women are actually being disempowered through the very conditions in which they work.

2.3.4 Fighting for recognition in the workplace

‘When individual women from amongst the poorest, least educated and most disenfranchised members of society come together, they experience dramatic changes in ... the balance of power, in their living conditions, in relationships within the household and the community. Perhaps the most important effect of empowerment is that the woman says: “Now I do not feel afraid.”

(A woman Organiser in India, cited in Chen et al 2005, 75)

Organising is one of the most important ways for workers to take action to address the discrimination and exploitation that many face, and to advance and defend their rights and interests. As noted by the 2005 *Progress of the World’s Women Report*, ‘for women whose world has been confined to home, family and work, the very act of joining an organisation adds breadth to their lives’ – enabling them to take on leadership roles, build their self-confidence, and gain new skills (Chen et al 1995: 76). Organising can also enable women with few assets to pool their resources, thereby increasing their economic power; it

can help workers to access services and social protection provisions; and it can facilitate their representation in local, national and international policy-making fora (ibid).

Strong labour unions have been central to supporting workers' rights in the context of globalisation and, undoubtedly, women make gains when labour unions are strong even when gender concerns are not explicitly included or women workers are not targeted as the main beneficiaries⁴. However, unions remain male dominated and generally fail to address women's issues (such as childcare and sexual harassment) due to gender biases in understandings of labour standards. Moreover, membership of a union is generally not open to those working in the informal sector, including home-based and casual employment, where the majority of women operate in many countries (Gammage et al. 2002; GERA Programme 2003, in Randriamaro 2006). Informal workers therefore face particular difficulties in organising, especially when they are women. Restrictions on women's mobility may create barriers to the full participation in meetings and can prohibit women from assuming leadership roles (Chen et al 2005). Unpaid care work also limits the time available for women to participate.

Despite these obstacles, women workers are organising themselves to fight for recognition in the workplace. Supporting these efforts through adequate resourcing, capacity building and support for women's leadership is hugely important (ibid). In gaining voice, women will themselves be able to demand their rights and exercise control over their own working conditions: a pre-requisite to empowerment.

Key readings:

BRIDGE (2006) 'Gender and Trade' *Cutting Edge Pack*, BRIDGE/IDS, Brighton
http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/reports_gend_CEP.html#trade
(Available in English, Chinese, Spanish and French)

Chen, M., Vanek, J., Lund, F., Heintz, J., Jhabvala, R., and Bonner, C. (2005) *Progress of the World's Women 2005: Women, Work and Poverty*, United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)
http://www.unifem.org/attachments/products/PoWW2005_eng.pdf

Elson, D (1999) 'Labour Markets as Gendered Institutions: Equality, Efficiency and Empowerment Issues' *World Development* 27:3, 611-627

International Labour Organization (ILO) (2007), *Equality at Work: Tackling the Challenges*, ILO, Geneva
http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---webdev/documents/publication/wcms_082607.pdf (English)
http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---webdev/documents/publication/wcms_082608.pdf (French)

⁴ This paragraph is adapted from Randriamaro 2006: 45

2.4 Migration for work⁵

Changing patterns of migration – with increasing numbers of women migrating independently in search of jobs rather than following male relatives – have also created new opportunities for women’s economic independence and empowerment. As women migrants take up new income earning opportunities created by increased demand for female labour in some services and industries, particularly export-oriented industries, they are gaining greater visibility in development policy. In particular, increasing attention is being given by the United Nations and other multilateral and bilateral organisations to the potential of female migrants’ remittances as a ‘motor of development’ (Jolly with Reeves 2005: 26). The United Nations Population Fund’s (UNFPA) *State of the World Population Report* (2006) on migration states in its opening paragraph that:

‘Every year millions of women working in jobs overseas send hundreds of millions of dollars back to their homes and communities. These funds go to fill hungry bellies, clothe and educate children, provide health care and generally improve living standards for loved ones left behind...their remittances constitute a significant contribution to poverty reduction and development’

(UNFPA 2006:1)

Remittances – and migration more broadly – is also being promoted by some as a vehicle for women’s empowerment. Women migrants may gain kudos from the remittances they are able to send home. They may also feel empowered by new opportunities to take on paid work, gain new skills with increased employment prospects on their return, and escape gender-specific discrimination or pressure to conform to gender norms.

‘While working in Hong Kong I experienced many things – the way people treat a dependent or independent woman. I have gained much experience and my confidence has grown. Now, I have a say in decision-making at home. My husband does not shout at me. I have bought a piece of land and four rickshaws and I am creating a means of livelihood for four other families...’

Sushila Rai, Nepalese migrant domestic worker

(UNIFEM 2004, section 2: 1, in Jolly with Reeves 2005: 3)

⁵ This section draws heavily on Jolly, S. with Reeves, H. (2005) ‘Gender and Migration’ *Cutting Edge Pack*, BRIDGE/IDS, Brighton

At the same time, migrants – especially women – may experience new vulnerabilities as a result of their precarious legal status, social isolation and potentially exploitative working conditions. Women are at risk on the migration journey, particularly if they have been illegally recruited or trafficked, leaving them vulnerable to sexual or physical violence. At their destination, women migrants often enter sex-segregated labour markets – making them more likely than male migrants to earn very low wages, work very long hours and have insecure contracts. Globally, whereas men tend to dominate in the more regulated and visible sectors such as construction, women are concentrated in jobs which are more isolated, for example domestic workers or “entertainers” working in the sex industry, exacerbating their risk of exploitation and abuse. These occupations tend to be seen as ‘unskilled’ and low-status, and are often characterised by poor working conditions and low pay. For example, Bolivian women and children working in clothing factories in Argentina and Brazil are subject to exploitation – such as 18-20 hour working days – partly due to their lack of legal documentation (Lean Lim et al. 2003, in Jolly with Reeves 2005).

While there is some recognition in the migration literature of the potential of these factors to undermine women’s empowerment gains from migration, other important barriers to their empowerment remain largely unexplored. For example, the expectation that women will remit can place a heavy burden on female migrants – and means an added responsibility for women who already have productive and reproductive duties (Brody 2007).

‘In the rush to portray women as heroines of local and national development, the sheer stress of being economically responsible – perhaps the main earner – is not adequately explored.’

(Brody 2007)

Moreover, seeking to make money is only one among many factors influencing decisions to migrate. Questions also need to be asked about the ways in which migrant women pursue and realise success not simply in terms of financial gains, but in terms of culturally and socially valued capital such as building networks, keeping land productive and raising a family. (Brody 2007 and in Agrawal ed. 2006). Current policy interest remains focused on the *economic* impact of migration, with women being viewed primarily as economic migrants. Yet the empowering potential of migration will only be realised if the *social* – including gendered – motivations and impacts are given greater recognition in policy and practice. This requires a shift to a gendered, human rights-based approach to migration (see Jolly and Reeves 2005). The key elements of such an approach could be:

1. Immigration and emigration policies that enable women as well as men to take up opportunities that safe and regular migration may offer, and which will foster the positive impacts of migration for the social and economic development of migrants, and the receiving and sending countries. This would include measures to ensure sufficient regular channels for women’s entry, to avoid them being pushed

into more risky irregular channels and bilateral agreements between sending and receiving areas which protect women migrants' rights.

2. Mobilisation around and support for international rights frameworks that offer protection for women migrants, to ensure that governments ratify and adhere to them. This includes not only frameworks relating to migrants, trafficked peoples, refugees and displaced peoples, but also women-specific frameworks such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), UN Resolution 1325 and the Beijing Platform for Action.

3. Support for the acknowledgement and realisation of the rights of migrants throughout the migration process, including providing pre-departure information on legal rights, facilitating remittances, ensuring access to basic services such as housing, education and health, and supporting migrant organising and solidarity between different migrant groups to address issues of exclusion and isolation (Jolly with Reeves 2005: 2).

Key readings:

Jolly, S. with Reeves, H. (2005) 'Gender and Migration' *Cutting Edge Pack*, BRIDGE/IDS, Brighton
http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/reports_gend_CEP.html#migration (English, French and Spanish)

García, M. and Paiewonsky, D. (2006) *Gender, Remittances and Development: The Case of Women Migrants From Vicente Noble, Dominican Republic*, United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW)
http://www.un-instraw.org/en/docs/Remittances/Remittances_RD_Eng.pdf

3. Tackling the 'double burden': a practical place to start

The above section has sought to unpack some of the uncritical assumptions being made about the links between economic opportunity and women's empowerment. In particular, it poses questions that aim to tease out the *social* and *gendered* dimensions which are often absent from mainstream discussions around microfinance, labour participation and migration. This section will focus on an issue which is absolutely conditional to women's equal and empowered participation in the labour force, yet which receives little attention from the broad development community – the 'double burden' of paid and unpaid work so often shouldered by women. This section makes the point that unless care work is taken into account, care obligations will continue to limit the time women can devote to paid productive work. It also notes that the double burden of paid work and care work undermines women's quality of life and well-being and is profoundly *disempowering*. While a dedicated, sustained and properly resourced effort to tackle this double burden is not the only approach needed to empower women economically, it is nonetheless a crucial component of any effective approach and a very practical place to start.

Traditional divisions of labour and socially ascribed responsibilities mean that it is women and girls who generally assume primary responsibility for unpaid care work. This includes both the direct care of dependents – children, elderly, people with disabilities, the sick – and the daily domestic work, including cooking and cleaning, that women are usually expected to take on. These obligations pose a serious obstacle to women's labour force participation, and have a major impact on their lives and well-being more broadly. As noted by the 2007 Global Monitoring Report, the greatest gap in labour force participation occurs between the ages of 25 and 49 – not surprising since heavy domestic and childcare responsibilities make it difficult for women to continue or enter formal wage labour (Global Monitoring Report 2007). For poor women living in rural Nicaragua, the time dedicated to reproductive work, including the collection of water and firewood, equals more than half a day – time that could be spent working for pay (Social Watch 2005, in Demetriades 2006). Yet many women cannot afford to take time off from income-generating activities to do care work and end up working a double day. Rather than enhancing women's capacity to exercise greater control over their lives, this is likely to undermine their health, well-being and dignity.

Pressing crises around the provision of care are exacerbating care burdens and heightening the imperative to act. As HIV/AIDS prevalence levels continue to grow globally, so the need for care escalates. Weak public health systems in many developing countries, coupled with a decline in the numbers of health care workers through illness and migration, has intensified the crisis. Growing aging populations in middle and high income countries also pose major new challenges for the provision of care. At the same time, rapid industrialisation and the breakdown of extended family units, particularly in Asian countries, are challenging traditional patterns of care for the elderly.

3.1 Towards an equitable distribution of care

If women are to be genuinely empowered by economic opportunities, a more *equal distribution of care* between men and women at the household and community levels is crucial. This is tricky work, requiring a fundamental questioning of entrenched social and cultural ideas about masculinities which often disassociate men from caring roles and provide social barriers to men and boys becoming carers (Peacock 2003, cited in Esplen 2006). The proliferation of initiatives to make men more 'gender equitable' offer opportunities here. But critical equity issues such as who does the housework or cares for the children are rarely addressed in programmes working with men. One exception is the Nicaraguan-based Centre for Popular Education and Communications (CANTERA), which runs a course on 'Masculinity and Popular Education', including modules on fatherhood and responsibility for domestic tasks⁶. Another exception is Institute Promundo in Brazil which has developed a manual series which includes training manuals on fatherhood and care-giving.⁷

Legislative change offers another avenue for transforming relations of fatherhood. In various countries in the North and South, policies have been introduced to encourage fathers to take care-related leave. In Iceland, for example, no distinction is made between paternity and maternity leave, but a nine-month paid leave after childbirth – at 80 percent of salary – is granted instead. This leave is split into three equal parts between the mother, the father (whose share is non-transferable) and the couple (ILO 2007). While this degree of financial support from the state may not always be possible in low and middle income countries, other steps can be taken to promote greater involvement from men in childcare. In Costa Rica, for example, a 'Responsible Fatherhood' law was passed in 2001 and a similar law is being talked about in Nicaragua (Patrick Welsh, personal communication).

3.2 State responsibility for the provision of care

Efforts to reconfigure arrangements of care between women and men are critically important. Yet governments also have a responsibility to recognise and measure the care activities that women and girls in particular absorb, and to respond to this through the provision of targeted services and state-funded care provision. This is essential if women are to be empowered by economic opportunities. A recent briefing by DFID calls for three key interventions:

⁶ Yet even among men who have been through the CANTERA training processes – and who are changing in many aspects – there is often an unwillingness to do household chores that directly attend to the needs of women and children, such as washing and ironing their clothes (Patrick Welsh, personal communication). Activities of a more general, collective character were being taken on by some, but the harder, "dirty" work was not changing and continued to be carried out by women.

⁷ See <http://www.promundo.org.br/396>

- Targeted infrastructure such as wells, energy (stoves, lighting etc) that improve access, reduce time burdens and/or increase ease of use of domestic services;
- Reducing the cost of existing infrastructure and domestic services to increase usage; and
- Childcare schemes, which are often essential for labour market participation by reducing time burdens.

(DFID 2007: 7)

Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO) makes additional recommendations to support women caring for people living with HIV/AIDS:

- Increase delivery of social protection schemes to reduce the burden of care, for example through the provision of nutrition in schools
- Strengthen public health systems and increase the capacity of governments to meet care needs
- Promote initiatives to address the health care worker crisis in many countries, for example through improved conditions of service and promotion opportunities.

(VSO 2006)

A recent UNRISD document on *The political and social economy of care in a development context* also sets out possible policy interventions on care:

- Provisions relating to monetary and social security benefits (for example, cash payments, social security and pension credits, tax allowances)
- Provisions relating to employment-related measures (for example, paid and unpaid leave, career breaks, severance pay, flexi-time, reduction of working time)
- Services or benefits provided in kind (for example, home help and other community-based support services, childcare places, residential places for adults and children)
- Incentives toward employment creation or toward provision in the market (for example, vouchers for domestic employment, exemptions from social security contributions for people employed as carers, tax reductions for the costs of employing a domestic helper, subsidies for private care).

(Daly 2001:adapted from table 2.1, in Razavi 2007: 24)

As is clear from the above boxes, considerable thinking has already been done to identify appropriate policy interventions to address the problem of the double burden. What is now needed is the dedicated political will and resources required to put these recommendations into action.

Key readings:

Budlender, D. (2004) *Why should we care about Unpaid Care Work?* United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), New York

<http://www.sarpn.org.za/documents/d0000919/index.php>

Kabeer, N. (2007) 'Marriage, Motherhood and Masculinity in the Global Economy: Reconfiguration of Personal and Economic Life', *IDS Working Paper 290*, Institute of Development Studies

<http://www.ids.ac.uk/ids/bookshop/wp/wp290.pdf>

Razavi, S. (2007) *The Political and Social Economy of Care in a Development Context: Conceptual Issues, Research Questions and Policy Options*, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD)

[http://www.unrisd.org/80256B3C005BCCF9/httpNetITFramePDF?ReadForm&parentunid=2DBE6A93350A7783C12573240036D5A0&parentdoctype=paper&netitpath=80256B3C005BCCF9/\(httpAuxPages\)/2DBE6A93350A7783C12573240036D5A0/\\$file/Razavi-paper.pdf](http://www.unrisd.org/80256B3C005BCCF9/httpNetITFramePDF?ReadForm&parentunid=2DBE6A93350A7783C12573240036D5A0&parentdoctype=paper&netitpath=80256B3C005BCCF9/(httpAuxPages)/2DBE6A93350A7783C12573240036D5A0/$file/Razavi-paper.pdf)

4. Conclusions

Existing commitment to empowering women economically offers an enormous opportunity for making major strides forwards towards poverty reduction, economic growth and gender equality goals. What is clear, however, is that accessing credit or earning a wage does not in itself equate with empowerment. Initiatives to this end are an important step but they are not “the solution”. Rather, we need to keep in mind the complex social factors that prevent some women from benefiting from economic opportunities, or from being empowered despite access to these opportunities.

As we have argued above, care work underpins much of this – being both a major barrier to women’s economic empowerment, and to their health, well-being and dignity more broadly. In many ways it is *the* social issue; the missing part of the empowerment equation. Recognising and addressing the enormous time and effort consumed by caring and the severity of the impact this has on people’s everyday lives must be a priority if we are really serious about empowering women.

Finally, we need to remember that economic growth is not the panacea of development. Development should also fundamentally be about well-being, rights and justice. As such, it is imperative that initiatives to empower women aim not only at bringing about financial gain, but also, *critically*, at ensuring women’s rights, equality and dignity.

Specific recommendations can be found at:

BRIDGE Overview Report on Gender and Trade (2006), p 53-56
<http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/reports/CEP-Trade-OR.pdf>

BRIDGE Overview Report on Gender and Migration (2005), p38-50
<http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/reports/CEP-Mig-OR.pdf>

The Asian Development Bank’s *Core Labor Standards Handbook* (2006)
<http://www.adb.org/Documents/Handbooks/Core-Labor-Standards/default.asp>

ILO Equality at work: tackling the challenges. Global Report under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (2007), p117-119
http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---webdev/documents/publication/wcms_082607.pdf

VSO Reducing the Burden of HIV and AIDS Care on Women and Girls (2006), p14-22
http://www.vso.org.uk/Images/RBHACWG_tcm8-8415.pdf

References (not in included in the bibliography)

Agarwal, A. (ed.) (2006) 'Migrant women and work', *Women and migration in Asia*, Vol. 4, Sage Publications, New Delhi/Thousand Oaks/London

Association for women's rights in development (AWID) (2004) 'Women's work exposed: new trends and their implications', *Women's Rights and Economic Change*, No.10, August 2004

Brody, A., Greely, M. and Wright-Revollo, K. (eds.) (2005) *Money with a mission 2: managing the social performance of microfinance*, ITDG, IDS

Brody, A. (2007) *Success stories: revisiting remittances and empowerment in the context of Thai rural women's migration* (Unpublished paper, presented at Development Research Centre for Migration Seminar in February 2007)

Copestake, J., Greeley, M., Johnson, S., Kabeer, N. and Simanowitz, A. (2005) *Money with a mission 1: microfinance and poverty reduction*, ITDG, IDS

Demetriades, J. (2006) *Is there a feminisation of poverty in Nicaragua?* Unpublished paper

Elson, D. and Person, R. (1981) 'The Subordination of Women and the Internationalization of Factory Production' in *Of Marriage and the Market. Women's Subordination in International Perspective*, eds. Young, Wolkowitz, and McCullagh (CSE 1981), 144-166

Esplen, E. (2007) 'Women living with HIV/AIDS: overview and annotated bibliography', *Bibliography no. 18*, BRIDGE, IDS, Sussex

Hashemi, S., Schuler, R. S. and Riley, I. (1996) 'Rural credit programmes and women's empowerment in Bangladesh', *World Development*, 24, 4: 653-53

Ilkharacan, P. and Jolly, S. (2007) *Gender and sexuality overview report*, BRIDGE, IDS, Sussex

International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank (2007) *Global monitoring report: millennium development goals. Confronting the challenges of gender equality and fragile states*. The World Bank, Washington DC

Jackson, C. and Pearson, R. (1998) *Feminist visions of development: gender analysis and policy*, London: Routledge

Johnson, S. and Rogaly, B. (1997) *Microfinance and poverty reduction* London/Oxford: Oxfam/ActionAid

Kabeer, N. (2005a) Gender equality and women's empowerment: a critical analysis of the third millennium development goal, *Gender and Development*, 13.1, March 2005

Kabeer, N. (2005b) 'Is microfinance a 'magic bullet' for women's empowerment? Analysis of findings from South Asia', *Economic and Political Weekly*, October 29, 2005

Kabeer, N. (2001) 'Conflicts over credit: re-evaluating the empowerment potential of loans to women in rural Bangladesh', *World Development*, 29, 1: 62-84

Kabeer, N. (1999) Resources, agency, achievements: reflections on the measurement of women's empowerment, *Development and Change*, 30, 3, July 1999. Blackwell Publishing

Razavi, S. and Miller, C. (1995) 'From WID to GAD: conceptual shifts in the women and development discourse' UNRISD, Occasional paper No. 1, UN Fourth World Conference on Women, February 1995

UK Department for International Development (DFID) (2007) 'Gender and growth', Growth Team Briefing Note 5, March 2007

UNAIDS/WHO (2006) *AIDS epidemic update*. http://www.unaids.org/en/HIV_data/epi2006/default.asp

Section two: an annotated bibliography

1. 'Women's empowerment' in theory, policy and practice

Africa Partnership Forum (2007) *Gender and Economic Empowerment in Africa*, 8th Meeting of the Africa Partnership Forum, Berlin, Germany, 22-23 May 2007-08-07

<http://www.africapartnershipforum.org/dataoecd/57/53/38666728.pdf>

There are multiple obstacles to the economic empowerment of women in Africa. For example, limited access to productive resources such as land, seed and fertiliser means that women may be unable to benefit from the expansion of trade in agricultural products. In fact, it has been calculated that agricultural productivity could increase by up to 20 percent if women's access to these resources were equal to men's. This paper – an outcome of the eighth meeting of the African Partnership Forum – provides an overview of the status of women's economic empowerment in Africa, outlines international and regional commitments on gender equality and empowerment, and proposes concrete recommendations for African governments and development partners to translate these commitments into action. On land and property rights, it urges development partners to support African governments to establish clear legislative frameworks for protecting the rights of women to own and inherit land. This should be combined with advocacy and education to challenge deep-rooted cultural norms and practices which underlie discrimination in land tenure in Africa. Other recommendations include providing targeted support to women entrepreneurs managing small and micro-enterprises to enable them to expand into the formal sector; creating investment funds for women; and promoting gender-sensitive legislation on family rights.

Esplen, E., Heerah, S. and Hunter, C. (2006) 'Women's Empowerment: An Annotated Bibliography', *BRIDGE Bibliography No. 14*, BRIDGE/Institute of Development Studies, Brighton, UK

<http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/reports/bb14.pdf>

What is 'women's empowerment' and how can we measure it? How is the concept being used in policy and practice and what are the problems with existing approaches? This bibliography gathers together a range of resources which discuss women's empowerment from different perspectives in order to provide an accessible introduction to key concepts, approaches and debates. A summary is provided of each resource, along with a link to the full document where available. The bibliography is divided into four sections exploring definitions of 'women's empowerment'; current programmes to advance women's empowerment; approaches to measuring and evaluating women's empowerment; and critiques of existing theory and practice. The bibliography was produced in collaboration with the Research Programme Consortium on "Pathways to Women's Empowerment."

Grown, C., Rao Gupta, G. and Kes, A. (2005) *Taking Action: Achieving Gender Equality and Empowering Women*, United Nations Millennium Project Task Force on Education and Gender Equality, Earthscan, London

<http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/documents/Gender-complete.pdf>

This report, prepared by the United Nations' Millennium Project Task Force on Education and Gender Equality, identifies strategic priorities and practical actions for achieving women's empowerment by 2015. Those relating particularly to women's economic empowerment include: investing in infrastructure to reduce women's and girls' time burdens; guaranteeing women's and girls' property and inheritance rights; and eliminating gender inequality in employment by decreasing women's reliance on informal employment, closing gender gaps in earnings, and reducing occupational segregation.

The report argues that the problem is not a lack of practical ways to empower women but rather a lack of change on a large and deep enough scale to bring about transformation in the way societies conceive of and organise men and women's roles, responsibilities and control over resources. Essential for this kind of transformation is the mobilisation of a large group people committed to the vision of a gender equitable society; the technical capacity to implement change of institutional structures and processes to support the transformation; and adequate financial resources.

Kabeer, N. (1999) 'Resources, Agency, Achievements: Reflections on the Measurement of Women's Empowerment', *Development and Change*, 30, 3, July 1999, Blackwell Publishing

This paper sets out from the understanding that empowerment is a process by which those who have been denied power gain power, in particular the ability to make strategic life choices. For women, these could be the capacity to choose a marriage partner, a livelihood, or whether or not to have children. For this power to come about, three interrelated dimensions are needed: access to and control of resources; agency (the ability to use these resources to bring about new opportunities) and achievements (the attainment of new social outcomes). Empowerment, therefore, is both a process and an end result. This understanding differs from instrumentalist interpretations which view empowerment purely in terms of measurable outcomes. Instrumentalist interpretations are problematic, argues the paper, because they convey the belief that social change can be predicted and prescribed in a cause and effect way. This undermines the notion that women's empowerment should be about the ability of women to make self-determined choices.

Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) (2001) *Discussing Women's Empowerment: Theory and Practice*, Sida studies No. 3

<http://www.sida.se/shared/jsp/download.jsp?f=SidaStudies+No3.pdf&a=2080>

In October 2000, a conference was held in Sweden to create a forum for development practitioners and researchers to discuss the latest debates on gender and power. The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) noted that in implementing gender policies in development, it was time to move from treating the symptoms of gender inequality to addressing the structural factors that cause it. This document comprises papers presented by Naila Kabeer, Patricia McFadden, Signe Arnfred, Edme Dominguez and Sherin Saadallah. Key issues covered include: the need to recognise how prescribed processes of empowerment may violate the essence of the concept; how culture excludes women from sites and statuses of power; the need to incorporate the language of political struggle into gender and development; the ways in which women in Mexico are changing political culture and gendered relationships, and the strategies being used by some Muslim societies to alleviate gender inequality and power imbalances.

The World Bank (2006) *Gender Equality as Smart Economics: A World Bank Group Action Plan (Fiscal Years 2007-10)*, World Bank, Washington

<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTGENDER/Resources/GAPNov2.pdf>

To promote economic development and attain the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) the global community must renew its attention to women's economic empowerment and increase investments in women. This is the argument put forward by the World Bank's Gender Equality Action Plan, which seeks to advance women's economic empowerment by enhancing women's ability to participate in land, labour, financial, and product markets, thus promoting shared growth and accelerating the implementation of MDG3 on gender equality. The Action Plan makes the "business case" for expanding women's economic opportunities – since increased women's labour force participation and earnings are associated with reduced poverty and faster growth, women will benefit from their economic empowerment, but so too will men, children and society as a whole. The Plan commits the World Bank Group to working in four action areas, outlined below.

- Intensify gender mainstreaming in Bank and International Finance Corporation operations and in key regional economic and sector work
- Mobilise resources to implement and scale up Results-Based Initiatives (RBIs) that empower women economically
- Improve knowledge and statistics on women's economic participation and the relationship between gender equality, growth, and poverty reduction
- Undertake a targeted communications campaign to foster partnerships and improve project execution, emphasising the centrality of women as economic actors for growth and poverty reduction.

2. Financial gain and women's empowerment: exploring the gendered dimensions

2.1 Access to Credit and Entrepreneurship

Goetz, A. and Gupta, R. (1996) 'Who Takes the Credit? Gender, Power and Control Over Loan Use in Rural Bangladesh', *World Development*, 24: 1

Special credit institutions in Bangladesh have dramatically increased the credit available to poor rural women since the mid-1980s. Though this is intended to contribute to women's empowerment, few evaluations of loan use investigate whether women actually control this credit. Most often, women's continued high demand for loans and high rates of loan repayment are taken as signs of women's empowerment. This paper challenges this assumption by exploring variations in the degree to which women borrowers control their loans directly. A significant proportion of women's loans are controlled and invested by male relatives, while women borrowers bear the liability for repayment. In cases where men invest loans badly this can undermine household survival strategies, forcing women to mobilise repayment funds from resources which would otherwise be used for consumption or saving purposes. International aid donors bear some responsibility for this process. Donors' interest in seeing the development of financially self-sustaining rural development institutions has resulted in a preoccupation with cost recovery, to the degree that loan repayment rates have become the primary index of success.

This paper argues that a new focus is required, prioritising the *quality* of loan use.

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Hosseini, C. (2004) 'Thinking outside the Islamic Box: Linking Context and Credit in Muslim West Africa', *Critical Half: Annual Journal of Women for Women International*: 2,1

<http://www.womenforwomen.org/downloads/CHJournalv2.pdf>

In West Africa, where several countries have large Muslim populations, the majority of women live at the economic margins and experience high levels of poverty. Generalisations are often made about women in Muslim countries which assume that religion limits women's access to the resources that could help them move beyond poverty and exclusion. However, such simplifications overlook important factors such as community support, class, ethnicity, language, and gender divisions of labour. These factors often play a greater role than religion in influencing the choices that women make about their economic lives, and in determining their access to, and participation in, credit and financial-service programmes. Moreover, in much of West Africa accessing microfinance is not seen as being at odds with Islam. Instead, the

activities made possible by loans enable women to make social contributions and assist the needy - both considered important aspects of Islam. This paper argues that conducting a thorough cultural analysis of the context in which an organisation operates is essential in order to reveal why some women are able to access financial services while others are not, and to show how an organisation can create an environment that provides more women with a greater range of choices.

International Labour Organisation (ILO) (2006) *Women's Entrepreneurship Development Capacity Building Guide* http://www.siyanda.org/docs/WED_capacity_building_guide.pdf

This guide is designed to meet the needs for documentation to support women's entrepreneurship development. It is aimed at a range of support agencies, including government ministries and Small and Medium Enterprise development units; microfinance institutions; associations of employers; women's NGOs; donor agencies and donor-assisted projects, and other key national and international actors. The guide provides a systematic guide that can be adapted to a range of contexts. It goes beyond the narrow approach that sees training as the major contribution to women's entrepreneurship development, and introduces a wide range of support mechanisms, including research, networking and association building, market access, and a broad spectrum of business development services. Furthermore, it integrates gender issues into the technical approaches to business development. It also takes account of special situations or target groups where women's entrepreneurship development can be effective, such as women living with HIV/AIDS, women affected by trafficking, women entrepreneurs with disabilities, and refugee women. For more information go to:

http://www.ilo.org/dyn/empent/empent.Portal?p_prog=S&p_subprog=WE

Kabeer, N (1998) *'Money Can't Buy Me Love'?: Re-evaluating Gender, Credit and Empowerment in Rural Bangladesh, Discussion Paper No. 363, Institute of Development Studies, Brighton*
www.ids.ac.uk/ids/bookshop/dp/Dp363.pdf

Lending programmes for women have attracted a growing following in international development circles because they appear to hold out the promise of combining poverty reduction objectives with the goal of empowering women. In Bangladesh, however – the country in which many of these programmes were pioneered – there have been several contradictory evaluations of the impact of credit on women's lives. This paper considers reasons for these inconsistent conclusions, highlighting differences in the methodologies used, the questions asked, and in the models of power underpinning the various evaluations. What appears to be common to all the evaluations, positive and negative, is that they draw on an externally derived notion of empowerment rather than one which draws on the analysis of the women loanees themselves. The second half of the paper reports on an evaluation of the Small Enterprise Development Project in rural Bangladesh conducted by the author in early 1997, in which the impact of credit on the lives of loanees was assessed from the standpoint of mainly female, but also some male, loanees themselves. A comparison of the 'outsider' and 'insider' perspectives on the impact of

credit thrown up by these different evaluations is used in the concluding section of the paper to make some general points about the conceptualisation, evaluation and promotion of women's empowerment in the context of credit programmes.

Kabeer, N. (2000) 'Conflicts Over Credit: Re-Evaluating the Empowerment Potential of Loans to Women in Rural Bangladesh', *World Development Journal*: 29,1, Elsevier Science Ltd.

Microcredit programmes for the poor have come to occupy a central place in poverty-oriented strategies in Bangladesh. Yet evaluations of the empowerment potential of credit programmes for rural women in Bangladesh have arrived at conflicting conclusions. This paper draws on the findings of a credit programme in Bangladesh, in which the impact of loans was evaluated by women loanees themselves. The paper argues that while the recent questioning of the empowerment potential of loans to women helps to counter the earlier preoccupation with "repayment rates", the recommendations arising from the more negative evaluations of loans carry the danger of overloading microfinance organisations with empowerment-related goals. This can seriously undermine their ability to deliver effective and sustainable financial services. It should be recognised that there are multiple rationales for lending to women, apart from empowerment. The fact that women are more likely to share their loans with male household members than men are with women merely strengthens the argument for lending to women, as the entire family is more likely to benefit economically, and women are more likely to benefit personally and socially.

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Kabeer, N. (2005) Is Microfinance a 'Magic Bullet' for Women's Empowerment: Analysis of Findings from South Asia, *Economic and Political Weekly*: 29, October 2005

<http://www.microfinancegateway.org/content/article/detail/35016>

Opinions on the impact of microfinance are divided between those who see it as a "magic bullet" for women's empowerment and others who are dismissive of its abilities as a cure-all panacea for development. This paper examines the empirical evidence on the impact of microfinance with respect to poverty reduction and empowerment of poor women in South Asia. It becomes apparent that while access to financial services can and does make vital contributions to the economic productivity and social well-being of poor women and their households, it does not "automatically" empower women. Like other development interventions such as education or political quotas that seek to bring about the radical structural transformation that true empowerment entails, microfinance presents a range of possibilities rather than a predetermined set of outcomes. Which of these possibilities are realised in practice will be

influenced by a host of factors, including the extent the programmes are tailored to the needs and interests of those they are intended to reach, the nature of the relationships which govern their delivery, and the calibre and commitment of the people involved.

Kelkar, G., Nathan, D. and Jahan, R. (2004) *We Were In Fire, Now We Are In Water: Micro-credit and Gender Relations in Rural Bangladesh*, IFAD-UNIFEM

http://www.yorku.ca/hdrnet/images/uploaded/Microcredit_Bangladesh.pdf

What is the impact of micro-credit institutions on gender relations in Bangladesh? What effect do micro-credit groups have on women's say in household decision making, and on women's labour and leisure time? This study, carried out by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) in collaboration with the Government of Bangladesh, focuses on 20 saving and credit groups in four rural districts of Bangladesh. It analyses the processes through which micro-credit has enabled the transformation of part of women's domestic labour into an income generating activity. It also looks at the sectors of economic activity in which this credit is invested and at the productive assets acquired by the members of the saving and credit groups. The study concludes that micro-credit schemes do not automatically lead to changes in gender relations. There is, however, a continuous creation of new gender norms in favour of women as income earners and as owners of resources, which amount to a gradual change in their status as dependants.

Mayoux, L (2005) *Women's Empowerment through Sustainable Micro-finance: Rethinking "Best Practice"*

<http://www.enterprise-impact.org.uk/pdf/WomensEmpowermentthroughSustainableMicrofinance.pdf>

Women's access to microfinance services have significantly increased over the past two decades. By enhancing women's ability to earn an income, these programmes have the potential to initiate a series of "virtuous spirals" of economic empowerment and increased well-being for women and their families. However, this paper challenges assumptions about the automatic benefits of micro-finance for women. For example, high repayment levels by women do not necessarily indicate that they have used the loans themselves. Men may take the loans from women, or women may choose to invest loans according to men's priorities. Likewise, high demand for loans by women may be a sign of social pressure to access resources for in-laws or husbands rather than an indicator of empowerment. Where women are unable to negotiate changes in intra-household and community gender inequalities, they may become dependent on loans to continue in low-paid occupations with heavier workloads. However, the paper argues that these shortcomings should not stop microfinance programmes from being undertaken. The experience of current innovations in many programmes indicates a range of ways in which contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment can be increased. Suggestions include providing services to reduce the burden of unpaid domestic work on women such as childcare, and ensuring that repayment schedules and interest rates reflect the reality of women's economic activities and life cycles.

Murray, U. (2005) *Promoting Gender-Sensitive Entrepreneurship via Microfinance Institutions*, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) http://www.fao.org/sd/dim_pe1/pe1_050401a1_en.htm

Microfinance is often praised because it is believed to facilitate women's 'empowerment'. However, in order for microfinance initiatives to work for women they need to acknowledge and account for gender-based constraints that affect women in their entrepreneurship activities, such as restrictions on women's mobility, and unpaid domestic responsibilities which leave them less time to expand their businesses. There are also generalised differences that exist regarding men's and women's businesses which should also be taken into account: women's income generating activities are often based in the home; women frequently use family members rather than hired labour; their businesses are often concentrated on services and light manufacturing; and their businesses tend to start smaller and grow slower. This paper focuses on how staff from a microfinance institution can interact with potential clients in a more gender-sensitive manner. A major element in this process is to move beyond the belief that just because the majority of the clients are female, there are no gender issues. Gender is a central organising factor in societies, and can significantly affect the processes of production, distribution and consumption. Becoming gender sensitive is not only a matter of counting the number of loans to women clients. The real problem is not the exclusion or inclusion of women, but the *empowerment* of women through their active participation in decision-making that affects their lives.

Trivelli, C. (2004) *Microcredit, Gender and Poverty Network: an Overview* (in Spanish), Centro de Investigación de Economía y Sociedad (CIES), *Economía y Sociedad*, 52
<http://www.gestiopolis.com/canales5/eco/consorcio/eys52/archivos/52-microcredito-economia-y-pobreza-en-peru.pdf>

The Microcredit, Gender and Poverty Network was set up in Peru in 2000. It focuses on research and knowledge creation to maximise the impact of microcredit in the country's development and to benefit particularly the most vulnerable sectors, namely women and the poorest. This article provides an overview of the situation in Peru, offers policy recommendations, and proposes new areas of research. Besides the need to introduce innovative microfinance products that are more efficient and sustainable, it argues that microcredit in itself does not empower women. Monitoring of who actually uses and administers the loans is crucial. Redistribution of property to women is also recommended as a useful way to increase women's access to credit and decision-making power in the household. New areas of engagement are proposed, including enhancing information provision to the electorate and ensuring that academics and practitioners are part of the process of policy discussion. Original title in Spanish: Red de microcredito, genero y pobreza: una vision de conjunto.

Underwood, T. (2006) *Women and microlending in Western Europe*, European Microfinance Network (EMN) http://ns30464.ovh.net/~rem/data/File/WP2_WomenMicrolending_in_W._Europe.pdf

In June 2005, the European Microfinance Network (EMN) launched a survey of Western European microlenders which aimed to generate an accurate picture of microlending in Western Europe between 2002-04 and examine possible barriers affecting women's participation in microloan programmes. The data indicated that over the period 2002-04 the number of microloans made to women increased by 30 percent and the total value of microloans rose by 34 percent; in 2004, the average value of loans disbursed to women (7,670 euros) was slightly higher than the value of loans disbursed to men (7,130). Yet the survey results suggest that despite microlending's great potential to meet women's financing needs, a number of factors are resulting in women's lower participation levels. For example, women's status and position in society and in the family may affect their interest in entrepreneurship and make women more risk averse than men and therefore less likely to set up a business. In addition 75 percent of microlenders did not have a policy to guide their work with women, 65 percent did not have tailored loan products, and 55 percent did not provide access to specialised training and technical assistance or access to specialised staff.

2.2 Globalisation, trade liberalisation and the 'feminisation of labour'

BRIDGE (2006) *Gender and Trade Cutting Edge Pack*, BRIDGE/IDS, Brighton

http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/reports_gend_CEP.html#trade

(Available in English, Chinese, Spanish and French)

Trade liberalisation has generated new employment opportunities for women – in non-traditional agriculture such as cut flowers, in clothing and textiles, in the electronics-oriented Export Processing Zones (EPZs), and in the service sectors. Paid employment can improve women's autonomy as well as their economic and social status. It can also shift power relations between women and men, including at the household level, and can improve women's well-being, negotiating power and overall status. Despite the advantages, however, women tend to have less skilled jobs than men, their wages are generally lower than men's, and they often work in unhealthy and/or exploitative conditions. This pack analyses the different impacts of trade liberalisation on women and men and considers how development practitioners can better promote gender equality and support women's access to the benefits of trade. The pack is a concise and practical resource, consisting of an Overview Report, a Supporting Resources Collection providing summaries of key texts, case studies, tools and manuals, and networking and contact details, and an issue of the *Gender and Development In Brief* bulletin.

Brown, F and Domínguez, L. (2007) *Determinants of Wage Differentials in the Maquila Industry in Mexico: A Gender Perspective*, The International Working Group on Gender, Macroeconomics and International Economics (GEM-IWG) <http://www.econ.utah.edu/genmac/WP/07-6.pdf>

In 2007, the off-shore garment industry located in the Mexico-United States border region, commonly referred to as the maquila industry, accounted for one third of all employment in the manufacturing sector in Mexico. But although the industry is booming, women and men do not enjoy the employment opportunities this presents equally. This study finds that women tend to occupy the lowest wage categories, being mainly employed on the production line, while men appear in the upper levels in white collar administrative and management positions. In terms of wages within different types of labour categories, women get paid less than men and the gap is wider in administrative positions than on the assembly line. The paper notes that 42.2 percent of the wage gap in the managerial and administrative group could not be explained by differences in education, training or experience between women and men and therefore gender discrimination may be in operation. The document highlights the need for further research on these issues, particularly in relation to gender pay gaps in different industries in Mexico.

Chen, M., Vanek, J., Lund, F., Heintz, J., Jhabvala, R. and Bonner, C. (2005) *Progress of the World's Women 2005: Women, Work and Poverty*, United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)

http://www.unifem.org/attachments/products/PoWW2005_eng.pdf

Unless governments and policymakers pay more attention to employment and its links to poverty, the hope for gender equality will flounder on the reality of women's growing economic insecurity. This is one of the core messages of this report, which argues that while globalisation has brought new opportunities for many workers, it has deepened insecurity and poverty for many others, including women, who have neither the skills needed to compete in global markets nor the means to acquire them. Women workers are concentrated in precarious forms of informal employment where earnings are the most unreliable and the most meagre. But change is possible: this report shows how and where change has happened, and describes how governments, the United Nations and NGO partners, and socially responsible corporations can work together to ensure that informal workers, especially women, receive an equitable return for their labour.

To make this happen, four priority steps are identified:

- Organising women informal workers to obtain legal and social protection
- Improving access to credit and financial markets among self-employed workers and mobilising demands for their products and services
- Designing and implementing appropriate policies in support of informal workers – this requires that informal workers are visible and that their work is valued
- Strengthening strategies to transform the structures that perpetuate gender inequalities.

Elson, D. (1999) 'Labour Markets as Gendered Institutions: Equality, Efficiency and Empowerment Issues' *World Development* 27:3, 611-627

Economists have tended to approach labour markets as neutral arenas in which buyers and sellers interact. This paper argues, by contrast, that markets are gendered institutions which operate at the intersection of the productive and reproductive economies - that is, as markets structured by gendered practices, perceptions, norms and networks. For example, there are social stereotypes which associate masculinity with having authority over others in the work place, or which define what is "men's work" and what is "women's work". These formal and informal rules both reflect and reinforce existing problems of gender domination and subordination. This is because most labour market institutions are constructed such that the burdens of the reproductive economy - the unpaid caring activities - are borne largely by women.

Although the gender gap in labour force participation has been diminishing in many parts of the world, this often results in women enduring a longer working day than their male counterparts. Moreover, being paid does not necessarily entail women retaining the majority of their income, as this is often handed over to other family members. Labour market participation may itself involve additional costs - transport, clothing, accommodation - which may limit a woman's ability to meet her own needs, even if she is able to retain control over her pay. To address these multiple inequalities faced by women in labour markets there is a need for a transformatory employment policy which helps to change people's perceptions of what is possible, beneficial and fair; fosters cooperative action; and strengthens women's bargaining power in the work place.

Available in hardcopy and electronically by subscription to World Development. USA & Canada: usinfo-f@elsevier.com, Europe, Middle East & Africa: nlinfo-f@elsevier.nl, Latin America: elsevier@campus.com.br. Alternatively hard copies are available from the British Library of Development Studies (BLDS) which offers a document delivery and inter-library loan service, see: <http://blds.ids.ac.uk/docdel.html>

Fontana, M., Joeques, S. and Masika, R. (1998) 'Global Trade Expansion and Liberalisation: Gender Issues and Impacts', *BRIDGE Report 42*, BRIDGE/Institute of Development Studies (IDS), Brighton
<http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/reports/re42c.pdf>

Do women work more or less when countries trade more? Do trade expansion and economic liberalisation affect women and men in different ways? Case studies from Ghana, Uganda, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Jamaica are used in this report to illustrate some of the gender dimensions of trade liberalisation. Present evidence suggests that, under certain conditions, export expansion can benefit certain groups of younger, more educated women. However, in general, the rights of women workers to fair terms and conditions of employment need protection. This report argues that gender analysis is important for understanding trading opportunities, and that benefits of trade expansion are different for women and men. Gender discrimination in the labour market, and access to and control over

land, needs to be tackled to reduce women's risk of losing out in the context of increasing trade liberalisation.

Grown, C., Elson, D. and Çagatay, N. (eds.) (2000) World Development Special Issue: Growth, Trade, finance and Gender Inequality, *World Development*, 28, 7

This special issue of the World Development journal is part of a larger project aiming to explore new ways of engendering macroeconomic and international trade models both theoretically and empirically. For example, Seguino's article uses empirical analysis to show that Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth is positively related to gender wage inequality in contrast to recent work which suggests that income inequality slows growth. Elson and Çagatay's article explores ways of ensuring that macro-economic policies have social and gender justice as their central goal. Although some of the papers are very technical, others are for a more general audience. The articles are divided into four categories: 1. growth and trade liberalisation 2. financial liberalisation 3. supply response and household well-being in gender-segregated low-income economies, and 4. bringing gender analysis into economic policy institutions. Available in hardcopy and electronically (by subscription to World Development) USA & Canada: usinfo-f@elsevier.com; Europe, Middle East & Africa: nlinfo-f@elsevier.nl; Latin America: elsevier@campus.com.br

Seguino, S. (2006) *Gender inequality in a Globalizing World*, 06-14 Working paper series, International Working Group on Gender, Macroeconomics and International Economics (GEM-IWG) <http://www.econ.utah.edu/genmac/WP/06-14.pdf>

How far have development strategies aimed at enabling poor countries to compete in global trade markets boosted well-being and gender equality? With a focus on rapidly developing East Asian countries, this paper argues that while Asian growth has been rapid, it has not produced greater gender equality. The paper notes that initial rapid growth in Taiwan and South Korea was largely sustained because of low wages paid to the women who constituted the majority of export industry workers. Since the 1990s increased competition from other low-wage producers has driven women's wages even lower and led to the growth of informal, unregulated work arrangements. As a consequence, their bargaining power in the workplace is reduced, particularly with regard to demanding equal wages with men and negotiating better conditions of work such as shorter hours and paid maternity leave. The paper argues that gender-equitable macroeconomic and development policies are therefore required, with an emphasis on gender-sensitive public sector spending. For example, public expenditure on infrastructure, such as clean water and roads, can reduce women's unpaid care burden.

Sen, G. (1999) *Gendered Labour Markets and Globalisation in Asia*, UNCTAD/UNDP

<http://www.unctad.org/en/docs/poedmm133.en.pdf>

This report - presented at an International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development conference - identifies increasing female labour as a core feature of the transformation of Asian labour markets under economic globalisation processes. Growth in export-production in particular, but also in services and agriculture, has led to a significant number of young (often unmarried) women entering the labour force. But under what conditions do women participate? Asian women are concentrated in a narrow range of lower-status low-pay occupations, and suffer from double or triple work burdens. Policy solutions should include the signing of regulatory instruments in the region such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (1979) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention on Home Work (1996).

United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) (2006) *The Story behind the Numbers: Women and Employment in Central and Eastern Europe and the Western Commonwealth of Independent States, Slovak Republic*

[http://www.forumwhore.com/proxy/cgi-](http://www.forumwhore.com/proxy/cgi-bin/nphproxy.cgi/000000A/http/www.unifem.org/attachments/products/StoryBehindTheNumbers_eng.pdf)

[bin/nphproxy.cgi/000000A/http/www.unifem.org/attachments/products/StoryBehindTheNumbers_eng.pdf](http://www.unifem.org/attachments/products/StoryBehindTheNumbers_eng.pdf)
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[proxy.cgi/000000A/http/www.unifem.org/attachments/products/StoryBehindTheNumbers_overview_eng.pdf](http://www.unifem.org/attachments/products/StoryBehindTheNumbers_overview_eng.pdf)
(overview)

Following the collapse of state socialist regimes, there have been radical changes in labour markets in Central and Eastern Europe and the Western Commonwealth of Independent States (CEE/CIS). Already high levels of job segmentation continue: women are increasingly crowded into underpaid public sector jobs while men are given better paid, higher status opportunities. Women are also entering the informal economy in growing numbers, where many receive minimum wages in unstable jobs with no access to benefits. To improve the labour-market situation of women in the CEE/CIS region, this report recommends several policy measures. One recommendation is to improve access to affordable childcare, along with wider availability of flexible work schedule arrangements that would allow women to stay in formal employment and avoid seeking poorly paid and unreliable jobs in the informal economy. The length, conditions and targeting of parental leave should also be reconsidered in order to create more equitable work conditions and allow parents to better balance work and family obligations. To help set standards for equal pay for comparable work, transparent job evaluation and wage setting mechanisms are essential.

Wichterich, C. (2007) *Fair and unfair competition: the EU-China trade race and its gender implications*, Women in Development Europe, Belgium

<http://62.149.193.10/wide/download/EU-China07.pdf?id=291>

To what extent has China's rapid transformation from a state-led to a market-oriented economy been achieved at the price of a growing gender gap in wages and promotional opportunities? This paper explores the gender implications of the Chinese trade race and the European Union's (EU) push for further rapid trade liberalisation. The paper argues that despite Chinese policies designed to align women and men's position in state-owned industries prior to the 1990s, the reality fell short of the ideal, with women also expected to take on the burden of care work. With economic transformation since the 1990s, these gender inequalities have been deepened, with women placed in the lowest paid, least secure jobs in industries manufacturing for global markets. On the other hand, some of the 'socialist achievements' with regard to gender equality in the economy have continued. For example, the rate of female economic activity is still higher in China than in many European countries. Moreover, there are more women in China employed in traditionally male-dominated professions than in most western countries. While not losing sight of these positive trends, the paper calls for greater recognition of, and research into, the adverse social, gender and environmental effects of rapid liberalisation and investment by European companies in China.

2.2.1 Labour rights and standards

ADEIM-Simbiosis, Artemisa, Cattrachas, Criola, IGLHRC, Red Nosotras LBT (2006) "*Unnatural*", "*Unsuitable*", *Unemployed! Lesbians and Workplace Discrimination in Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Honduras and Mexico*, International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC)

http://www.siyanda.org/docs/various_lesbians_workplace.pdf

This report analyses discrimination against lesbians in the job market, based on statistics and testimonials from Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico and Honduras. It seeks to make explicit the links between discrimination in the workplace and the ability of lesbian women to secure the basic elements of survival - food, housing, education and medical care - for themselves and their families. Discrimination based on gender and sexual orientation permeates the lives of lesbians and significantly undermines their economic security. It exacerbates the sexism that lesbians already experience as women, and the racism faced by people of indigenous or African descent or as members of other racially - or ethnically - marginalised groups. Even worse, it compromises their ability to obtain support from those to whom most people turn first when in financial need: their families and communities.

This report calls on the governments of Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Honduras and Mexico to:

- Enforce the provisions concerning human rights, women's rights and workers' rights contained in national and international laws and treaties that they have ratified

- Implement affirmative action measures to facilitate access to fair employment opportunities for young lesbians and lesbians over the age of 40, particularly those of African, indigenous and other ethnic groups in socially disadvantageous circumstances
- Implement the mechanisms necessary to record discrimination complaints and protect the right to effective remedy of those who have been the object of discrimination
- Promote educational campaigns targeting the general population to raise awareness about discrimination based on orientation/sexual preference and gender identity and its expression as a social problem.

Ascoly, N., and Finney, C. (eds.) (2005) *Made by Women: Gender, the Global Garment Industry, and the Movement for Women's Workers Rights*, Clean Clothes Campaign

http://www.cleanclothes.org/ftp/made_by_women.pdf

Gender influences labour practices in countless ways - ideas about the jobs women can do, how they should do them, their wages, their relationship to employers and the law. This publication aims to provide a clear understanding of the key role that gender plays in shaping the issues that labour rights activists in the garment industry are tackling. When the Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC) came onto the scene in Europe in the early 1990s, one of the key goals was to make people aware of the fact that almost universally it was women who were making our clothes - and under bad conditions. Clean Clothes Campaigners wanted the public to know that exploited labour in these industries often has a female face, and that if something was going to be done about their situation, that fact could not be ignored. Still today, more than a decade later, this challenge remains. This document is part of CCC efforts to document examples of initiatives that have recognised the gendered nature of the processes which underpin the current garment and sports shoe industries. Chapters address issues such as gender and labour mobility in the global garment industry, the impact of gender roles in garment workers' health, and the shifting patterns of women's work. Profiles are also given of women who are actively campaigning for the rights of women workers, as well as examples of organisations working to promote better lives for women workers, such as the Chinese Working Women Network and the Committee for Asian Women.

Association for Women's Rights in Development's (AWID) webpage: Young women in the new world of work: good jobs for our futures <http://www.awid.org/work/>

Because of the increasingly global nature of manufacture and trade and the restructuring of national economies, the work undertaken by young women today is decidedly different from that of the previous generation. Young women work as wage earners in factories, as salaried professionals in offices, as part-time workers in the formal economy, and selling goods and services in the informal economy. But in the context of a globalised economy, what makes a job "good"? Is the most important element job security, decent or survival wages, or employment-related insurance schemes and good working conditions? How can we structure work so that it is both personally rewarding and beneficial to our societies? And what do

we need to do to ensure that all young women have access to decent work? This topic was discussed on the Association for Women's Rights in Development's (AWID) Young Women and Leadership email list in 2004. This webpage is a comprehensive database about women and work, including relevant ILO conventions and documents. It also includes a primer on the implications of new trends relating to women's work, a summary of the email discussion, and links to workers' rights campaigns, women worker organisations, activism strategies and research tools.

Gothoskar, S. (2005) *New Initiatives in Organizing Strategy in the Informal Economy*, Committee for Asian Women (CAW)

<http://www.wiego.org/publications/Gothoskar%20%20New%20initiatives%20in%20organizing%20strategy%20in%20the%20informal%20economy%20INDIA.pdf>

The unpaid work that women do in the household is often overlooked and invisible, regarded as the natural domain of women and therefore not respected in the same way as waged work done outside of the home. This paper argues that this low regard for unpaid domestic work translates to the paid domestic labour sector, a sector that is often forgotten but where wages are pitifully low and conditions are often poor. Those undertaking such work are likely to be extremely poor, older women who are unable to find other types of work because of lack of education or because new service and entertainment industries employ mainly young women. The paper provides background information on the role of women in the informal sector, then goes on to explore the situation of domestic workers in India. It then discusses the work of various organisations working with domestic workers as well as providing insights into the activities of a thriving domestic workers' organisation in Pune, India. The paper concludes by asking if there is a replicable model of domestic workers' organisation around rights and if such an organisation should work for or with domestic workers.

Harilal, K.N., Kanji, N., Jeyaranjan, J., Eapen, M. and Swaminathan, P. (2006) *Power in Global Value Chains: Implications for Employment and Livelihoods in the Cashew Nut Industry in India*, Summary Report, International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)

<http://www.iied.org/pubs/pdf/full/14514IIED.pdf>

Employers take advantage of women's cheaper labour to lower their costs, and while employment for women workers is essential, it still does not pay enough to raise households out of poverty. This report explores the impacts of an expanding cashew nut market on the livelihoods of women workers in India. It is based on fieldwork in Kerala and Tamil Nadu in South India, and on interviews with cashew importers, roasters, salters and retailers in the United Kingdom. The paper argues that national level action to improve labour standards should not restrict the livelihood opportunities of the poorest workers by raising labour costs to a point where competitiveness is reduced and jobs may be lost. The implementation of labour standards will only help workers if they are accompanied by policies which compel firms in the North to address the impact of their purchasing practices on these standards. Otherwise the costs of

meeting such standards will be placed on firms less able to bear them - which could result in loss of workers' job, or the deterioration of firms.

Human Rights Watch (2007) *Bottom of the Ladder: Exploitation and Abuse of Girl Domestic Workers in Guinea* Volume 19, No.8 (A) (English and French)

<http://hrw.org/reports/2007/guinea0607/> (English)

<http://hrw.org/french/docs/2007/06/15/guinea16153.htm> (French)

Worldwide, domestic work is the largest employment category for children – especially girls. While other children in the family attend school, these girls are often denied an education. Many of them work up to 18 hours a day. They may also suffer beatings and sexual harassment or abuse. This report explores the situation of girl domestic workers in Guinea, although the situation is similar across West Africa. The report argues that the new Guinean government, established in March 2007, should establish a child protection system that allows for systematic monitoring of the well-being of children without parental care, particularly girl domestic workers. The government should also take measures to sensitise judicial staff to the situation of child domestic workers, improve access to the justice system for ordinary people, and ensure that crimes against children – such as exploitation and sexual and physical violence – be prosecuted. It is also recommended that the new Guinean government should specifically target girl domestic workers when devising programmes to promote access to education and apprenticeships.

International Labour Organization (ILO) (2007) *Equality at Work: Tackling the Challenges* ILO, Geneva

http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---webdev/documents/publication/wcms_082607.pdf (English)

http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---webdev/documents/publication/wcms_082608.pdf (French)

http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---webdev/documents/publication/wcms_082609.pdf (Spanish)

Also available in German, Arabic, Chinese and Russian. To order please contact pubvente@ilo.org.

In 1998, the International Labour Organization's (ILO) Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work was adopted – an expression of commitment by governments, employers' and workers' organisations to uphold basic human values vital to our social and economic lives, including the elimination of discrimination in the workplace. This is the second Global Report on discrimination under the follow-up to the Declaration. The report examines emerging issues in patterns of workplace discrimination, presents recent policy responses, and outlines the ILO's achievements to date and the continuing challenges it faces. Despite considerable progress in women's educational achievements, the unequal burden of family responsibilities continues to place women at a disadvantage in finding full-time employment. Better access to childcare is therefore essential, including for workers in the informal sector.

In India, for example, mobile crèches on construction sites have been created to cater for the children of migrant construction workers. Policies have also been introduced in various countries to encourage fathers to take care-related leave. In Iceland, for example, since the 2001 law reform, no distinction is made between paternity and maternity leave, but a nine-month paid leave (at 80 percent of salary) after childbirth is granted instead. This leave is split into three equal parts between the mother, the father (whose share is non-transferable) and the couple. Despite positive examples such as these, continuing barriers to equality at work remain. These include weak law enforcement, insufficient resources for bodies set up to fight discrimination, and programmes that are too narrow in scope and too short in duration.

International Labour Organization (ILO) Cambodia (2006) *Cambodia: Women and Work in the Garment Industry*, ILO

[http://www.betterfactories.org/content/documents/1/Women%20and%20Work%20in%20the%20Garment%20Industry%20\(en\).pdf](http://www.betterfactories.org/content/documents/1/Women%20and%20Work%20in%20the%20Garment%20Industry%20(en).pdf)

Women make up over 90 percent of approximately 290,000 garment workers in Cambodia. Based on a survey of 981 female garment workers and 80 human resource and administrative personnel, this study explores attitudes and practices around health and nutrition, breast feeding and childcare, personal security, harassment, workplace relations, and conflict resolution. Findings show that fainting and feeling dizzy are common causes of sick leave. This is related to not eating enough and being affected by chemicals and cloth debris. Women workers also spoke of sexual harassment and violence on the way to work. Over nine percent of workers surveyed stated that they or a close personal friend had been attacked and raped in roads near the factories in the previous year. 80 percent of women workers surveyed said they would like facilities for breastfeeding. To address these issues, the report recommends that workers be provided with sufficient breaks so that they can eat properly; receive protective clothing for working close to chemicals; have access to nursing rooms and breast feeding breaks; and be provided with transportation when having to work overtime after dark.

Khan, N. (2005) *Perfect Crimes: Sexual Harassment at the Workplace in Zimbabwe*, Child and Law Foundation, Harare

For almost a decade, women in Zimbabwe have worked to gain rights in the workplace and to tackle, in particular, the issue of sexual harassment. This report charts the processes involved and the methodologies used in this struggle. Work on these issues began at a time when Zimbabwean women were beginning to respond to and condemn other aspects of gender-based violence, but progress in the area of sexual harassment was slow and uncertain. At that time, there was no systematic data to provide validity to the notion of the existence of this phenomenon. There was mostly anecdotal data of women losing their jobs, being transferred, or suffering further victimisation for rejecting sexual overtures from bosses or colleagues. Since then much progress has been made. In terms of legislation, sexual harassment is now listed as an 'unfair labour practice' in Section 8 of the Labour Act.

Available from Child and Law Foundation, 6 Ross Avenue, Belgravia, Harare, Zimbabwe. Tel: 263-4-705587. Email: feszim3@africaonline.co.zw

Mather, C. (2004) *Garment Industry Supply Chains: a Resource for Worker Education and Solidarity, Women Working Worldwide*

http://www.women-ww.org/pdfs/www_education_pack.pdf

How can sub-contracted garment workers claim their legal rights in a context of increasing globalisation where complex supply chains make it difficult to trace employers and enforce them to fulfil their legal responsibilities? Multinational companies are under increasing pressure to be competitive as more and more countries, particularly in Asia, build manufacturing capacity and pay low wages to (often female) workers, thus keeping prices low. In this climate, many companies are removing costly overheads for factory buildings and supervisory staff by employing women to manufacture garments and other goods in their own homes or villages. These women usually lack formal contracts, meaning that employers can largely avoid paying adequate wages or maternity and sick pay. This pack aims to assist sub-contracted garment workers to better understand the global supply chains they are part of and use this knowledge for organising to defend their rights.

Mehrotra, S. and Biggeri, M. (2002) 'Social Protection in the Informal Economy: Home-based Women Workers and Outsourced Manufacturing in Asia', *Innocenti Working Papers No. 97*, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Innocenti Research Centre, Florence, Italy

<http://www.unicef-icdc.org/publications/pdf/iwp97.pdf>

There has been an increasing 'informalisation' of the labour force in developing countries over the past few decades. This means that growing numbers of workers are engaged in unregulated, uncontracted work which is often casual or temporary. Simultaneously there has been greater participation of women in the labour market. One aspect of this dual phenomena is the growth of subcontracted home based work (where workers work indirectly for a factory through an intermediary employer). This paper draws on surveys carried out in five Asian countries – two low-income (India, Pakistan) and three middle-income (Indonesia, Thailand, Philippines) – where home-based work is widespread. On the one hand, home-based work provides a source of income for poor workers, and on the other, it is a potential source of exploitation as firms attempt to contain costs, for example by paying low wages. This paper examines the social protection needs of these women workers. It advocates for the registration of home-based workers – a recommendation which is consistent with the ILO Recommendation on Home Based Work. Welfare funds are also proposed, similar to those already in place for informal workers in Kerala state, India, and for plantation workers in the Philippines. These funds should provide specific health benefits related to the nature of the home-based work including maternity benefits, life insurance and childcare facilities.

Kabeer, N. (2004) "Globalisation, Labor Standards and Women's Rights: Dilemmas of Collective (In)action in an Interdependent World", *Feminist Economics*, 10.1:3-35

<http://www.gapresearch.org/production/globlabourwomen.pdf>

In the context of trade liberalisation and the deregulation of the labour market, there has been an emergence of a northern-based alliance demanding that certain minimum labour standards be observed by all multinationals. This paper questions the view that globally enforced labour standards are in the interests of workers everywhere. It argues that advocacy for global labour standards has often been based on a characterisation of export-production in the 'Third World' as 'sweatshops', which, based on the author's research in Bangladesh, is a misrepresentation. Interviews carried out with women workers in Bangladesh show that the violations they articulate are not adequately captured by the demands for social clauses and global labour standards.

For instance, the issue of wages crop up frequently in women workers' accounts but not necessarily in relation to a demand for minimum wages. For most Bangladeshi women who wish to work, they choose the garment sector because of the higher wages relative to most other jobs available to women. The major source of grievances is not the amount paid but the irregularity of payments.

Pearson, R. and Seyfang, G. (2001) *New Hope or False Dawn? Voluntary Codes of Conduct, Labour Regulation and Social Policy in a Globalising World*, SAGE Publications: *Global Social Policy*: 1,1, September 2001

The notion that international corporations have a responsibility towards social development and policy is relatively new, and reflects the extended global reach of transnational corporations. This paper analyses the spread of voluntary corporate codes of conduct, defined as self-regulatory measures increasingly adopted by firms as a response to concerns about working conditions in global production chains. It considers their origins, their potentials and weaknesses, and finally their implications for the restructuring of social policy. The paper argues that the processes through which codes of conduct have been developed has brought positive impacts for previously excluded groups such as women export workers, home workers, and casual workers, by giving them a voice in social policy and labour regulation debates and a role in monitoring and evaluation. This is important not just symbolically but also in terms of the contents of labour agreements. For example, the active participation of women's groups has led to the inclusion of women's demands concerning sexual harassment, reproductive rights or even appropriate access to toilet facilities. The impact of this ethical turn in business is as yet unclear, however. The challenge lies in creating practical measures to ensure that a sustained improvement in labour standards is delivered in practice.

Copies of this publication can be ordered through Sage Publications:

<http://gsp.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/1/1/49>

Porter, J. (2003) *Women Worker's Rights - Who is Responsible? Gender Perspectives in Worker's Rights in Central America with Reference to Labour Rights Instruments*, One World Action, London

What rights are female workers entitled to and are these rights being adequately protected? To discuss these questions, One World Action (OWA) held a seminar with the Nicaraguan non-governmental organisation (NGO) Movimiento de Mujeres Trabajadoras y Desempleadas "María Elena Cuadra" (MEC, the "María Elena Cuadra" Movement for Working and Unemployed Women). Participants discussed the particular needs of women workers in Central America, the state of current labour rights laws and the extent to which these are gender sensitive, and the strategies that can be used to strengthen women workers' rights. Conclusions and recommendations included:

- Articulate more clearly the ways in which women's needs differ to those of men
- Strengthen the gender dimensions of International Labour Organisation (ILO) codes
- Lobby European Union (EU) governments to link export credits and other support to multinational corporations to guidelines on labour rights, and
- Ensure that future frameworks for corporate social responsibility fully reflect the concerns of women workers.

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Prieto-Carron, M. (2006) *Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in Latin America. Chiquita, Women Banana Workers and Structural Inequalities*, University of Bristol, UK

http://www.siyanda.org/docs/CSR_latin_america_prieto_carron.pdf

How can multilateral companies improve labour conditions for women workers? This paper focuses on the multinational Chiquita, and on its sourcing of bananas from Latin America. Over the last decade, Chiquita has improved its ethical performance through the development of a comprehensive corporate social responsibility (CSR) policy. One important aspect of this policy is its voluntary code of conduct which company-owned plantations and independent producers must implement. With regard to gender inequalities and discrimination, the Chiquita code does address a number of important issues such as forbidding all forms of sexual harassment. However, it makes no reference to promotion of women, nor to maternity rights and childcare. In focus group discussions, Nicaraguan women banana workers reported all kinds of labour rights violations: low remuneration, short contracts, long hours, and obstacles to freedom of association. This paper makes several recommendations. For example, sexual harassment could be addressed by employing more women in supervisory and management roles, by creating opportunities for women to safely report incidents, and by adopting a zero tolerance policy towards perpetrators. Companies could also work creatively with women and men workers to find ways of providing convenient and affordable childcare facilities. Practical measures, such as implementing 'breastfeeding breaks', must be an integral part of any CSR policy.

Turner, J. (2004) *A Gender Perspective on Core Labour Standards in Ethical Trading Initiative Company Supply Chains* http://www.siyanda.org/docs/Core_labour_standards_gender.pdf

To what extent does having core labour standards help to address the specific concerns of women workers - for example, for child care provision, maternity benefits, and safe transport? In 1998, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) adopted the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at work, which is made up of seven ILO conventions which together form the core ILO labour standards. The Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) Base Code is based on the Core ILO Conventions but also includes additional articles on the living wage, health and safety, regular hours, and harsh and inhumane treatment. The also specifically refers to sexual harassment. This briefing paper offers a gender analysis of the core labour standards and the ETI Base Code, and looks at what ETI retailers are doing to address discrimination and issues of concern to women workers. To date the changes are few and in order to have any significant impact on the levels of discrimination against women in the workplace there needs to be a much more concerted effort. Recommendations include:

- Retailers should provide more incentives to suppliers to implement labour rights
- Governments should ratify ILO Conventions such as the Maternity Protection Convention and the Home Work Convention
- Trade Unions should provide leadership training to women trade unionists
- NGOs should support southern women workers' organisations.

2.3 Migration for work

Esim, S. and Smith, M. (eds) (2004) *Gender and Migration in Arab States: The Case of Domestic Workers*, International Labour Organisation (ILO)

http://www.siyanda.org/docs/gender_and_migration_in_arab_states_the_case_of_domestic_workers_040813041046.pdf

Despite the “feminisation” of international migrant labour, much of the work carried out by women migrants, especially domestic work, remains invisible in national statistics and national labour legislation. While having a job might be empowering, women's participation in international migration is no guarantee of a decent wage, good working conditions, social security coverage or labour protection. More attention is needed to the labour situation of the growing number of women migrant workers. This publication presents an International Labour Organisation regional review in addition to four country studies from the Arab States: Bahrain, Kuwait, Lebanon and United Arab Emirates. It reveals practices and patterns that cause vulnerability of migrant women domestic workers and suggests effective alternatives. These include extending labour laws to cover domestic workers, creating a national body that monitors the

treatment of domestic workers, and setting up a database comprising key information for domestic workers in the case of grievances.

García, M. and Paiewonsky, D. (2006) *Gender, Remittances and Development: The Case of Women Migrants From Vicente Noble, Dominican Republic*, United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW)

http://www.un-instraw.org/en/docs/Remittances/Remittances_RD_Eng.pdf

How important is a gender analysis in understanding processes of migration and remittances in development, and in assessing the impacts of remittances on migrants and recipients? This case study of Dominican migration to Spain is one of several conducted by INSTRAW. The study found that women who migrate to Spain often live in difficult conditions, carrying out socially de-valued work. These women remit on average between 25 and 33 percent of their monthly salary, initially to their husbands. However, because the money was not being spent as the women wanted, many started to send money directly to mothers or sisters who had often assumed extra responsibilities for household and child-care duties since the migration. Although women migrants often see a reduction in gender inequalities because of the money they remit, the study found that perceptions about the roles and decision-making capacity of men and women do not change substantially. The study makes a number of policy recommendations to improve the living conditions of migrant workers and maximise the impact that remittances can have for development.

Jolly, S. with Reeves, H. (2005) 'Gender and Migration' *Cutting Edge Pack*, BRIDGE/IDS, Brighton
http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/reports_gend_CEP.html#migration (English, French and Spanish)

Migration can provide a vital source of income for migrant women and their families, and earn them greater autonomy, self-confidence and social status. At the same time, women migrants, especially if they are irregular migrants, can face stigma and discrimination at every stage of the migration cycle. During transit and at their destination, women can be faced with verbal, physical and sexual abuse, poor housing and encampments, sex-segregated labour markets, low wages, long working hours, insecure contracts and precarious legal status. Despite this, while there is increasing recognition that women are also migrants and that the causes and impacts of migration are gendered, attempts to mainstream gender issues into policy are patchy. This *Cutting Edge Pack* argues that if women and men are to benefit from the empowering potential of migration, a shift is needed to a gendered, human rights-based approach to migration. The key elements of such an approach could include immigration and emigration policies that enable women as well as men to take up the opportunities that safe and regular migration offer, and mobilisation around and support for international rights frameworks that offer protection for women migrants to ensure that governments ratify and adhere to these frameworks. This pack is a concise and practical resource consisting of an Overview Report; Supporting Resources Collection (comprised of

summaries of key texts, case studies and tools, and key organisations); and a *Gender and Development In Brief* bulletin.

Sørensen, N.N. (2005) *Migrant Remittances, Development and Gender*, Institute of International Studies-Denmark, DIIS Brief

http://www.diis.dk/graphics/Publications/Briefs2005/nns_migrant_remittances.pdf

Although migration can generate a wide array of positive as well as negative consequences for development, remittances have become the single most emphasised measuring stick for the ties connecting migrants with their societies of origin. Remittances can be both monetary (i.e., money transferred) and social (i.e., the ideas, practices, identities, skills and social capital that flow from the receiving to the sending communities). Remittances can be transferred either within a country in the case of internal migration, or across borders in the case of international migration. This brief aims at contributing a gender perspective to the remittances debate. It recognises the potential positive impact of remittances but criticises approaches that burden migrants, women in particular, with the expectation of sending remittances. It is generally assumed that women send home a larger share of their earnings than men and tend to be better savers. Women are also the largest receivers of remittances, and when in control of remittances are believed to channel financial transfers into better health, nutrition and education for the entire family. Remittances will be affected by the gender and position of the migrant in the family, as well as by gender inequalities in the labour market. However, the paper argues that the complex ways in which gender affects remittances is not fully understood and needs further research.

United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women (UNDAW) – Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2005) *World Survey on the Role of Women in Development. Women and International Migration*, United Nations

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/Review/documents/press-releases/WorldSurvey-Women&Migration.pdf>

What opportunities are there for empowering migrant women? What are the challenges and vulnerabilities women face in the context of migration? This report explores these questions in relation to all types of international migration, both legally authorised and irregular, including movements for family reunification and family formation, labour migration, refugee movements and human trafficking. The report sets out recommendations aimed at improving the situation of migrant, refugee and trafficked women. Recommendations include:

- ratifying and implementing all international legal instruments that promote and protect the rights of migrating women and girls
- facilitating and reducing the cost of remittance transfers

- developing policies that enhance migrant, refugee and trafficked women's employment opportunities, access to safe housing, education, language training in the host country, healthcare and other services
- improving the access of migrant women, including refugee women and displaced girls, to primary and reproductive healthcare services, including programmes to address sexual and gender-based violence, trauma resulting from flight and conflict, and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, and
- giving attention to the role of migrant women, including refugee and displaced women, in the reconstruction and development of post-conflict societies and ensuring their full participation in decision-making processes.

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) (2006) *State of world population 2006: a passage to hope; women and international migration*, UNFPA, New York

http://www.unfpa.org/swp/2006/pdf/en_sowp06.pdf

Produced in tandem with the United Nations High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, this report emphasises the positive impacts that women migrants have had on reducing poverty through sending remittances. At the same time it warns that millions of female migrants face hazards in the form of trafficking and other types of exploitation. It critiques weak multilateral cooperation and the failure to establish, implement and enforce policies and measures designed to protect migrant women from exploitation and abuse. Issues covered in the report include: remittances and development; refugees and asylum seekers; impacts on receiving countries; the exploitation of domestic workers; repatriation, integration and resettlement; and protecting the human rights of migrants.

3. Tackling the 'double burden'

Budlender, D. (2004) *Why should we care about Unpaid Care Work?* United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), New York <http://www.sarpn.org.za/documents/d0000919/index.php>

The failure of macroeconomic policies to acknowledge unpaid care work – such as housework, cooking, and caring for children, the elderly and sick people – has a significant impact on women's lives. This guidebook, written for non-economists and non-statisticians, focuses on the issue of unpaid care work in Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean States, where the problem has been exacerbated by HIV/AIDS and cuts in the health sector. It discusses the links between unpaid care work and poverty, and provides information on how to influence macroeconomic and trade policy-making, how to collect and analyse statistics on unpaid care work, and how and why to include unpaid care work in economic policy-making. The final section outlines possibilities for advocacy work and provides examples. One example is an initiative by the Korean Ministry for Women's Affairs which is pushing for insurance for full-time housewives, calculated on the basis of the value of their household labour. The initiative also advocates

for family friendly policies in the areas of family support and child care, and for the sharing of marital assets in cases of divorce.

Elson, D. (1999) *Gender-neutral, Gender-blind, or Gender-sensitive Budgets? Changing the Conceptual Framework to Include Women's Empowerment and the Economy of Care*, Commonwealth Secretariat

<http://www.undp.org/> (search for the document in the search engine on the homepage)

Budgets are often assumed to be gender-neutral, whereas in reality they tend to be gender blind – failing to take into account the fact that men and women have different roles, responsibilities and resources in society. This failure leads to further discrimination against and disempowerment of women. One of the major failures of budgets is their neglect of the unpaid 'care economy'. This paper makes recommendations to ensure that the unpaid care work so often absorbed by women and girls is measured, valued and included in the budget. It notes that current economic models are based on the unit of the household, which is seen as a consumer of goods and public services rather than as a producer of valuable inputs and resources. Women's contribution to the economy is largely in this hidden area of production which includes care work, voluntary or civil society activity, subsistence production and work in the informal sector. The invisibility of this activity means not only that it is underestimated or inaccurately measured, but also that it is excluded from Gross National Product (GNP) and usually ignored when making policy decisions.

It is recommended that:

- Parallel budget or 'satellite accounts' be set up to measure and quantify the value of unpaid output in the care economy. These would view caring labour in terms of market price and would make the division of labour which underpins this more explicit. It would also contribute to viewing sustainability in terms of sustaining society as well as the economy
- Investment is made in the care economy – for example through greater provision of free public services such as health care and education
- Gender-disaggregated data is collected of all economic activity and set out in a 'Social Accounting Matrix'. This would give a better picture of how and why women's economic activity often goes unmeasured and under-valued. Data should be collected on variations in income, expenditure, and government spending within and between households and businesses, and within government committees and departments.

Folbre, N. (2006) *Measuring Care: Gender, Empowerment, and the Care Economy*, Journal of Human Development, 7:2, Routledge

The Human Development Report Office has used both the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) and the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) as a means of monitoring international progress in the development of women's capabilities. This paper makes a case for the development of additional indices

focused on burdens of financial and temporal responsibility for the care of dependents. It argues that we need better measures of the inputs into care, rather than merely capturing some of the outputs of care in terms of improved health and education in the Human Development Index.

For example, as an alternative to measures of per-capita income (household income divided by the number of family members), surveys could measure individual income (earned income plus income from property plus transfers from others) minus taxes paid to the government, minus transfers for the care of dependents. This measure could be used to develop a better measure of individual poverty than current measures, which are typically based on household rather than individual income. Another measure could be individual disposable time - the amount of time 'left over' for an individual after they have fulfilled responsibilities for paid and unpaid work. This measure could be constructed from existing time-use surveys by summing leisure time and personal care (including sleep) time. However, it is important to note that much of the time that women report as leisure is accompanied by child care constraints; this time needs to be adjusted or 'discounted'. A Gender Care Empowerment Index is also suggested - an equally-weighted sum of men's proportion of direct unpaid care hours relative to women's direct unpaid care hours, and men's proportional representation in paid care work occupations relative to women's representation.

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Hard copies are also available from the British Library of Development Studies (BLDS) which offers a document delivery and inter-library loan service. For more information, see:

<http://blids.ids.ac.uk/docdel.html>.

Kabeer, N. (2007) 'Marriage, Motherhood and Masculinity in the Global Economy: Reconfiguration of Personal and Economic Life', *IDS Working Paper 290*, Institute of Development Studies

<http://www.ids.ac.uk/ids/bookshop/wp/wp290.pdf>

The different processes associated with globalisation have led to rising rates of paid work by women often in contexts where male employment is stagnant or declining. This paper explores how women and men are dealing with this feminisation of labour markets in the face of the widespread prevalence of male breadwinner ideologies and the apparent threat to male authority represented by women's earnings. Responses have varied across the world but there appears to be a remarkable resistance to changes in the domestic division of unpaid work within the household and a continuing failure on the part of policymakers to provide support for women's care responsibilities, despite the growing importance of their breadwinning roles. Many of the services previously provided on an unpaid basis are being transferred to the paid economy but most working women continue to bear a disproportionate burden of domestic responsibility. At the same time there is evidence that women may be using their newly acquired earning power to challenge the injustice of the double work burden.

Razavi, S. (2007) *The Political and Social Economy of Care in a Development Context: Conceptual Issues, Research Questions and Policy Options*, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD)

[http://www.unrisd.org/80256B3C005BCCF9/httpNetITFramePDF?ReadForm&parentunid=2DBE6A93350A7783C12573240036D5A0&parentdoctype=paper&netitpath=80256B3C005BCCF9/\(httpAuxPages\)/2DBE6A93350A7783C12573240036D5A0/\\$file/Razavi-paper.pdf](http://www.unrisd.org/80256B3C005BCCF9/httpNetITFramePDF?ReadForm&parentunid=2DBE6A93350A7783C12573240036D5A0&parentdoctype=paper&netitpath=80256B3C005BCCF9/(httpAuxPages)/2DBE6A93350A7783C12573240036D5A0/$file/Razavi-paper.pdf)

Women's massive entry into the paid work force has squeezed the time previously allocated to the unpaid care of family and friends. In many developing countries where public health services have been severely weakened during the decades of market reform, much of the care burden has fallen back on women and girls. In more developed economies, paid care services have become a growing sector of the economy as a result of women's increasing participation in the paid labour force. These services, in turn, employ many women - particularly those from disadvantaged racial and ethnic groups. In this context, the quality of care and the pay and working conditions of carers have become contested policy issues. Paid care services have been susceptible to market pressures that force down both the quality of services and pay - adversely affecting both care workers and the recipients of care.

This paper argues that there is an urgent need for an economic strategy for care work to ensure that standards do not deteriorate further and care workers do not fall more behind other workers in pay and working conditions. Section one analyses the contribution of feminist economics to the conceptualisation, measurement and valuation of the unpaid care economy. In Section two, the report analyses welfare and care regimes, drawing on sociological and social policy literature. It considers possible policy interventions: cash payments in the form of caregivers' allowance or citizen's wage; taxation allowances; different types of paid and unpaid leave from employment; and social security credits and social services. The final section explores the implications of the current emphasis on 'investing in children' for gender equality and the provision of quality care.

3.1 Towards an equitable distribution of care between women and men

Barker, G. (2006) 'Men's Participation as Fathers in Latin America and the Caribbean: Critical Review of the Literature and Policy Options', in I. Bannon and M. Correia (eds), *The Other Half of Gender: Men's Issues in Development*, The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank

<http://www> -

wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2006/06/20/000090341_20060620141950/Rendered/PDF/365000Other0ha101OFFICIAL0USE0ONLY1.pdf

Whether starting from a perspective of gender equity, child well-being, or men's self-interest, more engaged fatherhood is likely to bring positive results. Yet efforts in Latin America and the Caribbean to encourage men's involvement as fathers have been hindered by numerous assumptions. Many of the policy and programme initiatives that have emerged in the region have been framed around idealised

views of what being a father means – views that may not contribute to promoting family or child well-being or gender equity. Moreover, only a handful of these initiatives have grown out of a concern for gender equity, that is, of engaging men in child care, child support, and domestic chores. These assumptions about men make it difficult to design effective programmes and policies to encourage fathers' participation. It is important that we listen to the voices of fathers, recognise their own needs and interests, and make it clear how men themselves will benefit when they are actively engaged as fathers. This chapter provides an overview of men's participation as fathers in Latin America and the Caribbean, concluding with programme, policy, and research considerations for governments and development agencies. It recommends that new policies include men in early child development initiatives and maternal-child health initiatives, and try to recruit men as care givers. Future research should focus not only on traditional, married fathers but also on alternative situations, such as families in which men are surrogate fathers or stepfathers and families in which fathers live apart from their children.

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) (2002) *Reproductive Education and Responsible Fatherhood in Central America* (Spanish)
(‘Educación reproductiva y paternidad responsable en el istmo centroamericano’)

<http://www.eclac.org/cgi-bin/getProd.asp?xml=/publicaciones/sinsigla/xml/6/11766/P11766.xml&xsl=/mexico/tpl/p10f.xsl&base=/mexico/tpl/top-bottom.xslt>

What can be done to change gendered patterns of behaviour around parenthood? This programme on Reproductive Education and Responsible Fatherhood, carried out by the Mexican office of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), explores the social and economic factors which prohibit men from being responsible fathers. It also addresses the implications this has on women's economical and emotional status and on their children's well-being, such as lower levels of education, earlier entry into the labour force, high levels of malnutrition and childhood illnesses, and teenage pregnancies. This resource includes country reports on reproductive education and responsible fatherhood in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, and a regional report summing up the findings of the country reports. It also includes a training manual to support trainers in developing and running capacity building initiatives in key social sectors and institutions and a document making a first attempt to design indicators of responsible fatherhood to measure the implementation of initiatives in public policies. This Document is available in Spanish.

Enda Synergie Genre et Développement (ENDA-SYNFEV) and Réseau Siggil Jigéen (2002) *Joint Parenting, Advocacy in Senegal*
(‘Parenté conjointe, Plaidoyer au Sénégal’)

<http://www.famafrique.org/parenteconjointe/accueil.html> (French)

What advocacy mechanisms and initiatives can be put in place to encourage men to take joint responsibility for their families? This project on 'Joint Parenting Advocacy in Senegal' was carried out by ENDA Tiers-Monde with the support of the Acacia Initiative of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). It aims to use information and communication technologies (ICT) to raise public awareness of the benefits of joint parenting and to prepare the grounds for legislative change. The project includes research, information and communications initiatives, as well as training and advocacy. It has been implemented jointly with various civil society and human rights organisations, public authorities and elected representatives, and in association with the media and with regional and international ICT networks. A series of radio broadcasting programmes in French, and in the local language – Wolof, were also produced and are available to download from the site. Recommendations from the programme emphasise the need to build the internal capacity of women's organisations in Senegal, to form alliances and facilitate networking to promote gender equality, and to carry out more research on the impact of ICTs on social change in Senegal. All outputs of the project can be accessed from the website which is in French. Some documents are also available in English.

Instituto Promundo (2004) *The Program H Manual Series* (English, Spanish and Portuguese)

English: <http://www.promundo.org.br/396>

Spanish: <http://www.promundo.org.br/396?locale=es>

Portuguese: http://www.promundo.org.br/396?locale=pt_BR

Program H stimulates young men to question traditional masculine gender norms. The programme has developed five training manuals, including one on fatherhood and caregiving. This manual presents a series of reflections on men's participation in care-giving, based on a review of the literature, direct programme experiences and group discussions. It is not intended to be a "how-to" manual for young fathers; nor is it an attempt to promote the "joys" of adolescent fatherhood. Rather, what it aims to do is to reflect in a thoughtful way on care-giving in the context of unequal gender relations. By questioning the assumption that men are not concerned with care-giving, and do not know how to provide care, this manual invites the reader to listen to how young men themselves define care-giving and the place it has, and should have, in their daily lives. The manual contains an introduction to the issues, and provides descriptions of group activities (brainstorming, dramatisations, discussions and individual reflection) to engage young men in caring for their children.

Peacock, D. (2003) 'Men as Partners: Promoting Men's Involvement in Care and Support Activities for People Living with HIV/AIDS', paper prepared for the United Nations Expert Group Meeting on 'The role of men and boys in achieving gender equality', Brazil, 21–24 October 2003

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/men-boys2003/EP5-Peacock.pdf>

In South Africa, as in many parts of the world, men often act in ways that leave women and girls disproportionately shouldering the burden of providing care and support to people living with HIV/AIDS.

Despite this, little has been done to date to develop interventions that explicitly encourage men to play a more active role in caring for their partners and children. This paper, which was written for the UN Expert Group Meeting on “The role of men and boys in achieving gender equality”, argues that an important step in alleviating the burden of care and support borne by women is to challenge rigid ideas about masculinity which disassociate men from caring roles. It is also important to create opportunities for men to learn the skills necessary to provide care to people living with AIDS. For example, at a recent Men and Partners (MAP) workshop in Johannesburg, the male participants were encouraged to take part in a cooking competition. Most importantly, effective interventions need to present men as potential partners capable of playing a positive role in the health and well being of their partners, families and communities.