



United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW)  
United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)

# **The situation of rural women within the context of globalization**

**Report of the Expert Group Meeting  
4 – 8 June 2001  
Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS**

## Paragraphs

Preface	
I. Organization of work.....	1 - 15
A. Attendance.....	1 - 3
B. Documentation.....	4
C. Adoption of the agenda and programme of work.....	5
D. Election of Officers.....	6
E. Opening statements.....	7 - 13
F. Field trip.....	14
G. Working groups.....	15
II. Summary of the general debate.....	16 - 105
A. Introduction.....	16 - 48
1. Changing socio-economic and political environment:.....	23 - 26
a) the role of the state .....	27 - 28
b) commercialization of agriculture .....	29 - 36
c) labour-intensive industrialization and EPZs .....	37 - 38
d) changing labour markets and nature of work .....	39 - 42
e) new information and communication technologies (ICT)...	43 - 44
2. Framework for analysing the situation of rural women in the context of globalization.....	45 - 48
B. Diversification of livelihood .....	49 - 69
1. Access to resources and benefits .....	54 - 60
2. New employment opportunities and working conditions..	61 - 69
C. Changing patterns of labour mobility .....	70 - 87
1. The situation of women "left behind".....	75 - 78
2. When women leave.....	79 - 81
3. Migrants who returned.....	82 - 84
4. Remittances.....	85 - 87
D. Household dynamics .....	88- 103
1. Changes in the structure of rural households.....	89 - 92

2.	Changing patterns of household division of labour.....	93 - 97
3.	Impact of change on gender relations.....	98 - 103
E.	Key findings.....	104
III.	Recommendations.....	105 - 143
A.	Human rights and labour standards.....	106 - 114
B.	Women's livelihood and work.....	115 - 122
C.	Empowerment and capacity building through access to training technology and basic services.....	123 - 132
D.	Migration and gender relations.....	133 - 137
E.	Further research and policy for formulation.....	138 - 143

Annexes	<u>Pages</u>	
I.	List of participants.....	32 - 37
II.	List of documentation .....	38 - 39
III.	Agenda and programme of work .....	40 - 42

## Preface

The issue of rural women has been addressed at various United Nations conferences and summits, and the respective final documents provide comprehensive sets of policy

recommendations and plans of action for governments, for the UN system and for various actors of civil society. In addition, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women obliges State parties to "take into account the particular problems faced by rural women and the significant roles which rural women play in economic survival of their families, including their work in the non-monetized sectors of the economy, and to ensure the application of the Convention to women in rural areas".

The issues relating to the situation of rural women were considered in the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women (1985), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995), and the outcome document<sup>1</sup> of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled 'Women 2000; gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century'. The emphasis was put on the need for their equal access to productive resources, such as land, capital, credit and technology as well as to gainful employment, decision-making, education and health services. The Beijing Platform for Action in its paragraph 58n also emphasized the need for the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes that improve the situation of women producers in rural areas, increase their incomes and provide household food security.

The outcome document adopted by the twenty-third special session of General Assembly drew attention to the large number of rural women working in the informal economy with low levels of income and little job and social security and often with no rights to own land including through the right to inheritance (see paras 71b, 81b, 92c and 92e). It further outlined microcredit and other financial instruments as "successful strategies" for economic empowerment of women living in poverty, in particular in rural areas (See paras 7 and 21).

The situation of rural women has been extensively addressed in the Secretary General's reports to the General Assembly in 1985, 1989, 1993, 1995 and 1999 (see A/40/239 and Add.1, 1985; A/44/516, 1989; A/48/187, 1993; A/50/257/rev.1, 1995; A/52/326, 1997 and A/54/123, 1999) and during the Commission on the Status of Women.

The 1999 Secretary-General's Report on the "Improvement of the situation of women in rural areas" (A/54/123 – E/1999/66) specifically addressed the situation of rural women within the context of emerging global trends that characterized the current status of rural development, in particular the liberalization of trade and markets for food and other agricultural products; the commercialization and modernization of agriculture and the increasing privatization of resources and services.

The General Assembly resolution 54/135 called on Governments in collaboration with the United Nations system and civil society to attach greater importance to the improvement of the situation of rural women, in particular within the context of globalization. It further requested "the Secretary-General, in cooperation with the relevant international organizations, specialized agencies, funds and programmes, and in consultations with Member States, to prepare a comprehensive report on the situation of rural women and challenges faced by them, based, *inter alia*, on the outcome of an expert group meeting, which will draw from the contributions and case studies provided by experts from various regions".

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<sup>1</sup> General Assembly resolution S-23/3

Pursuant to this resolution, the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) in collaboration with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) organized the Expert Group Meeting on "The situation of rural women within the context of globalization". It was hosted by the Government of Mongolia in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia from 4 to 8 June 2001. The Meeting examined the impact of major global trends, including the growth in rural non-farm economic activities, non-rural employment opportunities, the liberalization of trade and markets for agricultural products, the intensification of the commercialization of agriculture, and the rapid diffusion of products, technologies, information, consumption patterns and the flexibilization of the labour market on the situation of rural women.

The Meeting proposed recommendations for research and policy agenda to maximize the beneficial effects of globalization for rural women. The recommendations were directed to Governments, the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, the private sector and other actors of civil society. They aimed to refine and expand an agenda for "actions to be taken" at both international and national levels outlined in the Beijing Platform for Action, as well as the further actions identified in the outcome document adopted by the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (Beijing+5).

#### **The Meeting considered five main topics:**

Topic 1: "Impact of major trends of globalization on women in rural areas: comparative analysis of challenges and opportunities"

Topic 2: "Changes in patterns of livelihoods, including, employment opportunities and conditions of work".

Topic 3: "Changing patterns of household division of labour".

Topic 4: "Impact of labour mobility and labour migration on gender relations and division of labour".

Topic 5: "Women's role in decision-making in the household and the community: capacity building".

The findings and conclusions of the meeting provide a comprehensive contribution to the preparation of the Secretary-General's report on the "Improvement of the situation of women in rural areas" to be submitted to the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

## I. ORGANIZATION OF WORK

### **Attendance**

1. The Expert Group Meeting on "The situation of rural women within the context of globalization" was held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia from 4 to 8 June 2001. The meeting was organized by the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) in collaboration with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and hosted by the Government of Mongolia.

2. The Meeting met in plenary, and in working groups. In an opening plenary meeting, background presentations created a conceptual framework for the discussions. Working group discussions, focusing on specific issues, followed the plenary. The meeting concluded with the adoption of a final report that contained the main conclusions and recommendations of the Meeting.

3. The Meeting was attended by 13 experts representing all geo-political regions and forty-four observers from Governments, intergovernmental organizations, the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations (see annex I for the full list of participants).

### **Documentation**

4. The documentation of the Meeting comprised a background paper prepared by a consultant commissioned by DAW; thirteen papers prepared by experts and four observers' papers (see annex II). In view of their relevance to the issues under discussion, a number of United Nations documents and other reference papers were made available.

### **Adoption of the agenda and programme of work**

5. At its opening session on 4 June 2001, the participants adopted the agenda of the Meeting and proposed programme of work as follows ( see annex III) :

- Opening of the meeting and opening statements;
- Election of officers;
- Adoption of programme of work;
- Presentation of papers by a consultant, experts and observers on the identified topics of the meeting;
- General discussion;
- Working group discussion ( see section G, p.6);
- Presentation of reports from working groups;
- Adoption of the report of the meeting;
- Closing of the Expert Group Meeting.

#### ***D. Election of officers***

6. At its opening session, the Meeting elected the following officers:

Chairperson	Ms. Sandra Botha (South Africa)
Vice-chair	Ms. Khorloo Enkhjargal (Mongolia)
Rapporteur	Ms. Jeanne Illo (Philippines)

#### ***E. Opening statements***

7. The Expert Group Meeting was opened by Mr. B.Ganbold, State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Mongolia. He welcomed the participants on behalf of the Government and underlined the importance of this meeting and its recommendations for the advancement of rural women and achieving the goals of gender equality. He emphasized the relevance of the meeting to the situation of rural women in Mongolia who are experiencing both the negative and positive impact of globalization and the need to enhance the benefits that rural women can gain.

8. In her opening statement, Ms. Yakin Ertürk, Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women, emphasized that the majority of women in rural areas of developing countries are unpaid family workers on small land holdings, in animal husbandry and/or in non-farm enterprises. Contrary to popular perceptions, rural women are not just involved in the subsistence and non-monetized sectors of the economy. They contribute to subsistence as well as to market-oriented production. Yet, their diverse roles and contributions often go unrecognized and are difficult to measure. She expressed that, feminist scholarship over the past three decades has shown that the implantation of cash crops and the creation of wage labour could not have been possible if women did not supplement male labour through their household production as well as by assuming the labour intensive tasks of cash crop farming.

9. She pointed out that the Expert Group Meeting would provide an opportunity to examine the impact of major global trends on the situation of rural women, living under diverse conditions and propose a research and policy agenda to maximize the beneficial effects of change for women.

10. She further indicated that the findings of the Meeting would be incorporated into the Secretary-General's Report on the "Improvement of the situation of women in rural areas" which will be submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session in 2001. The report of this Expert Group Meeting will also be made available to the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-sixth session in March 2002 and to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which is mandated to monitor the implementation of the Convention, including article 14 on rural women.

11. Ms. Lanyan Chen speaking on behalf of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), also welcomed the participants in her opening statement.

12. Ms. Chen noted that since rural women have the least access to productive resources, health care, education and decision-making processes, they are most vulnerable to the increase of poverty, food insecurity and violation of rights and human dignity, and least able to benefit from the opportunities generated by globalization.

13. She emphasized that in order to analyse the situation of rural women in the context of globalization, more sex disaggregated data is required as well as a better understanding of rural women's non-monetary contributions to the economy.

## **F. Field Trip**

14. During the Meeting some of the participants went on a field trip to the Tuv province in order to familiarize themselves with the lives of nomadic women. They were welcomed by Mr. N. Mendbileg, Governor of Tuv Province who described the situation of nomadic women in the province and measures that were developed to assist them to cope with privatization processes.

## **G. Working groups**

**15. The Expert Group Meeting established two working groups to consider the situation of rural women within the context of globalization:**

- Working group I considered topics 2 and 4.
- The discussion on topic 2, "Changes in patterns of livelihoods, including, employment opportunities and conditions of work " was chaired by Ms. U. Hoffman-Altman, and Ms. N. Kanji served as rapporteur;
- The discussion on topic 4, "Impact of labour mobility and labour migration on gender relations and division of labour" was chaired by Ms.A.Iken, and Ms.P. Bonfil served as rapporteur;
- Working group II considered topics 3 and 5.
- The discussion on topic 3, "Changing patterns of household division of labour" was chaired by Ms. R. Balakrishnan and Ms. S. Lastarria-Cornhiel served as rapporteur;
- The discussion on topic 5; "Women's role in decision-making in the household and the community: capacity building" was chaired by Mr. Badral, and Ms. L. Zhibin served as rapporteur.



## II. SUMMARY OF THE GENERAL DEBATE

### A. Introduction

16. The participants of the Expert Group Meeting examined the situation of rural women in the context of globalization. The discussion indicated that globalization involves changes in a wide range of areas, including:

- trade liberalization;
- greater mobility of capital and increased financial flows;
- changes in labour demand and restructuring of labour markets (flexibilization<sup>2</sup>);
- changes in the process of production;
- changes in the role and function of the state;
- rapid diffusion of products and consumption patterns;
- faster diffusion of information and technology;
- new forms of governance and mechanisms of regulation;
- emergence of “global civil society”.

17. The participants agreed that these processes of globalization are articulated within existing local contexts and mediated through local power constellations, existing gender relations, class and ethnic divisions as well as regional disparities. The impact of globalization should be considered in terms of short-term and long-term gains and losses for women. It was also recognized that the effects of globalization are not gender-neutral.

18. Taking into account the above factors, the Meeting focused on the following political and economic aspects of globalization affecting the rural sector:

- commercialization of agriculture;
- transition to market economy;
- further integration into the global market;
- labour-intensive industrialization;
- emergence of global commodity chains (GCCs);
- shift to high value food and cash crops;
- expansion of agribusiness industries;
- rapid change in agricultural technologies;
- wider use of information and communication technologies;
- privatization of resources (such as land and livestock) and social services (health, education);
- labour migration;
- structural adjustment policy involving cuts in public spending.

19. These aspects, which will be further elaborated in the following section, provide the context within which the situation of rural women was examined. It should be noted that the

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<sup>2</sup> Flexibilization of labour markets can be defined as a reduction of stable, permanent work and an increase in temporary and flexible work.

distinction between rural and urban sectors becomes blurred as production and labour markets get increasingly intertwined.

20. During the discussions it became clear that the following more general trends affecting rural women's livelihoods could be identified:

- The changing nature of specialization brought about by globalization entails that certain economic activities become more attractive and others less so; the effects of these changes on rural women are mediated by gender, ethnicity, race and class.
- The long-term prospects for men and women who have been displaced due to market integration may differ. This will depend on their human resource endowments and physical assets, as well as socio-cultural norms which have a bearing on the gender division of labour.
- Women's traditional reproductive role may restrict them from seizing new opportunities created by globalization. When women do take up new opportunities they may experience tension between their productive and reproductive roles.
- Socio-cultural norms are constantly undergoing change. In some ways processes of globalization are accelerating such transformations through the changes in employment and income earning opportunities and diffusion of consumption patterns, lifestyles, the media, new technologies and products.

21. In general, the participants agreed that rural women encounter new opportunities as well as experience additional limitations and negative impacts due to the changes. In the short run, it is possible that some livelihoods of rural women may be threatened due to the changes in the organization of production. It was agreed that in order to reduce the vulnerability of rural women in the short run, there is a need for developing an appropriate support system to assist them in their survival strategies. In the long run, in order to achieve and sustain the benefits that may be associated with globalization, it is necessary to design interventions to secure their livelihoods in this competitive environment by way of improving their access to resources and enhancing their human capital. Moreover, it is necessary to engage in social activism aimed at changing the existing norms that shape the gender division of labour.

22. The following sub-section discusses the changing socio-economic and political environment within which globalization is taking place and the next sub-section provides framework for analysing the situation of rural women within the context of globalization.

### *1. Changing socio-economic and political environment*

23. **The rural sector in many countries is diverse, ranging from well developed commercial large-scale and medium-size farms to family operated, small land holdings which may be devoted to subsistence production and/or market production.**

24. **As agricultural and livestock production is becoming more intensified and population pressures increase, some of these small land holdings are becoming increasingly marginalized and are actually producing at the sub-subsistence level.**

25. **The changes that are occurring in agricultural (crop, horticulture, live stock) production as well as in aquaculture and industry are key elements for understanding how**

global changes are affecting and influencing women's lives. In many cases, there has been an increase in employment opportunities for women, especially wage employment in agro-industry (especially fruit, vegetables and flowers), rural industry and export-oriented industries, including export processing zones (EPZs), as well as more self-employment (e.g. trade, handicrafts, food processing). These positive developments, however, have not been enjoyed fully due to the fact that many women lack the necessary resources and safety nets to enable them to maximize their benefits. At the same time, traditional forms of income and subsistence are eroding in many countries. As women are often reliant on these livelihood sources, their erosion may affect them negatively.

26. The meeting identified five dimensions of the changing environment. These are: the role of the state; commercialization of agriculture, labour intensive industrialization and export processing zones (EPZs); changing labour markets and nature of work; and new information and communication technologies (ICTs).

a) The role of the state

27. Globalization is compelling states to alter their relations with the market and civil society, as such; states are mediators of change. In many countries the onset for this changing role was the structural adjustment policies, which entailed significant cutbacks in public spending and the provision of basic services. For transition countries the dual political and economic transformation has led to a considerable decrease in public provisions and services as well. It is now increasingly recognized that the state has a critical role to play in the provision of basic services, particularly to rural areas where there may not be clear incentives for the private sector.

28. States are important actors in providing a conditioning, and often enabling, environment for the market economy, including commercial agriculture. As a consequence, a variety in the way production is organized depends in part on their policy choices. These policy choices have important implications in terms of creating enabling conditions (or not) for small farmers and making rural areas and livelihoods more appealing.

b) Commercialization of agriculture

29. The forces of globalization have brought about far reaching changes in the pattern of specialization within agriculture. In many areas, subsistence agriculture is giving way to commercialized agriculture, in which both small and large farmers are involved in the production for the market, and increasingly for export markets. Other forces such as rising income and urbanization have already been creating conditions conducive to the commercialization of agriculture. But globalization has added momentum to this process by liberalizing trade regimes and by allowing freer movement of capital.

30. An important consequence of producing for the export market in the context of freer mobility of capital is the growing involvement of giant agro-business complexes in developing country agriculture. This has the potential of radically transforming the agriculture sector of developing countries, leading to the industrialization of agriculture that has already taken place in the developed parts of the world. At this stage, however, this phenomenon accounts for a

relatively small proportion of commercialized agriculture in the developing world. Many people, including rural women, are engaged in smallholder commercial agriculture.

31. However, the industrialization of agriculture is leading to erosion of the “classical international division of labour” in agricultural production in some countries. The so-called non-traditional agricultural export commodities or high value foods (HVF) are becoming relatively more important than the traditional exports of coffee, tea, sugar and cocoa. These new HVF include fruit and vegetables, poultry, dairy products and shellfish.<sup>3</sup>

32. The success of these so-called New Agricultural Countries (NACs) in pursuing their HVF strategy has depended on a combination of factors, including favourable international market conditions during the early phase, dominance and availability of domestic and foreign capital, high degree of concentration in the industry (especially in production, processing and marketing) and reliable supply of inputs. Two characteristics seem to determine the competitiveness of HVF sectors. One is the pursuit of low cost production, primarily obtained through low labour costs, in particular that of rural women. Second, HVF competitiveness depends on reaching a high degree of quality, which is important for establishing a presence in niche markets. The role of consumers in OECD countries as well as increasing standards of food safety and quality requirements (phyto-sanitary regulations) are important elements in the functioning of agro-food system.

33. The agro-food industry is also characterized by the emergence of GCCs. The emergence of these GCCs has been significantly aided by new technologies in transportation and the computerization of much of the production process ranging from drip-irrigation to packing and increased specialization in livestock production. As a result of these trends, producers of traditional export commodities may see their market position erode as may smallholder family farmers.

34. An important facet of the global integration of agricultural markets is the organization of production through “contract farming” with rural producers. This means that the exporters or food giants control the production of commodities through providing technical assistance, finance, and controlling the use of fertilizers and pesticides, as well as types of seeds planted. The contract farming system can provide the opportunity to obtain an income from land-based production, to adopt improved production methods and a link to the market. Yet rural producers can also face risks of exploitation by middlemen and fluctuation in prices.

35. With the exception of a few globally operating food giants, transnational corporations (TNCs) tend to adapt their strategies to local conditions under which HVF and more traditional commodities are produced. Depending on local circumstances there may be some differences in the degree of control giving more or less flexibility to local farmers.

36. It was also recognized that under certain circumstances, traditional processes are gaining new dimensions. A case in point is the nomadic pastoralism in Mongolia, where the recent privatization of livestock and increased market integration pressured herders to adopt more commercialized activities such as producing cashmere for a growing international economic niche market.

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<sup>3</sup> About 24 low and middle-income countries were responsible for more than US\$500 million HVF exports by 1990. Most of these countries are located in Latin America and Asia. See: Watts, Michael J. and David Goodman. 1997. “Agrarian Questions: Global Appetite, Local Metabolism: Nature, Culture, and Industry in Fin-de-Siècle Agro-Food Systems.” In, David Goodman and Michael J. Watts, (eds), 1997. “*Globalising Food: Agrarian Questions and Global Restructuring*”. London: Routledge: 1-34.

c) **Labour-intensive industrialization and export processing zones (EPZs)**

37. With the changes in the organization of production there has been an increase in labour-intensive, often export-oriented, industries located in developing countries as well as in transition economies. This development has important implications for rural areas as it entails their further integration into the market. This market integration involves a wide variety of activities ranging from rural industries to the establishment of EPZs. Rural industrialization includes independent entrepreneurs producing for the local market as well as sub-contracting for larger domestic and foreign firms. Examples of rural industrialization are textiles and garments, food processing, carpet weaving and toys.

38. Government policies, including those that are favouring the establishing of EPZs, are aimed to attract foreign capital by providing special arrangements such as tax breaks and suspension of environmental and labour laws. The economic incentives provided by governments made labour-intensive industries more attractive, and for the firms establishing themselves in the EPZs women became the preferred labour force because given the level of skills required, female labour was found to be cheaper than male labour. However, as has been well-documented, the valuation of women's "skills" formed part of a process of gender stereotyping which depicted women as docile, nimble-fingered and only working for some pocket money, as they were not seen as the breadwinners.

d) **Changing labour markets and nature of work**

39. The "flexibilization" of work and labour market liberalization are among the defining characteristics of the economic environment in the era of globalization. These changes have been accompanied by labour-market deregulation. As a result, in some sectors regular, full-time employment is being replaced by more diverse patterns of employment such as irregular part-time employment, outsourcing, home-based work and other forms of temporary labour arrangements which escape standard labour legislation. Such changes in the labour markets are decreasing the relative tax burden of business and making production responsive to increased volatility in demand, while shifting the costs of economic adjustment and change onto the most vulnerable, usually women.

40. Within this process, employing female labour became more attractive because they can be hired for low pay and under less than desirable working conditions in comparison with men. With some exception, the majority of women, especially in developing countries are filling the irregular, low paying jobs with little training or promotion prospects. Although the gender differential affects of the employment and displacement of the labour markets under globalization are still controversial and not always predictable, the share of women workers particularly in the labour intensive sectors has, so far, been quite high.<sup>4</sup>

41. In the context of globalization, more and more poor rural women are able to find temporary and, in some cases, more permanent jobs in large-scale enterprises driven by export cash crop farming; agro-processing plants; and export-oriented industries, including export processing zones. Trade in natural medicinal resources, operations of

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<sup>4</sup> 1999 World Survey on the Role of Women in Development, Globalization, Gender and Work, United Nations, New York, 1999, p. 21

agency communications systems and home-based piecework such as leather tanning, packaging and labeling are other work opportunities that have become available to some rural women with the changing work environment. For the vast majority of the rural poor – women, children and men – sporadic construction work in the cities, informal trading and trucking are some of the more conventional activities that offer opportunities to supplement household earnings.

42. Despite the diversification of job opportunities, much of the work that rural women are able to engage in are either at the margins of emerging industries, where high turn over rate of labour is common, or in the informal sector. The increased choice and opportunity women are finding in the labour market may have a short life and gender inequalities may be intensified in the long run. Furthermore, although women are becoming more economically active in paid employment, they still remain economically disempowered with weak bargaining power and lower incomes. In addition, increased women's participation in paid work has not diminished women's responsibilities for household tasks and childcare. The burden of unpaid work at home and a marginal position in the labour market tend to reinforce each other, making it harder for women to break out of the role of dependent and secondary breadwinner within the family<sup>5</sup>.

e) New information and communication technologies (ICTs)

43. Within the context of globalization ICTs constitute an important interface in the transfer of resources as well as in the organization of production. The global trend is to move toward knowledge driven society (the network society) mediated by ICTs. ICTs have the potential to break the isolation of rural women and improve their access to education and training. ICT-based education will not only be important for capacity-building of rural women and girls, but may also assist in providing more food security as rural women and girls may gain better knowledge about markets and prices.

44. If effective measures are not taken urgently, it is highly probable that an ICT divide could widen urban-rural disparities in education and access to new forms of knowledge. This could create great disadvantages to rural households in structuring their livelihood strategies. As rural women and girls run significant risks of being further marginalized in the knowledge society and economy, it is important to specifically target them for programmes and training.

*2. Framework for analysing the situation of rural women in the context of globalization*

45. An essential feature of a globalizing economy is the shifting division of labour associated with changes in the nature of specialization and production processes. How these changes affect rural women depend in the first instance on two proximate factors: what role women play in the declining activities and how equipped they are to take advantage of the expanding activities. These two proximate factors depend in turn on a large number of underlying forces operating at the individual, household, community, state and global levels. For instance, individual skills and command over resources would have a bearing on the extent to which women participate in declining as well as expanding activities. Household structure and the nature of intra-household division of labour

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<sup>5</sup> 1999 World Survey on the Role of Women in Development, Globalization, Gender and Work, United Nations, New York, 1999, p. 13

will also affect women's opportunities and their ability to take them. Furthermore, their ability to seize the new opportunities and to fend off the new threats will also depend upon social norms impinging on gender division of labour in the broader economy, and the extent to which women can play an effective role in decision-making processes at the household as well as community levels.

46. However, these underlying forces are not immutable. The constellation of these forces is constantly being altered by the processes of globalization itself, interacting with other changes occurring in the spheres of economic policy, demography, technology, and socio-cultural values.

47. In order to understand the situation of rural women in the context of globalization, it is therefore essential to first note women's existing conditions with regard to their command over skills and resources, household structure and gendered division of labour, and women's role in decision-making processes, and then to examine how the processes of globalization are affecting all of them. This report undertakes such an analysis and structures the analysis in the following manner.

48. The report identifies two major channels through which the effects of globalization are being mediated, namely changes in livelihood patterns and changes in the patterns of labour mobility. The next section undertakes a discussion of rural women's livelihood patterns, how they are changing in the wake of globalization, and what effects they are having on the well-being of women in terms of their access to resources, income-earning opportunities and working conditions. The following section looks at the changing patterns of labour mobility and analyses how these changes are affecting the opportunities open to women. In light of the discussion presented in these two sections, the report then goes on, in the next section, to trace the changes that are taking place in the underlying factors such as household structure, household division of labour and gender relations that have a bearing on women's well-being.

## **B. Diversification of livelihood**

49. **With increased market integration most rural households are not able to support themselves exclusively on land based activities. Therefore, the majority of households have diversified their sources of livelihood either as a survival or an accumulation strategy. This was made possible by re-structuring household division of labour to enable households to maintain their status as independent family cultivators while at the same time engage in the non-farm and non-rural sectors. The strategy a household can adopt depends on, among other factors, access to productive resources such as land, capital, education and skills. In part, this strategy can influence how households allocate their labour between farm and non-farm sectors and between wage and non-wage labour.**

50. **Under market conditions the main bottleneck rural households face is cash availability. Therefore, those households with diverse sources of livelihood and predictable and regular cash earnings are able to achieve the highest level of security. Availability of cash enables households to hire labour and also invest in non-farm activities.**

51. **The relatively better off farmers are able to maximize their cash earnings by venturing into non-farm activities such as operating a small grocery store, restaurant, and café in the village or nearby town centre or taking up a regular wage/salary job in the private or public sector. Supplementing land based earnings with a stable and regular non-farm income enables such households to maximize their survival and creates the possibility of savings and, for some, the accumulation of capital. The women and children of such households often do not have to work outside the home.**

**52. On the other hand, households that are at the lower end of the social strata have little or no resources at their disposal to diversify their sources of livelihood. These households, whether they may have access to land or not, often must rely on cash or in kind earning of family labour<sup>3</sup> for their subsistence.**

53. The situation of rural women within the context of globalization, particularly those at the lower end of the social strata, varies according to their access to resources and employment opportunities.

#### 1. Access to resources and benefits

54. Even within the context of diversification most households in rural areas still depend on land and natural resources for their basic subsistence. Rights of control over land are important, since they determine access to other factors, such as, extension services, credit and membership to farmers' organizations. In some countries, rural women continue to be deprived of equal rights to land by law. In other countries, although they may have de jure rights, they do not have de facto rights.

55. In some cases, customary rights to land and other natural resources often enabled women to engage in and benefit from agricultural, livestock and forest based production. However, the privatization process, notwithstanding some exceptions, which has accelerated the process of land titling, land consolidation and reorganization of the use of common property is increasingly undermining property rights, thus, depriving women of direct access to land. Privatization tends to lead to the concentration of property rights (such as access, use, control) distributed within the household and the community into the hands of male household heads or local elites.

56. Some non-farm activities of rural women depend on access to a natural resource base. Intensive production and harvesting of forests for global markets have accelerated the degradation of critical natural resources on which the rural women from poor households depend for livelihood to augment their income.

57. Rural women are closely associated with local ecological resources and manage biodiversity on a daily basis. A renewed interest in bio-diversity and indigenous plants and materials have created opportunities for rural women to utilize their traditional knowledge and experience to take advantage of emerging national and global markets. However, these possibilities may not be realized unless Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) are implemented in a transparent and just manner to protect the rights of local communities to indigenous resources.

58. An important issue is the possible effects of increased privatization of agriculture extension services and financial markets on rural women whose access to information and credit is already minimal. Rural women's access to agricultural support systems has traditionally been limited, not only because extension workers generally worked with male heads of the households, but

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<sup>3</sup> Children of all ages are a significant component of household survival strategies. They perform various tasks in domestic work, household production as well as generate income cash through employment mainly in the informal sector.



also due to the time constraints faced by women to participate in such programmes due to their heavy work load. Privatization of agricultural extension services will further adversely affect the prospects of women's access to these services.

59. Agriculture being a high-risk venture, credit to farmers is not easily forthcoming in many countries, particularly to women. Furthermore, the cyclic nature of production and thus income creates unique constraints to access credit from commercial banks. Though many countries followed the practice of providing agricultural credit under concessional terms, the current changes directed to develop competitive credit markets could pose problems to farmers in their access to capital, unless the private sector steps in to fill the capital gap. Any changes resulting in reduced access to capital for rural households have implications for production investment and thus their livelihood strategies.

60. Provision of micro-finance is a popular measure to support rural women's access to income generating ventures. The impact of micro-finance initiatives for rural women in general is rated to be positive. But differences are evident among the micro-finance programmes in demonstrated approaches, commitment and success related to capacity building among rural women to be self-reliant producers and confident credit holders in their individual rights. As liberalization and financial market integration accelerate, with focus on competitive credit and efficient financial management principles, the concern would be to provide a sustainable access to micro-credit for rural women. Additionally, it should be recognized that micro-credit for petty trade should be only the entry point for economic advancement of rural women, but long-term focus should be upgrading their economic enterprises to ensure sustainable livelihood.

## 2. New employment opportunities and working conditions

61. Commercialization of agriculture together with trade liberalization, especially in developing countries, have created new employment opportunities for women in rural areas which are also accompanied by new risks. For instance, export crop expansion may force women from permanent agricultural employment into seasonal employment. In Thailand for example, women started to subcontract to multinational corporations on family-owned plots to produce baby corn and asparagus on former paddy land or started to raise shrimps under contract to foreign companies. Often such employment arrangements in the agricultural export sector entail low pay labour-intensive manual jobs. However, despite its low wages, the net returns from such activities may be an improvement over the traditional agricultural activities it is replacing. Such is the case in Thailand, where women now earn more in a shorter work day than what they did by cultivating rice.

62. Globalization is affecting the livelihood prospects of rural women not only through its effects on agriculture but also through its effects on industry. Trade liberalization coupled with free movement of capital has enabled many developing countries to set up export industries using cheap labour. This has opened up employment opportunities for women, especially in the garments and electronics sectors. In many countries in South and Southeast Asia, women are moving in large numbers from rural to urban areas to make use of these opportunities, resulting in a distinct feminization of labour force in export-oriented industries.

63. In most cases, previously these women did not have any job prospects at all. The most they could aspire to was the life as a maid, or a prostitute, or a petty trader. For them, the prospect of employment in export industries has amounted to improvement in their livelihood opportunities, with far-reaching economic and social consequences (see for example, Tzannatos 1995)<sup>6</sup>.

64. Livestock production in developing countries is also undergoing major transformation due to global demand for variety of livestock products particularly from developed countries. These demands are diversifying livestock production, and are also creating new industries around livestock products similar to what is happening in the agricultural sector. While the changes in the organization of livestock production may favour male labour, female labour appears to be preferred for the labour intensive tasks involved in the processing and production of livestock products.

65. New technologies for agricultural production are leading to the creation of new employment opportunities in rural industries and agribusiness enterprises. However, such opportunities may favour those who have certain skills, capacities and access to social networks and assets. This may pose a danger for women unless they are provided with education and training to acquire the necessary skills. Such a selective phenomenon is evident where employers in certain export industries prefer young women with some education over older women who often do not. This problem becomes acute when the nature of specialization shifts from relatively unskilled activities to skill intensive activities.

66. On the other hand, withdrawal of state provisions for basic services often increases the burden of reproductive work on women thereby restricting their ability to take up opportunities in productive, paid employment.

67. In general rural women work long hours, and under difficult circumstances often without proper technologies to ease their productive and reproductive work. The wage levels are still lower for women compared to men. In some organized sectors, the new jobs entail low wages and poor work conditions and the unorganized agricultural and informal sectors are totally outside of the sphere of formal labour laws. In addition, new work arrangements have also been introduced to increase the competitiveness of agribusiness enterprise, rural industries or export processing zone firms and contract farming. Such arrangements may involve complex contractual arrangements which are not self-evident to the poorly informed new employees who have low or no formal education.

68. Nevertheless, women in rural areas and especially those who are under extreme economic deprivation seem to prefer the option of having access to jobs with pay irrespective of the terms. In this connection, domestic work, in the cities or abroad, has for long been a major source of employment for the poor women of rural areas. For instance, many Filipino women migrate to become nannies or housekeepers. The intensification of trade in services, over the past two decades has increased and broadened the scope for such work for women in many parts of the developing world.

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<sup>6</sup> Tzannatos, Z. (1995) "*Growth, Adjustment and the Labour Market: Effects on Women Workers*". Paper presented at the Fourth Conference of the International Association for Feminist Economics. World Bank: Washington, D.C.

69. By and large, the benefits accruing to rural women and men, through new economic opportunities brought by globalization differ due to prevailing gender norms and inequalities. Men appear to be reluctant to assume work traditionally associated with women (particularly reproductive work) unless there is an increase in status or when it is well paid. Women may be reluctant to assume work traditionally associated with men, but do so out of need.

### **C. Changing patterns of labour mobility**

70. The demand for cheap labour in the newly emerging industries, agribusinesses, EPZs and services that were established often with the help of foreign capital continues to be strong. Women are preferred workers because they can be hired for lower pay in “irregular” jobs and often under less favourable terms than men, and easily dispensed when their labour is no longer needed.

**71. This process is particularly important in view of the ongoing process of impoverishment in rural areas due to diverse factors such as land scarcity, over-grazing, a loss of productive and monetary value of land and a decrease in agricultural productivity. Daily hardship, and lack of educational and social services continue to be strong push factors. In some cases, rural women (and men) leave their villages to take advantage of employment opportunities elsewhere, including overseas. Migration has, thus, become both a process and consequence of globalization.**

72. Movements of labour have been from rural to rural, as young women and men join the work force of agribusiness; rural to urban, where girls and adult women leave for towns and cities to enter the service and manufacturing sectors, including the EPZs; as well as internationally, to work as nannies, maids, factory workers, entertainers, or teachers and nurses. In some instances, the migration is cyclical or temporary, in others, it is more permanent. In most cases, labour movement is voluntary. However, there has also been a rise in forced migration, such as the trafficking in women and girls for sex work, domestic service, or sweatshops.

73. There are many actors involved in the migration process. States, private enterprises and market forces influence the structuring and channelling of migratory flows. At the household level the whole family or household may be involved in the decision which family member should be migrating. At times middlemen or agencies play a central role in organizing the migration of rural people, with possible risk of exploitation, in particular for women and girls.

**74. Although generally migration results in the redistribution of tasks and responsibilities among those left behind, there appears to be a strong difference as to the impact of migration on household division of labour and gender relations depending on whether a woman or a man is migrating.**

#### *1. The situation of the women “left behind”*

**75. When migration results in the loss of male labour, households resort to different strategies in order to survive. One strategy, in the social cultural setting in which women**

are able to enter male domains, is for the women to undertake the work previously done by migrants. Sometimes, however, this strategy may result in the work not being done.

76. The absence of a husband or other male head of household often forces women to take over his tasks and responsibilities. While this means increasing women's burden, it may have empowering effects as this affords a woman the opportunity to acquire new skills (e.g. negotiating with government departments and traders, learning to use agricultural equipment). Women may (e.g. in Egypt) also experience an upward occupational mobility due to vacancies, which under different circumstances would have been occupied by men.

77. Another strategy, when migrant remittances are sufficient, is for women to utilize this income to contract labour for certain agricultural and livestock production tasks traditionally done by men. In addition, when remittance income permits, some women are able to hire labour to assume some of the most labour-intensive tasks, allowing them to assume income-generating activities off farm.

78. However, in some societies a man's role and responsibility may be taken over by a male relative, or the woman whose husband migrates has to move in with her husband's relatives. In these instances the women cannot attain control of the household resources because these are being delegated to the male relatives. If, in the absence of the husband, the wife is deprived of participation in family and community decision-making processes as well as in direct benefit from the remittances, she is adversely affected by the migration. Women may also find it difficult to cope with numerous family responsibilities without the support of their husbands such as in raising and educating the children.

## *2. When women leave*

79. Apart from economic reasons, which are of primary importance, women and in particular young single women, tend to migrate in order to escape the hardship of rural life and the patriarchal and social control.

80. In the course of their migration women may develop their skills and decide to build an independent life rather than resume their former roles in the household. However, since women in their migration rely on social networks that assist them in finding a job and in providing a safety net in times of emergencies, their ability to act independently may be curtailed or weakened. Therefore, they may not fully benefit from the opportunities the migratory process brings, such as exposure to new values, ideas, roles and market demands.

81. With increased demand for cheap female labour and aggressive job advertising on the part of prospective employers, rural women who are relatively isolated from the outside world are faced with the risks of trafficking and HIV/AIDS. The international community, including the United Nations system addressed this issue on various occasions.

## *3. Migrants who returned*

82. Men and women migrants often have to renegotiate their position within the relationship, household and community upon their return. Men tend to resume their

decision-making position in the household more easily than women, if they wish so. On the other hand, long-term migrants often do not wish to resume their traditional work and prefer to engage in different activities that earn better income or bring higher status. The implication for households is that women continue to fulfil these tasks. For example, in western Sudan returning male migrants prefer to engage in trade rather than resume agricultural work in order to maintain their income.

**83.** Rural migrants generally return home with new skills, work experiences, ideas, savings and technologies. At times the values women bring back home are more conservative. Such has been the case of Egyptian women returning from the Gulf countries. More often than not, however, women come home with greater self-confidence and higher self-esteem. In the Philippines, returning women overseas contract workers are beginning to engage in community affairs and politics. As with women migrants elsewhere, indigenous women migrants in Mexico come home more inclined to challenge the established gender roles and prevailing customs in the family. They are less likely to fit into their former roles and tend to abandon more easily local traditions because of their more restrictive nature for women than men. This may create strong conflicts leading to women's re-migration.

**84.** The pressure to leave again tends to be strong when the money sent home by a female migrant has been used differently than she anticipated (spent rather than saved or invested). This leaves her with neither savings nor an economic base for the future, which for single women can diminish their prospects of getting married and for women with economic dependants could mean going back to the starting point.

#### *4. Remittances*

**85.** Generally, remittances from migrants improve the quality of life of rural households, although their long-term impact and importance for sustaining rural life differ.

A distinction can be made between remittances which are being used to feed the household members and remittances used for investments purposes.

**86.** The impact of remittances on household well being depends very much on who in the household control income. There is a tendency that income controlled by women is usually invested in the household and its members, and less on consumer items. Male remittances tend to arrive less regularly than those of women, and men take a larger share of their earnings income for their own personal use (alcohol, second wife, cigarettes) than women who are more likely to invest in production inputs (cattle, paying of debts, fertilisers and the such). Men tend to buy consumer items such as radio, bicycles, and cars, even in instances when their income may be needed for household survival.

**87.** The remittances sent by daughters tend to be more regular, in particular if it is a transfer from woman to woman. Research has also shown that in some cases young and unmarried women have tended to keep a larger portion of their income for themselves.

### **D. Household dynamics**

**88. Globalization is associated in many places with an emerging diversity of household types, changes in decision-making, gender division of labour and intra-household relations.**

*1. Changes in the structure of rural households*

**89. The emerging diversity of household types includes an increasing number of households headed by women as well as those containing multi-generations. There are also households which remain closely linked even though the members are split as a result of migration (multi-spatial households).**

90. The precise structure of multi-generational households varies. Apart from the typical extended family set-up, multi-generational households may include additional kin or may have a missing middle generation due to out-migration or HIV/AIDS related death, particularly in Africa. This results in a growing number of households in which grandmothers, single mothers or even children are looking after extended households which also include non-family members.

91. Female-headed households (FHH) need to be recognized as a separate category including single person-households, and two and three generational households. Where men are away on temporary and seasonal migration, headship may be of temporary nature. It is also in these households that the men may continue to maintain the decision-making power. But there is a tendency of the development of female-headed households without a link to a male partner either because the woman is not married, is widowed, divorced or abandoned. It is in these households that female headship induces long-term changes in household structures. In these households women have the decision-making power and the full social and economic responsibility for the well being of its members.

92. When women migrate, they tend to maintain close links with their rural homes with reciprocal benefits, for example, sending cash remittances and bringing back food to urban areas. Despite migration, the links between the members of the household remain. These intra-household links also facilitate transfer of new ideas and cultural norms, values and habits. When men migrate, they often establish secondary households with new partners. This reduces remittances back to the rural areas and may create household conflicts.

*2. Changing patterns of household division of labour*

**93. As already discussed, one effect of globalization is a sharp increase in the diversification of different types of work household members may engage in. This as well as changes in household structure are affecting the division of labour within households.**

**94. The opening up of new opportunities, such as wage labour, high value crop production or income generating activities can increase economic returns but would also increase the demand for labour. The majority of rural households respond by restructuring their household division of labour where women and children may be disproportionately burdened. Child labour for poor rural households is particularly important for achieving livelihood security. Children, in many instances escaping the social and legal factors that restrict the work options for adult women and men, are able to go just about anywhere and do any type of work, such as working as porter, shoe shiner, street vendor.**

**95. Women's labour is particularly indispensable and often irreplaceable in rural areas. While men might be able to shift their work performance in accordance with the available work opportunities, women do not have the same flexibility. Productive labour of rural women includes non-remunerated family labour (unpaid family work) and paid labour (wage labour and piece rate work). In household production rural women's work is characterized as "multi-tasking" and "labour intensive" as they shoulder the responsibility for productive and reproductive tasks. Yet, policy makers do not adequately recognize the contribution of women and children to rural economies. Although there has been some progress in including women's unpaid work in official statistics, in most countries this issue is not recognized.**

**96. In resource rich areas, certain industrial and manufacturing firms locate their production facility absorbing local labour. Location of such enterprises also capture state subsidies and various services. These new enterprises, while offering rural employment, also siphon resources such as fertile land, water for irrigation, and forest, that were crucial for traditional rural household production and for ensuring food security for many families. In such situations the burden of compensating for these resources often fall on the households, namely women who should spend more time and energy looking for these resources.**

**97. The process of migration also has mixed impact on the situation of women in rural households. Migration of some family members may increase household income, but it can also cause an increase in women's workload. The impact of the additional workload on women is particularly strongly felt in areas where social support systems and services are weak or have eroded. Often children, particularly girls, are then called upon to assume some of the domestic tasks. Women employ different strategies to compensate the loss of labour. They may organize labour exchange with other women, work longer hours themselves or, if they have means from remittance and other income sources, hire additional labour. But they might also adopt such strategies as reducing the area under cultivation, switching to less labour-intensive but also less nutritious crops.**

### *3. Impact of change on gender relations*

98. The influence of women on the decision-making process in the household and in the community is a reflection of customs and cultures and of power relations. These relations are deeply embedded in society and are resistant to change. However, globalization is having a major impact on customary decision-making patterns. Changes in household structures have implied renegotiations of gender relations, with outcomes dependent on individual choices, socio-cultural context as well as economic factors. This may result in the possibility for increase in psychological problems and increased violence against women.

99. In the context of improvement in women's economic position, women are more likely to control resources that directly affect all household members. This may enable women to take on a more active role in male dominated decision-making structures. It may also influence their social relations at the household and community level. Woman's role may no longer be only defined by her relationship to a man as his wife and mother of children but as a person influencing community matters or as a person engaging in a wide range of enterprises and social

activities. This is reflected by rural women's participation in revolving credit schemes, cooperative ventures and increased networking at the work place as well as the participation in adult education and community programmes.

100. Information technology has also impacted directly and indirectly on rural women. Many have access to radio and at times television. This has brought about a dramatic increase of information into their homes and has introduced them to patterns of gender relations and decision-making which exist in other cultures.

101. In many countries, the most visible change, which is taking place with regard to gender relations relate to marriage. As rural women adjust to economic change and as a result of earning an independent income and gaining access to new ideas or lifestyles, the factors influencing her choice of a partner or form of cohabitation tend to alter. For example, she may place more emphasis on personal characteristics rather than on economic prospects and cultural expectations. Worldwide there are a growing number of women choosing to delay marriage or remain single while still choosing to have children. There are communities in which migrant unmarried women returning home are looked at as particularly desirable marriage partner due to their economic independence, skills and abilities. There are, however, also communities in which these gains are perceived as a threat making it more difficult for the women to get married and readjust to the community.

102. Women sex workers are particularly vulnerable to acts of harassment. Migrant women returning home are forced to adopt to the prevalent norms of gender relations and in the course of readjustment may be subject to total subservience to male family members.

103. The greater the degree of exposure rural women have to cultural and social changes in the rest of the world, including human rights instruments, the more likely it is that these changes will also shape and reinforce their independent decision-making roles and influence gender relations. The impact of globalization has also brought about changes in the nature of local government, with rural women being drawn into decision-making structures on account of their new influence in the household and the community. This is also reflected in the conscious efforts of political parties to recruit rural women as candidates in all levels of politics. However, they are often not promoted within party structures to decision –making positions without some form of intervention.

## **E. Key findings**

104. The analysis presented in this report has identified the following major impacts of globalization on the situation of rural women.

- **Globalization has been associated with increased feminization of the labour force, as the female share of employment has increased worldwide. Much of the increase has resulted from a movement of female labour from the subsistence sector in rural areas to the paid economy.**
- While new economic opportunities for rural women may have resulted from globalization, the benefits accruing to women and men differ due to constraints posed by their differential access to resources and by the gender norms that shape their willingness



and capacity to take advantage of non-traditional job opportunities or new production technologies.

- **Even within the context of production diversification most households in rural areas still depend on land, and natural resources for their livelihood, though not exclusively. In this context, it is disconcerting to note that the currently accelerated process of land titling, privatization of common property and land consolidation for efficient production, can increase the risk of women losing the existing property rights.**
- **Globalization has opened up opportunities for rural women into various types of paid non-farm activities. Since many of these activities are dependent on the natural resource base, it is a matter of some concern that intensive production and harvesting of forests for global markets have led to the degradation of critical natural resources.**
- **A renewed interest in bio-diversity and indigenous plants and materials have created opportunities for rural women to utilize their traditional knowledge and experience to take advantage of emerging national and global markets. However, these possibilities may not be realized unless Trade-Related Intellectual Property Rights are implemented in a transparent and just manner to protect the rights of local communities to indigenous resources.**
- **The move towards export-oriented industries based on unskilled labour has opened up many new employment opportunities for rural women. However, as the globalizing economies move on to more advanced forms of specialization requiring skilled labour, there is a danger that women will lose out at that stage unless appropriate actions are taken, well in advance, to enable them to acquire education and the requisite skills.**
- **One of the consequences of increasing migratory flows is that the absence of a husband or male member of the household often results in women taking over his tasks and responsibilities. While this means increasing women's burden, it may have empowering effects as this affords a woman the opportunity to acquire new skills and capacities.**
- **When remittance income permits, some women are able to hire labour reducing their work burden. However, in the absence of the husband, when the woman has to move in with her husband's relatives or patriarchal control is passed on to other male relatives, the women cannot attain control of the household resources, thus, being adversely affected by her husband's migration.**
- **When women migrate in search of new job opportunities, they may develop the skills and decide to build an independent life rather than resume their former roles in the household upon their return. Women tend to migrate using a network that assists them in finding a job and serves as a safety net in times of emergencies. However, such a network can also weaken their ability to utilize the opportunities the migratory process brings along such as becoming exposed and accustomed to new values, roles and market demands.**

- **In general both men and women have to renegotiate their positions within the relationship, household and community, upon their return. When women migrants return, they generally are less likely to fit into their former roles and tend to abandon more easily local traditions, supposedly because of their more restrictive nature for women than men. They are also more inclined to challenge the established gender roles and prevailing customs in the family. This may create strong conflicts leading to women's re-migration. Long-term male migrants, however, often do not wish to resume their traditional work and prefer to engage in other activities.**
- **One effect of globalization is a sharp increase in the diversification of the different types of work household members engage in. This as well as changes in household structure are affecting the division of labour within households sometimes leading to increasing work burden for women. This tendency has been reinforced by increasing migration of male family members. The impact of the additional workload on women is particularly strongly felt in areas where social support systems and services are weak or eroded. Often children, particularly girls, are then called upon to assume some of the domestic tasks.**
- **Globalization has given way to conditions that have the potential to significantly alter customary decision-making structures within the household. Changes in household structures have implied re-negotiation of gender relations, with outcomes dependent on individual choices, socio-cultural context as well as economic factors.**
- **Some rural women have become the only breadwinners in the household, as male members have become unemployed due to the displacement effect of labour markets. While this situation has enabled women to gain greater access to decision-making power, at the same time, it has increased the possibility for greater exposure to violence.**
- **By and large, however, women's involvement in non-traditional activities and paid employment has changed the patterns of decision-making within rural households. From being passive participants in male-dominated decision-making structures, women are now gaining control of resources that directly affect them and other members of the household.**
- **One of the consequences of globalization has been greater exposure of rural women to cultural and social changes taking place in the rest of the world, including international human rights instruments. It is likely that these changes may shape and reinforce their independent decision-making roles. In some countries, current changes in the nature of local governance have increased the potential for women to be drawn into decision-making structures.**

### III. RECOMMENDATIONS

105. The implementation of these recommendations, at all levels, should be based on women's needs and priorities as identified by participatory rural processes and should focus on the following areas:

#### A. Human rights and labour standards

106. Women's views should be taken into account by Governments and Parliaments in the formulation of new laws and regulations, and in changing existing laws which contravene the principle of equality between women and men. Practical measures for the implementation of international instruments should be promoted.

107. All relevant human rights instruments should be fully applied to rural women by Governments. Particular attention should be given to the implementation of art. 14 of CEDAW by States Parties to the Convention

108. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) should develop a general recommendation on art.14 of the Convention and specifically request the reporting Governments to pay attention to the situation of rural women in the context of globalization.

109. Women's equal right to property and inheritance should be fully and unconditionally recognized and implemented. Compliance with international standards of equality, including women's property rights, should be protected and promoted by Governments.

110. Governments, international organizations including the UN system and NGOs should promote awareness of rural women's legal property rights as a priority, through:  
a) dissemination of national and international legal instruments; b) legal literacy training for rural women; c) legal assistance d) awareness raising of current discrimination e) gender-sensitive training for implementers.

111. ILO conventions as well as international standards of gender equality and human rights should be incorporated in national laws and codes of conduct of transnational corporations. Their observance should be monitored by Governments, relevant international organizations (e.g. ILO), trade unions, NGOs and other actors in civil society.

112. Training programmes and discussions aimed at both rural women and men to promote gender awareness should be organized by national and local Governments, human rights groups and other NGOs to encourage the sharing of parental roles and household duties by men.

113. Governments should eliminate de jure and/or de facto job discrimination against rural migrants and abolish all discriminatory regulations affecting living and working opportunities of rural migrants in urban areas, where appropriate.

114. Governments, human rights and women's groups should provide information to

rural migrant women on their human rights and international standards of equality. Governments should also provide these women with legal and consular support, as appropriate.

## **B. Women's livelihood and work**

115. Governments, the private sector and civil society should jointly develop policies and projects and consolidate resources in order to improve infrastructures and provide job opportunities in rural areas.

116. The functioning of financial institutions in rural areas should be analysed by Governments and local authorities with the view to make them more accessible to rural women. This should include the support to revolving credit systems which are well suited to assist cooperative ventures in rural areas.

117. Governments, donors, NGOs and the private sector should develop specific assistance programmes and advisory services to enhance rural women's economic skills in banking, modern trading and financial procedures matching requirements of the market economy.

118. International donors should provide aid programmes directly to rural women rather than through the intermediaries.

119. Governments should protect, through proper policy regulations, national resources and bio-diversity and invest in eco- and cultural tourism in rural areas to enable rural women to develop new economic activity.

120. Rural women's indigenous knowledge and experience in subsistence production and environment should be recognized by national and local Governments as a resource and integrated into formal programmes.

121. Support for rural women by Governments, NGOs and the private sector should not be confined to micro-enterprises. Rather, it should be directed at different scales of enterprise and women should be supported to expand their enterprises according to their needs and the possibilities in the given environment.

122. In order to enhance women's participation in the labour market, improve their bargaining power and facilitate social contacts, Governments, NGOs and the private sector should support initiatives aimed at strengthening social networks that are a source of support and information.

## **C. Empowerment and capacity building through access to training, technology and basic services**

123. Governments, NGOs, mass media and other actors in civil society should organize educational and awareness raising campaigns aimed at the transformation of cultural norms towards gender equality and encourage the private and public sector to be more gender-sensitive.

124. Education, information and training for rural women should continue to be a high priority. Information services for rural women entrepreneurs should be expanded based on an analysis of rapidly changing and new market opportunities.

125. Agricultural training programmes and educational institutions should revise their curriculum and methods of their work to respond to the needs of rural women in a rapidly changing global context. They should also provide rural women with information on emerging job opportunities.

126. Governments and local authorities should develop exchange programmes at school level for rural and urban girls, to familiarize them with the living conditions in each sphere, and introduce them to the opportunities in each area.

127. Governments, international organizations, including UN system, educational institutions and NGOs should create opportunities for rural women from various regions and countries to exchange experiences and information, to network, and engage in mutually beneficial projects.

128. Rural women should be more actively supported by Governments and the private sector in gaining access to opportunities provided by new agriculture and information and communication technologies (ICT). These ICT facilities must penetrate to the level of rural villages.

129. Governments should ensure provision of basic services in education and health, including maternal and child care services and devise them in accordance with the needs of rural women and girls including through distance and informal education programmes. The private sector should support such activities.

130. Governments and the private sector should provide support for community initiatives for care of abandoned and/or orphaned children and other vulnerable members of the community.

131. In order to improve rural women's negotiating positions and skills within the household and community, to strengthen their self-esteem, self-confidence and awareness of their rights, national and local Governments, international organizations and NGOs should provide capacity building training to the rural women.

132. Governments, political parties, local authorities and NGOs should:

- (a) Facilitate women's participation in decision-making bodies at the local level by providing training and capacity building programmes. Quota system should be adopted as an interim measure, as appropriate.
- (b) Support and encourage rural women's equal participation in leadership in rural producer associations.

#### **D. Migration and gender relations**

133. NGOs should organize training programmes for women who are entering 'male

working domains' and strengthen women's ability to cope with the absence of male members of the household and encourage them to perform all tasks related to new work requirements.

134. Governments in cooperation with the International Migration Organization (IMO) should promote establishment of training programmes, services and community centres for migrant rural women.

135. Governments, financial institutions and NGOs should provide rural communities and migrant women with information on modern ways of financial management, banking and investment opportunities in order to make their remittances and savings rewarding.

136. Donors should provide financial support to non-governmental organizations involved in providing direct counselling to female migrants from rural areas.

137. In view of increased trafficking in women and children, Governments, international organizations and national and international law enforcement agencies should provide effective protection of rural women migrants and their children and protect their rights.

### **E. Further research and policy formulation**

138. Governments, international organizations, including the UN system and research institutes should undertake analysis of the impact of 'globalization' on the rural population from a gender perspective. The data and information should be disaggregated by region and sex and made context-specific in order to reflect rural women's work including in the informal sector. It should be followed by further empirical research and case studies in various economic and socio-cultural contexts, in order to assess the challenges to and opportunities for rural women.

139. Governments and international organizations including the UN system should intensify their efforts to reflect women's unpaid work in rural households in national statistics and in policy formulation, implementation, and monitoring.

140. The consequences of the phyto sanitary regulations and subsidies to agriculture, as applied by some countries, should be analysed by Governments, international organizations and research institutes to illustrate their impact on agriculture in developing countries and rural women in particular.

141. The changing nature of households and gender relations in rural areas within the current global context should be studied by research institutes in order to enable Governments and international organizations to adjust policies and programmes to respond to rural women's needs.

142. Further comparative long-term research should be conducted by IMO, national and international research institutes to document the diversified patterns of migration and their impact on gender relations and gender identities throughout the migration cycle.

143. Special studies should be undertaken by Governments, research institutes and the private sector to establish the best model for integrating rural women in the ICT field.

## ANNEX I

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## ANNEX II

### LIST OF DOCUMENTS

#### A. PAPERS BY EXPERTS

- EGM/RW/2001/EP.1      *Impact of HIV/AIDS Pandemic on the situation of rural women in Mongolia*  
Prepared by Khorloo Enkhjargal, MD, PhD, Executive Director,  
National AIDS Foundation, (Mongolia)
- EGM/RW/2001/EP.2      *Changes in patterns of livelihoods, including, employment opportunities and conditions of work*  
Prepared by S.R. Osmani, Professor, School of Public Policy,  
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- EGM/RW/2001/EP.3      *Earning a living: globalization, gender and rural livelihoods*  
Prepared by Jeanne Frances I. Illo, Institute of Philippine Culture  
Ateneo de Manila University (Philippines)
- EGM/RW/2001/EP.4      *Changing patterns of household division of labour*  
Prepared by Soha Abdel Kader, Independent Consultant (Egypt)
- EGM/RW/2001/EP.5      *The impact of changing patterns of land rights on rural women*  
Prepared by Susana Lastarria-Cornhiel, Land Tenure Center,  
University of Wisconsin-Madison (USA)
- EGM/RW/2001/EP.6      *Changes in livelihood patterns of rural women and the significance of non-farm income*  
Prepared by Nazneen Kanji, International Institute for  
Environment and Development (England)
- EGM/RW/2001/EP.7      *Labour mobility, gender relations and division of labour:  
The case of women-headed households*  
Prepared by Adelheid Iken (Hamburg)
- EGM/RW/2001/EP.8      *Labour migration and rural women headed households.  
Challenges and*  
*Perspectives at the dawn of the new millennium*  
Prepared by Paloma Bonfil (Mexico)
- EGM/RW/2001/EP.9      *Impact of rural-urban migration on gender economic relations in China*

Prepared by Xin Meng, Fellow, Department of Economics,  
Research School of Pacific/Asian Studies, Australian National  
University (Australia)

- EGM/RW/2001/EP.10      *Rural women in a global village measures and policies to  
increase the  
participation of rural women in decision-making in the  
household and the community within the context of globalization*  
Prepared by Sandra Botha (South Africa)
- EGM/RW/2001/EP.11      *Rural women as equal partners in the development in Europe*  
Prepared by Utah Hoffmann-Altmann, Coordinator, Humboldt  
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- EGM/RW/2001/EP.12      *Capacity or opportunity: women's role in decision-making in  
household and the community case studies in China*  
Prepared by L. Zhibin, College of Rural Development, China  
Agricultural University (China)

#### **B. PAPERS BY OBSERVERS**

- EGM/RW/2001/OP.1      *Women farmers and entrepreneurs in the globalizing economy*  
Prepared by Eija Peju, World Bank (Washington)
- EGM/RW/2001/OP.2      *Impact of globalization on rural women*  
Prepared by Revathi Balakrishnan, FAO (Rome)
- EGM/RW/2001/OP.3      *The role of ICT for rural women*  
Prepared by S. Badral

#### **C. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- EGM/RW/2001/BP.1      *Engendering globalization: from subsistence farming to rural  
industrialization and agribusiness*  
Prepared by Marianne H. Marchand, Amsterdam School for  
Social Science Research the Belle van Zuijlen Institute  
(Netherlands)
- EGM/RW/2001/BP.2      *The situation of rural women in Mongolia*  
Prepared by B. Shatar, Deputy Chairperson of the Cabinet  
Secretariat, Government of Mongolia

## ANNEX III

### PROGRAMME OF WORK

**Monday, 4 June 2001**

8.30 am - 9.30 am	Registration
9.30 am - 10.30 am	Official opening of the meeting Statements by: Representatives from the host country Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mongolia <b>Mr. B. Ganbold, State Secretary</b>  United Nations Development Fund for Women <b>Ms. Lanyan Chen</b>  Division for the Advancement of Women <b>Ms. Yakin Erürk, Director</b>
10.30 am - 11.00 am	Coffee break
11.00 am - 11.15 pm	Election of Officers: Adoption of programme of work
11.15 pm - 1.00 pm	Presentations on the topic 1: "Impact of major trends of globalization on women in rural areas: comparative analysis of challenges and opportunities"  Presentation by the World Bank (7-10 min.) <b>Ms. Eija Peju</b>  Presentation by the FAO Regional Officer (7-10 min.) <b>Ms. Revathi Balakrishnan</b>  Presentation of a background paper by the consultant (20-30 min) <b>Ms. M. Marchand</b>  General Debate:
1.00 pm - 2.30 pm	Lunch
2.30 pm - 4.00 pm	Presentations on topic 2: "Changes in patterns of livelihoods, including, employment opportunities and conditions of work " (each presentation 7-10 min.). <b>Ms. Khorloo Enkhjargal</b> <b>Mr. S.Osmani</b> <b>Ms. J.Ilo</b>

	Debate
4.00 pm - 4.30 pm	Coffee break
4.30 pm - 6.00 pm	Topic 3: Changing patterns of household division of labour. (each presentation 7-10 min.). <i>Ms. S. Kader</i> <i>Ms. S. Lastarria-Cornhiel</i> <i>Ms. N. Kanji</i>
	Debate
7.30 pm	Reception/Dinner
<b>Tuesday, 5 June 2001</b>	
9.00 am -11.00 am	Working groups: general discussion. Working group I on topic 2: "Changes in patterns of livelihoods, including, employment opportunities and conditions of work " Working group II on topic 3: "Changing patterns of household division of labour" <i>* Each working group will receive the summary of general debate on the issue of the discussion prepared by rapporteur.</i>
11.00am - 11.30 am	Coffee break
11.30 am - 1.00 am	Discussion on policy recommendations for the report. Working group I: "Changes in patterns of livelihoods, including, employment opportunities and conditions of work ". Working group II: "Changing patterns of household division of labor".
1.00 pm - 2.30 pm	Lunch
2.30 pm - 4.00 pm	Presentations of reports from the working group I and II on topic 2 and 3.
4.00 pm - 4.30 pm	Coffee break
4.30 pm - 6.00 pm	Topic 4. "Impact of labour mobility and labour migration on gender relations and division of labour". (Each presentation 7-10 min.). <i>Ms.B. Shatar</i> <i>Ms. A. Iken</i> <i>Ms. P. Bonfil Sanchez</i> <i>Ms. X. Meng</i>
	Debate.



### **Wednesday, 6 June 2001**

9.00 am - 10.30 am	Topic 5: "Women's role in decision-making in the household and the community: capacity building" (each presentation 7-10 min.). <b><i>Ms. S. Botha</i></b> <b><i>Ms. U. Hoffmann-Altmann</i></b> <b><i>Ms. L. Zhibin</i></b> <b><i>Mr. S. Badral</i></b>  Debate
10.30 am- 11.00 am	Coffee break
11.30 am - 1.00 pm	Working groups: general discussion. Working group I on topic 4: "Impact of labour mobility and labour migration on gender relations and division of labour". Working group II on topic 5: "Women's role in decision-making in the household and the community: capacity building". <i>* Each working group will receive the summary of general debate on the issue of the discussion prepared by rapporteur.</i>
1.00 pm - 2.30 pm	Lunch
2.30 pm - 4.00 pm	Discussion on policy recommendations for the report. Working group I: "Impact of labour mobility and labour migration on gender relations and division of labour". Working group II: "Women's role in decision-making in the household and the community: capacity building".
4.00 pm - 4.30 pm	Coffee break
4.30 pm - 5.30 pm	Presentation of reports from the working group I and II on topic 4 and 5.
5.30 pm - 6.30 pm	Overall discussion on all reports presented by working group I and II.

### **Thursday, 7 June 2001**

9.00 am - 2.00 pm	Drafting group
3.00 pm- 6.00 pm	Discussion of the draft report and policy recommendations.

### **Friday, 8 June 2001**

9.00 am - 11.00 am	Presentation of the report
11.00 am- 11.30 am	Coffee break
11.30 am - 1.00 pm	Final discussion of the report

1.00 pm - 2.30 pm

Lunch

2.30 pm - 6.00 pm

Adoption of the Report  
Closing statements  
Closing the meeting