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The plight of rural women: alternatives for action[1]

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1. Introduction

In developing countries generally women form a high proportion of the rural workforce, with some variations based on cultural and traditional practices as well as class or caste distinctions. Obviously "rural women", like "rural men", cannot be treated as a homogeneous category; the wives and daughters of the rich, and rich women in their own right (e.g. landowners and money-lenders), contribute little in terms of labour. But with these exceptions the majority of women who live in the rural areas of developing countries make a vital contribution to rural production, both farm and non-farm.

Women perform many of the crucial as well as laborious tasks in the home and on the farm. They carry out a large number of duties related to food production, besides helping with the cultivation of cash crops. In addition to looking after the children and other members of the family, their functions include food processing, water carrying, cloth making, etc., tasks which in industrialised societies are performed outside the household and are allocated through the market mechanism.

All this involves long hours and hard, physically demanding work ranging from food preparation at dawn while other family members are still resting, to carrying water and fuel over long distances and caring for small children while working in the fields and on development project sites. It has been estimated that rural women's actual daily working hours can be as high as 15-16, often considerably more than those of men. They suffer from a double burden of exploitation: along with their menfolk, as part of the rural poor; and, in addition, as members of the female sex. In many parts of the world, from the time they are born, rural women are given a minimum of medical care, less than their fair share of the family food and an inferior education (with the result that literacy rates for women are lower than those for men), and have to put up with poor working conditions, including lower wages for tasks involving hard physical labour.[2]

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Finally, women are seldom considered in the planning of rural development projects, with the consequence that modernisation has often had a negative impact on women. Micro-studies reveal that most women are still engaged in manual work using traditional tools. They have little or no access to technological training, credit and modern inputs generally. Whilst their contribution to agriculture, especially food production, is being increasingly recognised, their work continues to be treated as of a supplementary nature, more or less as an appendage to that of men. Consequently, rural women's economic activities are underestimated in labour force and national income statistics. Remedying the biases that distort conventional statistics in this way requires an effort to redefine the concept of economic activity in relation not only to the process of production for the market but also to its contribution to human welfare [Beneria].

In this article it is intended to give a brief résumé of the findings of some of the research undertaken by the ILO and other United Nations agencies as well as by independent researchers regarding women's activities in the rural sector; this will be followed by a short discussion of alternative action programmes. The focus will be on women belonging to disadvantaged groups, such as female agricultural labourers, plantation workers, sharecroppers, tenants and small farm operators, as well as women engaged in household and cottage industries. These are the classes of women who are engaged side by side with their menfolk in the daily struggle for survival; they suffer from all the problems of poverty—landlessness, high levels of unemployment and underemployment, insecurity of livelihood—in addition to facing discrimination based on sex.

2. The situation of rural women

Women in subsistence agriculture

Studies from several countries confirm that rural women participate extensively in agricultural work, either in the fields or within the confines of the "compound", depending on the degree of their seclusion. In Hyderabad, India, for example, in the villages investigated [Mies, *b*] women perform 75-80 per cent of all agricultural work. Their share in agricultural operations is substantial in respect not only of food crops but also of those non-food commercial crops, e.g. cotton, that are labour-intensive and do not involve the use of mechanical implements. The findings in Hyberabad point to the fact that women's main means of production are often their own bodies, whilst men's work usually involves some farm equipment and the use of draught animals. The study further shows that rural women, especially agricultural labourers, have an actual working day of approximately 15 hours.

Even in countries like Bangladesh where, because of tradition and *purdah*, women generally do not work in the fields, they are nevertheless fully occupied in agricultural production processes once the rice crop has been brought into the compound. Their work consists of threshing (to separate the rice from the stalks); drying the stalks for cattle feed; winnowing and sieving the rice several times; parboiling; steeping, drying and husking; and finally preparing for the storage of rice, which includes the making of special containers coated inside and out with a mixture of cow dung and mud. At every step in this process the women have to be careful not to do anything that might adversely affect the quality and quantity of rice produced or the condition of next year's seed. Additionally, women in rural Bangladesh have to do most of the work involved in the production of poultry, goats, fish, milk, lentils, vegetables, herbs and fruit, as well as having a year-round responsibility for the feeding and care of the bullocks used as draught animals [Abdullah and Zeidenstein].

It is interesting to compare the agricultural tasks performed by women in Bangladesh with the work done by secluded Moslem women in Hausaland, northern Nigeria, and in Syria. Because women in Hausaland are confined to their compounds, they generally do not carry out farm tasks or cultivate land. Nevertheless, they do have their own sources of income through trading, food processing, hairdressing, midwifery, etc., occupations which are carried out inside the compound, using children as agents for outside transactions such as buying and selling. Rural food processing is an important industry in Hausaland, providing gainful employment for thousands of rural people, primarily women, and generating a substantial amount of income that is spent locally [Longhurst]. In Syria women are reported to have major responsibilities, especially for planting, sowing, harvesting, threshing, hoeing, ploughing and the grading and sorting of produce, with women, particularly young girls, doing almost all the work during the peak agricultural seasons. The women's workload was found to have become even greater owing to the prolonged absence of adult men who have migrated in search of employment either to urban areas or abroad.[3]

Comparable data on the extensive particpation of rural women in agricultural activities is now available for a number of countries. In many cases, especially in Africa, the origin of the phenomenon can be traced back to the advent of colonialism when men were recruited for wage-earning employment in plantations and mines; their families, particularly the womenfolk, were forced to work the land for subsistence, since the male wage was sufficient only to meet the needs of single workers.

Female wage labour in agriculture

Women also work for wages in agriculture, being compensated mainly in kind, but sometimes also in cash. The trend for women to work outside

the family farm is rising with the increase in landlessness. As more rural families find themselves without any ownership or tenancy rights in land, both men and women are forced to contract themselves out as seasonal and casual labour. Women are generally paid 40 to 60 per cent of the male wage and given the more labour-intensive tasks like weeding, transplanting and harvesting. This appears to be equally true under two such widely different political systems and economies as those of India and the Republic of South Africa. In India the work of transplanting rice is done almost entirely by women, who are reported to work non-stop from 10.30 a.m. to 6 p.m. for a statutory minimum wage of 3 rupees a day (compared with 5 rupees for men). In South Africa casual work in weeding or picking, which is also the lowest paid of all agricultural jobs, is reported to fall to the lot of women who, apart from earning extremely low wages, are also frequently paid in kind, in the form of maize meal, fruit or other crops. Casual work of this sort in South Africa is not protected by labour legislation on minimum wages, maximum hours of work, etc.[4]

Detailed studies on women's wage employment are limited in number; more information needs to be gathered, especially on recent trends in the diminution of employment opportunities for women in agriculture as a consequence of mechanisation. Reductions in female employment are likely to have substantial negative effects on the income and welfare of poorer households, especially if there are no compensatory increases in employment for males of the same households. The implications are particularly serious for households that survive only through the labour of all able-bodied family members, regardless of sex, as well as for low-income female-headed households, which appear to be increasing in number owing to outward male migration.

Plantation workers

In addition to working as seasonal and casual labourers in agriculture generally, women also work on plantations, either as members of a plantation worker's family or as labourers in their own right. On plantations in India, Malaysia and Sri Lanka, for example, contracts are generally signed with the male head of the family, who is frequently required also to provide the labour of his wife and children. A recent study of plantation labour in Malaysia reports that women provide 50 per cent or more of the labour force on rubber estates [Heyzer-Fan]. They work mainly as tappers and weeders, with the help of their children. Their wages, which are calculated as part of a "family" wage, fluctuate with the weather (rubber tapping is impossible on rainy days, which are frequent during the wet monsoons). Their employment is being adversely affected by the declining international demand for rubber and the resulting trend towards the conversion of rubber estates into oil-palm holdings, whose labour requirements are much lower. Indeed, it is reported that women plantation

workers all over the world are facing serious employment problems as a consequence of falling over-all demand for labour.[5] Technological advances in field operations are increasingly enabling plantations to maintain or even to expand their output with fewer permanent workers. Part of the field work is becoming semi-skilled, requiring mechanical training normally provided only to males. On some of the plantations there appears to be a classification of jobs by sex, women being assigned to jobs with lower pay and poorer conditions of work. On the São Paulo coffee plantations, for example, the most demanding jobs, which are paid at piece rates, are reported to be reserved for women.[6] In Brazil, again, women are being increasingly used only for seasonal or casual work. Women workers on plantations are employed under "verbal contracts" or as "casual labourers", working on a day-to-day basis with little employment security or access to worker benefits.

In recent years foreign owners of plantations have been more and more inclined to liquidate their land holdings and to operate on the basis of contracts signed with individual farmers. Under this new system of operation, the expatriate company maintains a small central estate with a large number of small farmers tied to it by delivery contracts. The individual families are linked to the company through the supply of credit and other inputs as well as the purchase of produce grown on the holding. Under this set-up the family remains the unit of production, with the family members, especially the women, working long hours for very low returns.[7]

Women's land rights

Rights in agricultural land in most societies, even in many of the developed countries, still devolve to men on the assumption that there is always a male head of family. It is clear from studies of recent developments, however, that female-headed households are on the increase. One of the results is that, while rural women bear the major burden of agricultural work, they cannot easily obtain seeds, fertilisers and other inputs on credit since this is generally given against the security of land. In certain instances government policies have resulted in dispossessing women of their traditional rights in land use. This is principally the case in Africa where, under communal tenure, land rights were allocated to the person who worked the land—frequently women in precolonial days. Colonial administrations, with their imported notions about the composition of families and individual rights in land, tended to encourage the idea of land usually being owned by the male head of the household. In these circumstances women came to be regarded as subordinate members of the farm family and they lost the status they previously enjoyed as independent farm operators.[8]

Whilst women's loss of status is probably particularly evident in Africa, elsewhere also land reform, land settlement programmes and the

development of co-operatives—all reputedly progressive and development-oriented measures—have neglected to take into consideration women's interests, roles and position. Land reform laws, for example, have consistently ignored women, referring in general to the distribution of holdings to families with a clear assumption that there is always a male at the head of the household. This is what is reported to have happened in Ethiopia under the Land Reform Proclamation of 1975, which "perpetuates the legalised and feudal family structure, thus excluding women from directly participating in the agrarian reform movement".[9] Most government policies in practice ignore the fact that many rural males have migrated to cities and even to other countries, leaving their wives to take full responsibility for the cultivation and management of the land. Under the land laws of many countries men continue to have the right to come back to the village and take possession of the land, sometimes even with a second wife, dispossessing the first wife who has worked the land. These and other problems concerning women's rights in land, including inheritance rights, need careful investigation.

The impact of modernisation and the internationalisation of production

A good deal of evidence has now been gathered to show that technological progress has resulted in the creation of new inequalities between rural men and women. In many cases the introduction of modern techniques has increased the already heavy burden of work for women, especially during periods of peak labour demand. The Bangladesh study, for example, reveals that the introduction of higher-yielding rice varieties imposes a heavy workload on unpaid family workers (normally women) in respect of weeding, harvesting and processing [Abdullah and Zeidenstein]. Similarly, in Egypt, the introduction of new cotton varieties is reported to have intensified seasonal demand for family (female) labour, thus increasing women's workload.[10] At the same time, the jobs which women perform on the farm and in the home, such as weeding, transplanting, harvesting and household chores generally (gathering firewood, carrying water, grinding cereals and spices), have not been materially lightened by new technologies, even though it is recognised that these tasks are especially time-consuming and physically tiring.

Whilst, on the one hand, development has increased the workload of women who are unpaid family helpers, time-saving mechanised devices have been introduced to perform tasks for which women were previously hired for wages, thus depriving them of a source of employment. For example, in both southern India and Indonesia, rice mills (in which men are now hired to work with machines) are replacing traditional husking operations for which women were previously engaged.[11] The new techniques thus introduced benefit the landowners by reducing costs and better preserving the rice grains, but at the expense of women from poor

rural households for whom rice pounding used to constitute a major source of regular income.

In Indonesia large landowners are taking to the practice of subcontracting the harvesting and sale of rice to outsiders, so as to escape their traditional crop-sharing obligations towards local harvesters (generally women). As a consequence, in certain areas harvesting operations have become more mechanised, with a saving in costs to private entrepreneurs of as much as 42 per cent; this has, however, caused a loss of jobs on a large scale, mainly affecting the poorer women who were traditionally involved in harvesting, generally in return for a share of the produce. Even where machines have not been introduced the contractors prefer to employ a small group of male harvesters who work more rapidly with the use of sickles than is possible with the traditional tool (*ani-ani*) used by the women, which cuts stalks individually. This reduces the number of harvesters by as much as 60 per cent but deprives women and their families of income and, even worse, a direct source of food, thus lowering nutritional levels.[12]

There is some evidence that the incorporation of small farms into larger national and world markets has worsened the position of women, especially where the motivation has been individual profit rather than the welfare of the local population. This appears to be true, for example, of two areas in Morocco: the Gharb district in southern Morocco, which is under the control of the Ministry of Agriculture, and the valley of El Jadida in the Oulja region, where a number of agricultural co-operatives have been set up [Mernissi; El Belghiti and Beneria]. Both these areas are now geared to agricultural production for European or other foreign markets. Households producing cash crops in Morocco normally rely heavily on women's unremunerated labour and in the areas that have recently been linked to the international market women are having to carry an even higher workload during peak seasons; this is reported to be having a bad effect on their own health and the well-being of their children. In the Gharb district women do not seem to have benefited from the introduction of new production techniques. They continue to work as unpaid family workers, the head of the household being compensated for the work of the whole family. Nor do they derive much benefit from modernisation generally, since this manifests itself in the availability of such commodities and services as electricity, improved transport, schools, hospitals, medicaments, etc., whose cost puts them beyond the reach of women and children from peasant families. Accordingly, the introduction of modern technology appears to have made little or no difference to the everyday life of peasant women, who continue to work with elementary tools and primitive sources of energy. In fact, for the majority of peasant families to which these women belong, modernisation and production for the international market have resulted in an expansion of commercial farms at the expense of family farms, leading to a deterioration in the economic situation and sometimes

to the elimination of the smaller farms. Some of the people who have thus been disinherited, including women, have been taken on as wage earners, but with little job security or permanency of employment.

A somewhat similar situation appears to exist in the State of Sinaloa in Mexico (Culiacán Valley), which produces 60 per cent of the tomatoes consumed in the United States each winter [Roldán].

In Africa the impact of modernisation on women seems to be particularly adverse, mainly because the large degree of economic independence enjoyed by women in traditional societies has been gradually eroded by the establishment of male-dominated institutions such as co-operatives and marketing boards, as well as by the creation of individual rights in land to replace communal or land use rights.

Women in rural industries

In most developing countries women are active, along with men, in rural home-based industrial production; the *biri*-making industry in northern India, which mainly employs secluded Moslem women (*biri*—also written *bidi* and *beedi*—is a cheap substitute for cigarettes), and the lace-making industry of Narsapur in southern India may serve as illustrations. Work on *biri* production is mainly done at home by women who are paid at piece rates under a contract system. The contractor, who provides the raw material and collects the finished products, is frequently a powerful landowner, while the women are poor, illiterate and tradition-bound. The relationship thus becomes highly exploitative, the effective piece rate paid to women being less than the minimum wage prescribed by the Department of Labour [Bhatty].

The lace industry, which has existed since 1900, is big business in Narsapur, 95 per cent of the output being exported to foreign markets [Mies, *a*]. It is almost totally controlled by outside agents, hawkers, traders and exporters, all of whom make large profits. The lace is produced by women and girls, who often start lace-making at the early age of 6 and continue till they are 70 years old; they are paid very little for their work. The irony is that women's employment in lace-making is not recorded separately in national labour force statistics, where these women continue to be classified as "housewives", apparently working on lace-making as a hobby. The lace-makers, like the *biri*-makers, are secluded women (although non-Moslem) to whom the contractors supply thread and from whom they collect the finished products, paying for them on a piece-rate basis. The workers are completely unorganised, and the average daily return is reported to be only 0.56 rupee, compared with a wage of around 3 rupees per day for female agricultural workers. Lace-making in its present form is thought to be closely linked to the growing pauperisation of peasants in the area. Because women belonging to local peasant households are in desperate financial straits through indebtedness, loss of land, etc., and because custom and tradition preclude these women, who

belong to higher castes, from working for a wage outside the home, they are forced to work at lace-making in spite of the extreme exploitation to which they are subjected.

Whilst the situation of women working in these two household industries no doubt presents certain special characteristics, the problems faced by them have certain policy implications for household industries generally. From the experience of the *biri-* and lace-makers, it could be concluded that the integration of women into the market economy through the establishment of home industries has not solved but rather aggravated the problem of their poverty. At the same time, the development of these home industries has led to an extraordinary growth and concentration of capital in the hands of a few merchants and exporters, to the disadvantage of the women who are the main producers. Whilst national programmes designed to increase women's income-earning activities continue in many countries to be focused on handicrafts and home industries generally, little or no attempt is made to ensure that the women who produce the commodities also exercise control over the marketing of the end product. It is clear that great care needs to be taken in developing new employment promotion and export-oriented schemes (including home industries) for poor rural women as long as the prevailing unorganised and exploitative relations of production within industry and the patriarchal relations within the family remain intact.

3. Action to assist rural women

Studies on rural women have shown that there is nothing final or fixed about the roles that women assume or the status accorded to them in a particular society. Women's roles undergo changes, usually gradual but occasionally abrupt, through improvements in technology, through political revolution, as a consequence of wars, through legislative reforms, through changes in educational systems, etc. By studying and drawing attention to the potential impact of certain types of development on the role and status of women, it is possible for governments and national bodies generally to accelerate and guide these changes. There is nothing inevitable about women being displaced by the modernisation of agriculture. Men have benefited from such modernisation whenever special efforts have been made on their behalf. By making a concerted effort to reach women agriculturists through extension services, by giving women the same educational and training opportunities as men, by providing them with rights in land, by opening up credit and marketing services to women, by setting up child-care facilities to lighten their domestic burdens, etc., it should be possible to reduce drastically the liabilities presently suffered by rural women.

The aim should be to ensure that the special requirements of women are taken account of and incorporated in the design of rural development

projects from the very beginning, instead of assuming that, by increasing GNP growth, development will automatically have a "trickle down" effect on poor women in rural areas. Technical co-operation projects need to be geared more directly to food processing and traditional sectors where women predominate, with the object of lightening women's workload by introducing appropriate technology for such tasks as water carrying, weeding and transplanting, which are both physically tiring and time-consuming. At the same time, care needs to be taken to ensure that women are not pushed deeper into less-skilled and lower-paid or unpaid jobs, resulting in their further marginalisation. Wage differentials based solely on sex should be done away with and an attempt made to fix wages on the basis of the perceived and actual marginal productivity of individual tasks, whether performed by men or by women.

In some of the developing countries efforts are being made by governments to involve rural women in development programmes. For example, the Ministry of Rural Development in Lesotho has recently set up an Office of Women's Affairs to ensure participation by women in the formulation of rural development schemes. In Mali a National Centre for Research and Industrial Development was created in 1975 under the Ministry of Industrial Development to encourage non-farm activities for women in rural areas. Similarly, the Women's Bureau in Kenya supports income-generating projects (animal husbandry, small-scale business) as well as community welfare projects directed towards improved water supplies, the opening of day care centres and the promotion of handicrafts for women. Some local authorities in Kenya have also accepted the idea of allocating business premises and farming plots to women's organisations as a means of strengthening their growth and involvement in development. In Papua New Guinea the Government is considering a proposal made by the National Council of Women to revise land laws in order to ensure equal rights for women in the ownership of land, which would enable them to benefit from rural development programmes directly. In Cuba women are given special encouragement to join co-operatives and it is reported that they now constitute 35 per cent of the membership of rural co-operatives. This high level of participation has been achieved as a direct result of two complementary developments: (i) the organisation of communal and social services in villages, which relieve women of some of their traditional household and domestic responsibilities and give them more time to devote to co-operative activities; and (ii) the adoption on 8 March 1975 of the Family Code, which makes it obligatory for both partners in a marriage to share equally in household tasks and the raising of children.[13] The Jamaican Women's Bureau is encouraging women to train for and take up income-earning activities that were formerly limited to men, such as goat raising, woodwork, welding, and baking for sale on the local market, while the Institute of Craft is reorganising and expanding the craft industry, in which female employment predominates.[14]

In devising projects for poor rural women, two things need to be kept in mind: the importance of an appropriate organisational base, and the development of fully competitive and economically viable projects. Organisation or group action, both separately and jointly with men, is necessary for a variety of reasons: to achieve economies of scale; to eliminate middlemen, money-lenders and traders who profit from the exploitation of women; to provide solidarity and support to women who are otherwise isolated in their homes and families; and finally, to organise a variety of communal services necessary to reduce women's heavy workload. Similarly, it is clear that "small craft projects to help women earn 'pin money' are not only *passé*, they are almost destined to fail. Such failures reinforce the biases against women's economic activity" [Tinker]. Schemes for the development of home industries for women in Third World countries should be very carefully planned, so as to ensure that the producers (women) maintain control over the basic economic infrastructure (credit, raw material supplies, marketing, etc.) and some organisational and collective strength vis-à-vis the traders and exporters.

As a result of greater awareness generated by feminist movements and possibly also by the International Women's Year, there has been an intensification of women's organisational activities in a number of countries. Examples of organisations in which women play an important role (whether or not membership is limited to women only) exist in different parts of the world. The efforts made by women in Uttarakhand, India, to save forest resources through the Chipko Rural Workers' Organisation may be quoted as a case in point. Here tribal women living in the most backward hill districts of Uttar Pradesh have taken the lead in a campaign to protect the Himalayan forests against excessive extraction. They have seen clearly that in the absence of proper forest management the resulting soil erosion and other consequences will increasingly force male family members to migrate to other areas in search of paid employment, leaving the women, children and old people behind to cope with the cultivation of the land. The women have also been directly concerned with the problem of forest depletion because of the difficulties they experience in the collection of firewood for cooking.[15] It is remarkable that tribal women with little training or education have achieved the necessary degree of social and political consciousness to mobilise themselves to defend the forests, which they now perceive as their heritage and source of future economic independence.

In Nepal women's organisations are developing with government support and encouragement. Under the Small Farmers' Development Programme women (and men) are being encouraged to form organisations of their own, below the level of co-operatives. Each group has a limited number of members (15 to 20 only) who get together around a common income-raising activity, based on group work plans and group action. This group action is supported by the Government through an integrated

programme providing supervised credit, extension and technical backstopping.[16] In the People's Republic of China the growth of a clearly recognisable women's movement provided the necessary institutional framework for the development of a collective identity amongst women. For example, local women's groups have become recognised organisations for protecting women's rights, sometimes even acting as divorce courts. This has occasionally resulted in tensions between the groups' wider revolutionary aims, such as class unity, and the specific demands of women, such as divorce.[17]

In Kenya, as an outgrowth of the mutual aid movement known as *harambee*, 5,000 self-help groups have been set up to encourage income-earning activities amongst poor rural women, including poultry raising, bee-keeping, vegetable gardening, animal husbandry, small-scale retailing, transport and handicrafts. Group action of this sort is always organised around specific income-earning projects. Membership fees in these groups are deliberately kept low in order to encourage poor women to join, a major aim being to create a sense of solidarity amongst women.[18]

In Ghana women's organisations have a long history, their main objective being to bring women together to work on communal tasks such as repairs to roads, waterways and schools. In one case of such activity cited recently the women concerned pooled their resources to build a health clinic and raised money—principally through work on a collective cassava farm—to establish a day nursery for the children of working mothers.[19]

The above are, of course, only a very small selection of the instances where women have begun to attack and overcome their problems through the formation of solidarity groups or organisations. It is clear that if poor rural women are to benefit from development they need to come together in one way or another in order to defend their interests and obtain their share of national resources. Poor women, like men in similar situations, need grass-root organisations that are based on local initiatives and are controlled by the poor themselves.

All over the developing world there exist traditional organisational forms which enable women to associate for specific religious, social and even economic purposes. Among the Moslems of the Indian subcontinent, for example, there are the *milads*, usually held on Fridays, when the women meet to read from religious books and to chant prayers. In other countries there are church, social and cultural groups but also the traditional mutual aid, savings and burial societies, which provide the means for limited group action. These get-togethers could provide the platform for initiating other, more development-oriented activities. If more information on such traditional forms of organisation were available (as to what they are, how they function, what their purpose is and who their leaders are), it might be possible to channel development information and training in group action through them. The use of such traditional means already familiar to poor

women could prove more effective than the introduction of institutions, such as co-operatives, whose working procedures are often foreign to the poor.

Notes

[1] This article draws extensively on as yet unpublished ILO research. Where appropriate, the relevant source will be indicated by the name of the author(s) in brackets. The works used are as follows:

Abdullah, T., and Zeidenstein, S.: *Village women of Bangladesh: prospects for change.*

Benería, L.: *Accounting for women's work.*

Bhatty, Z.: *Economic role and status of women: a case study of women in the beedi industry in Allahabad.*

El Belghiti, M., and Benería, L.: *The participation of women in commercial agricultural production,* A case study of the Oulja region in Morocco.

Heyzer-Fan, N.: *Women rubber estate workers in peninsular Malaysia,* An examination of social and economic changes and their effects on the sexual division of labour.

Longhurst, R.: *Resource allocation and the sexual division of labour,* A case study of a Moslem Hausa village in northern Nigeria.

Mernissi, F.: *Les effets de la modernisation rurale sur les rôles de sexe au Maroc.*

Mies, M., *a: Housewives produce for the world market: the lace-makers of Narsapur.*

—— *b: The impact of the market economy on women's productive and reproductive work in the rural subsistence economy in Hyderabad, India.*

Roldán, M.: *Wage labour and rural women's condition in the valley of Culiacán.*

Tinker, I.: *New technologies for food chain activities: an equity strategy.*

[2] United Nations: *Development and international economic co-operation: effective mobilization of women in development,* Report of the Secretary-General, United Nations General Assembly, Thirty-third session, agenda item 58*(d)* (New York; doc. A/33/238, 26 Oct. 1978), p. 7; and idem, Commission on the Status of Women: *Report on the twenty-seventh session,* Economic and Social Council Official Records, 1978, Supplement No. 2 (New York; doc. E/1978/32/Rev. 1; E/CN.6/620/Rev. 1), p. 19.

[3] FAO/UNESCO/ILO/WPF/ECWA: *Mission report on rural women's participation in development,* Syrian Arab Republic, 28 August-12 September 1979.

[4] "Women: the family food producers of South Africa", in *Ideas and Action Bulletin* (Rome, FAO), No. 126, 7/8 1978, p. 29.

[5] ILO: *Conditions of work of women and young workers on plantations,* Report III, Committee on Work on Plantations, Sixth Session, Geneva, 1970.

[6] V. Martinez-Alier: "The subordination of women and productive labour", cited in *IDS Bulletin* (Brighton, Institute of Development Studies), Apr. 1979, pp. 23-24.

[7] S. George: "The risk shifters", in *New Internationalist* (Wallingford (Berkshire)), Nov. 1979.

[8] A. Okeyo Pala: "The forgotten workers", ibid.

[9] Z. Tadesse: "The impact of land reform on women: the case of Ethiopia", in ILO: *Women in rural development: critical issues* (Geneva, 1980; mimeographed).

[10] I. Palmer: "New official ideas on women and development", in *IDS Bulletin,* Apr. 1979, p. 48.

[11] B. Hariss: "Paddy milling problems in policy and the choice of technology", in B. F. Farmer (ed.): *Green Revolution* (London, Billing and Sons, 1977).

[12] A. Stoler: "Class structure and female autonomy in rural Java", in *Signs* (Chicago), Autumn 1977, pp. 74-89.

[13] E. J. Croll: *Socialist development experience: women in rural production and reproduction in the Soviet Union, China, Cuba and Tanzania*, IDS Discussion Paper No. 143 (Brighton, Institute of Development Studies, 1979).

[14] United Nations Economic and Social Council: *Review and evaluation of progress achieved in the implementation of the World Plan of Action: employment*, Report of the Secretary-General, Commission on the Status of Women, Twenty-eighth session, Vienna, 25 February-5 March 1980.

[15] A. Mishra and S. Tripathi: *Chipko movement: Uttarakhand women's bid to save forest wealth* (New Delhi, Gandhi Peace Foundation, 1978).

[16] International Fund for Agricultural Development: *Report to the IFAD of the Special Programming Mission to Nepal* (Rome, 1979), pp. 153-154.

[17] Cf. E. Croll: *Women in rural development*, The People's Republic of China (Geneva, ILO, 1979).

[18] A. Okeyo Pala: "Woman power in Kenya: raising funds and awareness", in *Ceres* (Rome, FAO), Mar.-Apr. 1978, pp. 43-46. This contribution was based on a paper prepared for the Regional Conference on the Implementation of National, Regional and World Plans of Action for the Integration of Women in Development, held in Nouakchott from 27 September to 2 October 1977 under the auspices of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa.

[19] J. Bukh: *The village woman in Ghana* (Uppsala, Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1979), pp. 91-93.