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Effective mobilization of women in development

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report has been prepared in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 31/175 of 21 December 1976 on the effective mobilization of women in development. The General Assembly, in paragraph 4 of the resolution, requested the Secretary-General to prepare a comprehensive report on the effective mobilization of women for development, their participation in policy-making in the economic field, in commerce, trade and industry, their participation in political parties, trade unions, training, especially in agriculture and co-operatives, and credit and loan systems, and their equal participation with men in all development efforts. The Assembly recalled resolution 3505 (XXX) and took note of the preliminary report (A/31/205 and Corr.1) presented at its thirty-first session, which outlined a comprehensive study, based on its request, regarding the participation of women in agriculture, industry, trade and science and technology which the Secretary-General was requested to submit to the Assembly. The present report is thus in response to the requests contained in the two resolutions mentioned above.

2. Owing to the wide range of issues involved in the above requests, it was decided that the present report should deal to a greater extent with agriculture, trade, financing and technology, as well as with the mobilization of women into grass-roots organizations and policy-making in the rural rather than urban areas, and to a less extent with industry. 1/

3. Such focus has been justified in detail in the study outline in the preliminary report (A/31/205) and it is in line with other major decisions of Member Governments. 2/

1/ As mentioned in particular in paras. 22-26 of the Secretary-General's report (A/31/205 and Corr.1), it is expected that, at the second stage, if the General Assembly so wishes, a more comprehensive analysis of women in industry will be undertaken. Since there already exists a considerable amount of information and statistical data on the participation of the female labour force in industry, it is felt that this issue should be approached within the framework of action-oriented research, and should also pay more attention to the impact of the hiring of transnational corporations and their technology transfer policies on the job and the socio-economic conditions of women. Research along this line might be undertaken in collaboration with the ILO, Centre on Transnational Corporations, UNIDO, UNCTAD and the relevant United Nations agencies.

2/ See Economic and Social Council decision 175 (LXI) of 5 August 1976 on the progress report of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination on rural development (E/5809); Council resolution 2073 (LXII) of 13 May 1977 on social and institutional reform as a means of increasing domestic food production and distributing it equitably among the population; General Assembly resolution 32/52 on the Manila communiqué of the World Food Council: Programme of Action to Eradicate Hunger and Malnutrition; FAO resolution 10/75 on the role of women in rural development; and Economic and Social Council resolution 1978/34 of 5 May 1978 on women in development and international conferences.

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These decisions give high priority to promoting agricultural productivity, agro-based industries and integrated rural development programmes, and encourage more vigorous official and private efforts to extend to the poorest sectors of the rural population, and in particular to rural women, the facilities now being offered mostly to men by financial and lending institutions.

4. For the purpose of presentation, the present report has been subdivided into two main sections, which are integrated and complementary to each other. Owing to the lengthy documentation usually submitted to the General Assembly, it was decided that section II of the report should be shorter and should introduce the reader to the most crucial questions and to the conclusions and recommendations for policy-making. Section III of the report contains detailed data and analysis in support of the data analysis presented in section II.

5. Section II focuses on the situation of women in agriculture and analyses it as intimately related to existing national and international policies affecting wage and trade patterns and to the access of developing countries to appropriate scientific and technological developments. It was prepared on the basis of data provided by the pertinent organs of the United Nations, such as the ILO, UNCTAD, FAO and the Committee for Development Planning, especially their research studies on recent world economic trends. Data from other research and academic institutions have also been used as appropriate.

6. Section III contains a more detailed analysis of (a) the various regionally differentiated economic roles women play in agriculture; (b) the role of women in industry; (c) the extent to which women have equal access to special incentives and assets, such as land, loan and credit systems and infrastructure technologies; and (d) the participation of women in grass-roots organizations, such as trade unions and co-operatives.

7. Section III of the study is mainly based on data provided by Member Governments in response to a note verbale sent by the Secretary-General in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 3505 (XXX), and to the questionnaire on the implementation of the World Plan of Action, which incorporates the requests contained in Assembly resolution 31/175. Since no predetermined questionnaire format was requested or followed on the specific requests contained in Assembly resolution 3505 (XXX), and since many Governments did not answer all pertinent questions on the questionnaire, additional data and substantive information provided both by relevant United Nations organizations and other research institutions have been used.

II. RURAL WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

A. Summary presentation

8. The present paper analyses rural women's labour input (direct and indirect) into the export economy of developing countries. It shows that rural women's working conditions should receive special consideration in the implementation of the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, in so far as they affect agricultural productivity and are affected by the establishment of new price structures and trade patterns. In respect to the latter, it indicates that the existing unequal international market exchange between developed and developing countries has a direct bearing both on the uncertainty of employment and on the cheap price put on labour offered by the developing countries. In particular, it shows how the market forces push even further another type of unequal exchange - that between rural women's labour input and their economic returns. It also discusses how traditional economic analysis leads developing countries to accept the false choice of not raising the price of labour, especially that of rural women (who receive either less pay than men or no pay), under the assumption that agricultural wages have to be kept low in order to face competition. This premise is questioned in the paper and it is suggested that it is precisely by raising wages along with other protective economic measures that the vicious circle of under-development in rural areas might be broken and the development process begun. The historical example of the United States of America at the time of its independence is used to illustrate the fact that an under-developed country chose to maintain special tariff policies and high wage levels (wages were twice that of Britain) as a way of achieving rapid development.

B. Scope of the input of rural women's labour

9. It has been estimated by ESCAP and ECA that women provide 60 to 80 per cent of the agricultural labour in Asia and Africa; in Latin America, according to ECLA, the percentage is 40 per cent. ^{3/} A significant part of this female agricultural labour is used in export and cash crops and has a direct impact on the GNP and exchange earnings increase of most developing countries, since the export of raw materials, including agricultural products and minerals (excluding petroleum), account for more than 75 per cent of the total foreign exchange earnings of developing countries. ^{4/} However, the extent to which women contribute to the

^{3/} Uma Lele, Design of Rural Development: Lessons from Africa (Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1975), pp. 25-27; see also "The role of women in African development" (E/CONF.66/BP.8), and "The participation of women in the development of Latin America" (ESA/CSDHA/AC.10/4/Rev.1 of February 1976).

^{4/} In Malaysia, for example, products from the agricultural sector contributed 45.5 per cent of the total foreign exchange earnings in 1975, according to the Third Malaysian Plan 1976-1980, Kuala Lumpur, 1975; see also the special supplement entitled UNCTAD IV in Development Forum, vol. 4, No. 3, April 1976, p. 1.

economy of developing countries should be evaluated not only through their direct participation in the labour force used in export-oriented plantations, but also through their indirect labour input as offered free-of-cost within the family unit of production. The latter includes the provision of infrastructural services for family survival (food for subsistence, carrying water, gathering firewood etc.) and the reproduction of the labour force. Thus, rural women's labour input into the centre economy has many differentiations from that of men in as far as it takes place within the family unit, it is mostly offered through the periphery and traditional sectors of the economy and it is practically free of cost. 5/ Although almost devoid of economic return, the economic value of these traditional and differentiated economic roles for the export economy of developing countries is in no way minimal. Its importance can be evaluated by the extensive participation of women in agricultural production, a fact that actually makes them the chief food producers. In fact, the success of development programmes in increasing agricultural productivity, employment and consumer demands, depends on the extent to which they can also increase women's wages and modernize their work along all stages of the food chain.

10. A diagnosis of the short-comings of the past decade indicates that the lagging output of agriculture has severely impeded the economic and social progress of many developing countries. It also indicates that the new international development strategy for the 1980s will emphasize national and international policies towards rapid agricultural expansion to provide food security, adequate supplies of agricultural raw materials for industry, absorption of unemployment into gainful employment, improved distribution of income and increased export. 6/ The present paper is concerned with the need to increase women's wages, employment opportunities and productivity through the modernization of their various economic roles as part of these new national and international policies. However, there has been little research done in this area, particularly on the interplay between those international and national factors which contribute to the extreme exploitation of rural women's labour and also cause an over-all slow pace of development in developing countries. One of the few and pioneering research efforts in this field has been initiated by the International Labour Office 7/ and provides invaluable data, much of which is reported on here.

5/ For a more thorough discussion of the economic role of women concerning the reproduction of the labour force within the family unit, see Helen I. Safa, "Women, production and reproduction in industrial capitalism", Department of Anthropology, Rutgers University, New Jersey, paper prepared for presentation at the 1978 meeting of the International Studies Association, Washington, D.C. See also Claude Meillassoux, Femmes greniers et capitaux (François Maspero, Paris 1975).

6/ "Development trends since 1960 and their implications for a new international development strategy" (E/AC.54/L.98 of 13 February 1978).

7/ International Labour Office, "Conditions of work of women and young workers on plantations", report III of the sixth session of the Committee on Work on Plantations, 1970.

C. Conditions of rural women's work - an extreme case of unequal exchange

11. Although the concept of "unequal exchange" is not used here to identify fully all the social and economic conditions that determine both the inequality of wages and prices of production, it intends to point out that these inequalities are basically rooted in what has been called the "harsh reality", in which the social and economic conditions of production operate and determine the inequalities in the development of the productive forces (that is, labour versus capital). With this concept in mind, the present paper considers that the conditions of rural women's work is part of that "harsh reality" in so far as those factors causing extreme inequalities between their labour input and economic returns, operate both in the national and international context. Thus, the expression "unequal exchange" is also used in this paper to point out that developing countries have to sell the product of a relatively large number of hours of labour in exchange for products of developed countries which involve a smaller number of hours of labour. ^{8/} In this way, the extent of the international unequal exchange is determined by the relative amount of unequal economic returns of these labour forces, in as far as the price of their respective labour input, although not easily measured, could be said to be inversely proportionate to the hours of labour offered.

12. The data analysis presented in this section departs from this broader concept of unequal exchange which attempts to determine the interrelationship between national and international factors affecting rural women's working conditions. In fact, the analysis of this interplay will show that unless the unequal exchange between rural women's labour input and their economic return is diminished, the unequal exchange at the international level will also continue to increase.

13. The employment practices for women on plantations, although differing from region to region and by country, depending on the crop raised, show certain trends which clearly depend on serious fluctuations in world prices, the market prospects for a particular crop and on the technological innovations introduced. Whenever technological changes are introduced in plantation industries, there is a tendency to do away with women's labour. In addition, protective labour legislation concerning women, due to costs involved in paid maternity leave and enforcement of women's rights to "equal pay for equal work" are constantly dismissed or are non-existent. These discriminatory practices maximize profits at the expense of maintaining an unskilled and cheap female labour reservoir. In certain areas, owing to the seasonal nature of the work involved on plantations, women are withdrawn from other regions and are employed on a temporary basis, such as on the sugar-cane and tea plantations in Taiwan. Whatever the case, seasonal or permanent labour, women are always treated as the cheapest source of adult labour. In some plantations, such as coffee, tea and rubber, which are more labour-intensive than others, such as coconut and palm oil, female labour, although mostly preferred, receives much lower pay than that of men. In most plantation countries, including

^{8/} Charles Bettelheim, "Theoretical comment" in E. Arghiri, Unequal Exchange: A Study of the Imperialism in Trade, Monthly Review Press, New York, 1972, appendix I.

those where ILO Convention No. 100 is public law, wage differences are very wide and, on the average, four fifths below that of men, even when women perform the same work as that of men. 7/ In general, rural wage differences between women and men are striking. Studies show women on the average earn 40 per cent to 60 per cent of the income of men in both developing and developed countries (ESA/CSDHA/AC.10/4/Rev.1 of February 1976).

14. This unfair economic return is often accompanied by an unfair division of productive tasks based on the use of distinct technologies with agricultural modernization programmes systematically favouring teaching males to work with new farm equipment, while women continue to use hand tools. This in turn increases the gap in productivity and wages between men and women. 9/ This process has its origin in colonial agricultural policies, which are still inherited by most developing countries. The colonial policies encouraged a more rapid incorporation of men than women in the mainstream of what is the present economic order. 10/ As a result, where women used to enjoy considerable decision-making power and skills in agricultural production, their socio-economic status has been thereby lowered. Along this process, both men and women were displaced from their previous tasks in order to fulfil the demands and expectations of export-oriented policies. While men were taken away from their own fields to work for wages, women were left behind overburdened with additional traditional tasks.

15. A further implication of this situation is the consequent push of women's labour towards the so-called marginal or periphery economy. This process also forces women to provide that additional labour input, concerning the production of food for subsistence and the provision of basic services for family survival.

9/ John H. Cleave, African Farmers: Labour Use in the Development of Smallholder Agriculture (Praeger Publishers, 1974); see also Uma Lele, op. cit., and "The participation of women in the development of Latin America" (ESA/CSDHA/AC.10/4/Rev.1). Cleave's analysis of women's and men's work in farm and non-farm activities, as they affect the agricultural productivity of smallholder farmers in West and East Africa, points out that the lack of appropriate technology to alleviate women's burden of domestic tasks directly affects the over-all agricultural productivity. In his view, this is particularly relevant because while the increase in men's agricultural activities tends to be at the expense of various off-farm activities, in the case of women, it is at the expense of time spent on crucial family obligations, such as that of grinding grains, fetching water and picking firewood. For a detailed analysis of the inefficiency of technology transfer to rural areas as it affects women's socio-economic status and productivity, see "Water, women and development" (E/CONF.70/A.19, February 1977).

10/ Cleo Presvelou, "The invisible women", in Ceres, FAO, March-April 1975; and G. Balandier, Sociology of Black Africa (Praeger Publishers, New York, 1970).

16. As shown in table 1 below, the labour input of women along the food chain is much higher than that of men, both in activities related to food production and distribution and in additional tasks related to fuel and water provision. In Kenya, for example, it is estimated that 95 per cent of the village food supply is produced by women and, in South Africa, 80 per cent of subsistence agriculture food is also produced by women. 11/

Table 1

<u>Responsibility</u>	<u>Unit of participants</u>
A. <u>Production, supply, distribution</u>	
Food production	0.70
Domestic food storage	0.50
Food processing	1.00
Animal husbandry	0.50
Marketing	0.60
Brewing	0.90
Water supply	0.90
Fuel supply	0.80
B. <u>Household, community</u>	
Bearing, rearing, initial education of children . .	1.00
Cooking for husband, children and elders	1.00
Cleaning, washing etc.	1.00
House-building	0.30
House repair	0.50
Community self-help projects	0.70

Source: "The changing and contemporary role of women in African development", Economic Commission for Africa, 1974; "Country reports on vocational and technical training for girls and women", ECA, 1972-1974; studies, mission reports and discussions. As noted in the text, units of participation should be determined first for areas within countries, then on the national level and then for Africa. As cited by the World Conference of the International Women's Year, 1975 (E/CONF.66/BP/8), p. 10.

17. These figures are subject to a further interpretation, which suggests that development policies have failed to offer sufficient incentives to enable women to change their participation from traditional into modernized and more economically

11/ The role of women in African development (E/CONF.66/BP/8);
and R. M. Fagley, Rural women as food producers, Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (New York, 9 June 1975 (mimeographed)).

rewarding activities. In fact, studies on African rural development show that whenever sufficient incentives are introduced to increase farm and non-farm employment in new cash crops with the use of appropriate technologies that make farming more profitable, the traditional pattern, shown in table 1, concerning the division of labour based on sex, breaks down. ^{12/} In practice, however, in most cases in the rural areas, whereas men are absorbed into the emergent modernized tasks, women's participation in the traditional labour-intensive sectors tends to increase, thereby increasing their work load. For example, the UNICEF report on the Conference on Women, Youth and Children, held at Lomé in 1972, ^{13/} points out that technical and economic development projects in Central and West Africa have actually worsened the situation of women for two main reasons: (a) these projects give very little assistance to the food producing and traditional sectors, where women are highly involved; (b) these projects do very little to cut down the traditional tasks related to new productive methods and which are also mainly performed by women. The report indicates that in practice these projects, on the contrary, increase the number of such tasks (for example, carrying water for insecticide treatment and the transport of harvested crops).

18. On closer examination, these inequalities in productive tasks also reinforce low male wages, since women's work in these basic services and in other tasks for family survival is taken for granted. In traditional economic analysis, for example, this assumption has contributed to policies that disregard the economic value of women's work in these sectors by advocating that agricultural wages be kept under subsistence levels as women provide those services that the low male wage could not otherwise afford. Although these policies increase profit, they do not always increase the purchasing power of rural populations and, in fact, tend to worsen it, generating further economic stagnation. This fact also contributes to the usual imbalance of national income generated through agricultural export, since most of the profits are drained from rural to urban areas and to other countries, depending on the source of the capital invested. Thus, the surplus thereby created usually finds its way to those already able to absorb it - namely, the developed countries and the urban industrial areas of developing countries. This situation reinforces the unequal distribution of wealth in favour of those already in possession of wealth.

19. Furthermore, these policies prevent the increase of agricultural wages under the false assumption that the cost of the product will increase and market competition will not be met. This argument of maintaining a cheap labour force in the face of increasing cost and competition goes against the historical example of the United States where, at the time of its independence, the wage levels were twice that of Britain, even though it was still an under-developed country. ^{14/}

^{12/} J. H. Cleave, African Farmers, Labour Use in the Development of Smallholder Agriculture (Praeger Publishers, 1974).

^{13/} "Children, youth, women and development plans: The Lomé Conference", issued by the UNICEF Regional Office for West and Central Africa, Abidjan, pp. 54-56.

^{14/} See E/AC.54/L.98; see also E. Arghiri, op. cit., p. 132; and A. Lewis, The Evolution of the International Economic Order (Princeton University Press, 1978).

The branches that were subject to foreign competition were protected by prohibitive tariffs and this, along with increased market capacity, created through high wage levels, led to an influx of capital that started off the process of development. Along with an increase in market capacity, there was an inducement of development in rural areas through mechanization, further investment and diversification of its agricultural and industrial production. Besides, the spread of schools, universities, transport-roads and energy services has always been a major characteristic of the policies of the United States since their early stages of development. "Ruralization" policies were present both in developed market-oriented and socialist countries at their early stages of development. Cuba, for example, has been able to achieve development by means of implementing a major policy of "ruralization" and redistribution of income. Thus, the decentralization of development to the rural areas along with a better distribution of income and investments between rural and urban areas have proved to contribute decisively in the case of the United States and Cuba to their faster development. (This was especially true in the case of the United States in the early stages of economic growth.) The relevance of these factors and policies for the development of the least developed and developing countries are to be considered more carefully and perhaps as preconditions for a faster and fairer development process in these countries. In fact, evaluations of the world economic trends and of the programme for the Second United Nations Development Decade have frequently pointed to the importance of implementing such policies in order to diminish the gap between developed and developing countries.

20. If developing countries would seek to integrate similar solutions (for example, raise wage and tariffs) into their present combined efforts towards a rational international programme to increase prices and to establish a system of indexation (for example, price stabilization, which includes the establishment of international buffer stocks and integrated financing for key commodities) a better control of the international inflationary process and of unemployment could be achieved at the same time that better consumption patterns and world food security are improved. 15/ The combination of these complementary policies could thus ensure

15/ The well-known economist Celso Furtado proposed similar measures in a recent discussion of the new international economic order in October 1977. Furtado argues that a certain increase in wages in developing countries could strengthen their bargaining power, since the consequent increase in the cost of production of certain commodities sold to developed countries would thereby generate a fairer amount of exchange earnings at the same time that it would improve the distribution of income in those countries. His proposition is made both to agricultural and manufacturing sectors:

"As the accumulation of capital in the capitalistic system is concentrated in certain areas (the central countries), the real wage rates vary enormously among countries, independent of the physical characteristics of the produce of labour. Thus, a worker in an electronics plant located in a third world country may earn less than 1/10 of the amount earned by a worker doing the same job in a central country, even if both are employees of the same firm, use the same technology and produce for the same market. According to the current theory of international trade, the products originating in the

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that the efforts towards the implementation of the new international economic order will diminish both the international "unequal exchange" as well as that between labour and economic returns at the national level. Otherwise, inappropriate technology transfer, low prices and instability for certain commodities, stagnant markets alongside growing competition, export quotas and increasing costs for fertilizers and machinery will continue to result in a cut-back of the existing permanent paid female labour force with lower wages for women and increasing use of their temporary labour. Therefore, agricultural productivity will suffer along with the worsening of the working conditions for women. In fact, the over-all agricultural production of developing countries between 1971 and 1976 was only 2.4 per cent (that is, the mean growth) which was far below the target of 4 per cent established by the Second United Nations Development Decade (see E/AC.54/L.98). This low increase led to no increase in the per capita food production within the developing countries, and to no increase in food for subsistence and in levels of nutrition. 16/

21. Nearly all studies concerned with productivity in agriculture assume that both the small farmer and the agricultural labour force are mostly composed of men. This is a false assumption for in most developing countries, and especially in Africa, women not only produce the subsistence crops in addition to helping their husbands to feed their cash crops, but they also harvest them and carry them to the market. In fact, they constitute the chief food producers and more and more are carrying the burden of farm-work while men are increasingly integrated into off-farm work. In Kenya, for example, more than one third of rural households are headed de facto by women. 17/ In Colombia, women and children comprise 55.7 per cent of the total

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peripheral country should be sold at a lower price, which would drive competitors out of the market. But in practice this rarely happens, for the TNC find it convenient to 'administer' the price of the product in question so as not to create problems in high-wage countries, appropriating the surplus resulting from the low wages of the periphery";

The CTC Reporter, vol. 1, No. 3, December 1977, p. 17. See also UNCTAD Common Fund for an Integrated Programme for Commodities (TD/184, chap. II, and TD/B/662). Also, see Jere R. Behrman, International Commodity Agreements: an Evaluation of the UNCTAD Integrated Commodity Programme, published by the Overseas Development Council, October 1977, in which the author corroborates the fact that "certain economic gains are potentially available to both producers and consumers through price stabilization", provided that the anti-inflationary gains would be "reaped" with alternative programmes which could increase production without unemployment and raise consumption both in producers' and consumers' countries. Behrman's computation shows that "for the US alone conservative estimates of the gain from reducing inflationary pressure by a pure price stabilization programme are of the order of \$15 billion for the decade". Thus, the benefits to the consuming countries would be quite large in comparison to the costs and may be much greater than those for the producing nations.

16/ See E/AC.54/L.98.

17/ See "Women, population and rural development in Africa", Women's Programme Unit/FAO, (MI/HO 440/E/1.76/1/3850), p. 3; see also, Kenya Census, 1969 (Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, Nairobi, 1971); also The changing and contemporary role of women in African development, UN/ECA, Addis Ababa, 1974.

labour force in the coffee estates. In Brazil, women are extensively used on coffee plantations, where they help their husbands, but are not normally remunerated separately. In Kenya, on the coffee estates 37 per cent of the regular workers are women. ^{18/} As a whole, women constitute a much higher proportion (80 per cent to 90 per cent) of the seasonal labour force hired for harvesting coffee. ^{18/} In Asia, in the tea and rubber areas between 1960 and 1966, the percentage of women workers increased from 46.46 per cent to 49.33 per cent in the case of tea, and from 40.40 per cent up to 43.22 per cent in the case of rubber. In India, data show a similar trend with the employment of women on coffee and rubber estates going up over the years, while that of men has either remained close to the same or has gone down. ^{18/} Women's work is extensively used on plantations of rice, sisal, fruits, cotton and vegetables. Even in countries where it is difficult to break down old traditions, poverty has led women and men to work shoulder to shoulder. (For example, in Egypt, rural women not only do not always wear the veil, but they also work extensively on the cotton plantations in the south.)

22. Solutions for the increase of food production have been attempted without taking into consideration the women's component. Although the green revolution was initially viewed with optimism as a way of dealing with rural poverty, it was soon realized that it would lead to the creation of a rural élite and further aggravation of inequality of services. Although not always favourable to full employment for both men and women, it has resulted in a more marginalization of female than male labour. This situation is explicitly explained in a study by Billings and Singh in the Punjab, India, where the introduction of mechanization greatly reduced female labour. ^{19/} This marginalization was also owing to the adverse effects of technology for the employment of women, as it was created by the need for special skills and training which were given primarily to men. Thus women were pushed deeper into less skilled and lower jobs and even into unpaid jobs. A major consequence of these failures was to permit the employment of more men than women in the centre economy by encouraging lower wages for agricultural workers, as a whole, than would otherwise be possible. Finally, the "draining" of surplus generated through this type of agricultural modernization, which is almost devoid of appropriate employment policies for women, were aggravated even further by the fact that the best lands were utilized for these crops, leaving the relatively inferior lands for subsistence food production. ^{20/}

23. The failures of the green revolution also reflect some other problems developing countries face during transitional stages of development, when priority

^{18/} ILO, "Conditions of work of women and young people on plantations", report III of the sixth session of the Committee on Work on Plantations, 1970.

^{19/} Martin H. Billings and Arjan Singh, "Mechanization and the wheat revolution: effects on female labour in Punjab", Economic and Political Weekly, vol. 5, No. 52, 26 December 1970, pp. A-169-A-172.

^{20/} The issue of draining of surplus and the resultant rural poverty is thoroughly discussed by A. Obeng in "Of money, underdevelopment and rural development in Africa", Cahiers Africain d'administration publique, No. 17, July 1977.

is given to increased production, especially in urban areas. This emphasis usually leads to a capital-intensive rather than employment-intensive policies, and aims at a mere increase in GNP growth. It assumes that a certain degree of laissez-faire accumulation of wealth will eventually bring the "trickle down" effect to the rural poor and particularly to women. 21/ However, nearly all studies evaluating the progress achieved by developing countries during the past decade indicate that, in spite of this emphasis, the average rate of growth in the developing countries fell short of its targets for agriculture, manufacturing and GNP. In addition, the rate of increase in volume of export was also below target. 22/ These short-comings have also been associated both with the failure of the developed countries to implement the measures set forth in the second development strategy concerning trade policies, technical and financial resources, and with inadequate policies concerning income distribution and employment, in particular in the rural areas (see E/AC.54/L.98).

24. These recent trends are alarming and need to be examined closely with a view to finding out alternative styles of development which could facilitate those national and international structural transformations that are necessary both to increase productivity and diminish inequalities between men and women, urban and rural, and between developed and developing countries, at a more rapid pace. In fact, it is being increasingly realized (the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States and the new international economic order) 23/ that economic development

21/ The assumption has been that by modernizing one sector of society or the economy, beneficial effects will be felt at all levels; this, however, does not happen as is obvious from the presence of extreme poverty in the hinterlands of developing areas.

22/ See World Economic Survey, E/5995/Rev.1 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.77.II.C.1).

23/ The short-comings in economic development in most developing countries raised serious international concern, as expressed by the adoption by the General Assembly at its sixth special session in 1974 of the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, which was followed in the same year by the adoption by the Assembly of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States. In addition, concerted efforts were also taken at two conferences to review the problems of agriculture and industry, the main production sectors: the FAO Conference in November 1974, which adopted a series of resolutions aimed at overcoming the economic, functional, institutional and commercial obstacles in order to increase agricultural productivity in the developing countries; and the UNIDO Conference in May 1975, when a Declaration of Policy was made. Finally, during the seventh special session of the General Assembly in 1975, concentrated attention was given to problems of international economic co-operation, in particular for the improvement of the geographical distribution of labour to achieve a more equitable distribution of income. In 1976, the ILO Tripartite World Conference on Employment, Income Distribution and Social Progress and the International Division of Labour adopted a strong programme of action outlining policies to be achieved. It is important to point out that in all these efforts emphasis has been given to the urgent need of improving the income distribution and to full employment.

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embraces not merely economic growth but a more fundamental transformation of the socio-economic structures, ^{24/} involving not only changes in the structure of production and demand, but also significant improvements in the employment situation, in the distribution of income and in the capability of countries to sustain development.

D. Conclusions

25. The discussions and the data analysis presented indicate that it is of the utmost necessity to increase wages in the rural areas and incorporate women into the process of rural modernization, rather than to expect that GNP growth will bring the "trickle down" effects to the rural poor and particularly to women. The analysis which led to this conclusion, as elaborated both in sections I and II of the present report, was based on data showing that the extremely poor working conditions of rural women contribute both to a lower agricultural productivity and to increased inequalities in the socio-economic productive forces of national and international systems. These factors are pointed out as being key obstacles impeding a more rapid development for developing countries.

26. Furthermore, the study reveals that, when the family division of labour based on sex is transposed to society as a whole, the productivity and wage differences between men and women widens. In this way, the unfair division of labour based on sex works to the disadvantage of the developing countries by decreasing both the productivity and the economic returns of their vast female rural labour force, the inequalities in the relative price of labour thereby exchanged increases, thus also increasing the unequal exchange at the international level. Consistently, this conclusion points to the fact that the bargaining power of the developing countries increases when the strengthening of their financial and technological capacity is able to bring a parallel increase in the economic return of rural women's labour in each of their differentiated roles within and outside the family. A closer examination of this fact also led to the conclusion that it was by modernizing women's work and increasing their wages that male agricultural wages would also be improved, because they would then have to afford to buy the services women would not provide free of cost. Therefore, disparities between countries concerning their levels and pace of development are directly linked to their capacity to achieve self-sustained development, which can improve the working conditions of rural women. This is to say that adequate provision of intermediary infrastructural services for family consumption (for example, day-care centres, water, energy and

^{24/} See article 7 of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, which established that

"each State has the right and the responsibility to choose its means and goals of development, fully to mobilize and use its resources, to implement progressive economic and social reforms and to ensure the full participation of its people in the process and benefits of development. All States have the duty, individually and collectively, to co-operate in eliminating obstacles that hinder such mobilization and use." (General Assembly resolution 3281 (XXIX)).

housing) can facilitate the integration of women into the mainstream of development and increase their technical skills, job opportunities and wages, ^{25/} should go hand-in-hand with self-sustained development approaches aimed at diminishing the disparities between developed and developing countries.

E. Policy implications

27. The major policy recommendations drawn from the study have crucial implications not only for rural women as a disadvantaged group, but also for national development and international economic co-operation. They are addressed to major priority issues as established by the General Assembly, such as food security, trade, employment, income distribution policies and the development of self-sustained technology. They emphasize that the improvement of rural women's socio-economic condition is a prerequisite for a more rapid development and equitable distribution of income and assets in the developing countries. To this end, the present recommendations stress the need for (a) policy-oriented studies that interrelate commodity price and wage policies in agriculture; (b) policies that include a women's component within national and international efforts aimed at strengthening the capacity of developing countries to achieve a more rapid development; and (c) policies that ensure better job opportunities, technical skills and higher productivity for rural women.

28. The implementation of these recommendations requires special national and international policies, which should facilitate the transfer of appropriate

^{25/} For a more thorough discussion on the urgency to maximize the utilization of human resources of developing countries, see the report by Joseph G. Odera-Jowi entitled "Technical co-operation among developing countries" which emphasizes that the primary objective of technical co-operation among developing countries should be the generation of development incentives in the area of human resources development. The report states that:

"Human resources development is the key to the exploitation and development of natural resources; the accumulation of capital; and the establishment of the institutions through which development processes are planned, managed and pushed forward" (DP/229, vol. I, 1976, p. 4).

See also "Water, women and development" (E/CONF.70/A.19) and "Appropriate technology for developing countries and the needs of rural women" (ESA/ST/AC.7/CRP.3/Add.3), a paper prepared for the Ad Hoc Working Group on Appropriate Technology of the Advisory Committee on the Application of Science and Technology to Development, which met at Vienna from 16 to 20 May 1977. At that meeting it was proposed that a functional design for multi-purpose day-care centres should be developed by developing countries for large-scale and cheap industrial production. These day-care centres should actually be adequate for rural and poor urban areas, where energy sources are less or almost not available. They should also include space and facilities that can use innovative technology to maximize the utilization of human and raw material resources (for example, elderly services used in the care of children, small industries and schools for specialized skills and formal education).

financial and technical assistance to developing countries and to rural areas (for example, day-care centres, infrastructure technology and special training programmes). Thus, the incorporation of better wages and job opportunities for rural women as part of national and international policies, although a challenging enterprise, should also help strengthen the bargaining position of developing countries in their efforts towards achieving a fairer division of labour and capital within and between countries.

29. In the search for possible solutions to these questions, developing countries should be able to receive adequate technical and financial assistance from the various relevant specialized agencies. In this respect, international funds and lending institutions, such as the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), FAO and the World Bank stressed the need for directing resources in establishing programmes for subsistence agriculture, both as a way of increasing food production in the poorest countries and to ameliorate income distribution. As women play a fundamental role in the processes of food production and distribution, especially in the poorest areas, the modernization of their tasks in all stages of the food chain should actually receive greater attention during the implementation of these goals.

30. In this respect the General Assembly might wish to address itself more specifically to the pertinent United Nations organizations within the context of the Inter-Agency Programme for the United Nations Decade for Women with a view to obtaining special funds to implement programmes of action for rural women. In addition, to this end, the Assembly might find it appropriate to include in its recommendations, following the first review of the implementation of the Programme of Action to Eradicate Hunger and Malnutrition, to be submitted for consideration at the current session in pursuance of resolution 32/52, special provisions aimed at ensuring that the improvement of the working conditions of rural women would also be incorporated as an important recommendation in that Programme of Action, in order to achieve more rapidly the main objectives and priorities thereby established, in particular that of food security. This would be crucial for developing countries, since women have proved to be the main "resistance" labour force to the destruction of subsistence agriculture. Still, in connexion with these objectives, developing countries might wish to suggest projects that could help strengthen their financial and technological capacities and enable them actually to incorporate and mobilize women into their development process.

31. Concerning the feasibility and economic implications of possible wage increases in agriculture as a way of improving the income distribution of the rural poor, the General Assembly might initiate preliminary efforts addressed more specifically to this question in conjunction with pertinent organizations, such as UNCTAD. For example, consultations could take place regarding the feasibility of United Nations organizations undertaking policy-oriented studies within the framework of the new international economic order which are related to the development of a possible wage increase in agriculture among the producers of certain key commodities. In addition, complementary studies aimed at assisting developing countries to design new supportive economic measures, such as those concerned with more adequate tariff systems, common price agreements and other subsidiary policies aimed at facilitating the implementation of better wage levels in agriculture, could also be undertaken.

32. Finally, concerning the problem of increasing rural women's access to better job and wage opportunities, the General Assembly might also wish to address itself to pertinent United Nations organizations within the context of the Inter-Agency Programme for the United Nations Decade for Women, such as the ILO and UNESCO. In this respect, the report points to the need to (a) bring studies up to date on the working conditions of women on plantations, following the research by the ILO in 1970; 18/ (b) intensify the efforts of concerted United Nations organizations and non-governmental organizations towards including technical and educational training programmes for rural women and ensuring their access to better job opportunities.

33. Finally, the General Assembly might wish to address itself more specifically to the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs (a) to develop more accurate methodologies in collaboration with the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, the regional commissions and other relevant United Nations bodies to provide a proper data basis for planning and to facilitate assessment of progress with regard to women's participation in rural development, and (b) to prepare more systematic inputs for women's integration in rural development for inclusion into broader plans and technical programmes within the United Nations system, including the joint inter-agency programmes, especially in the area of technical training and co-operation among developing countries.

III. REGIONAL PATTERNS OF WOMEN'S SOCIO-ECONOMIC ROLES 26/

A. Summary presentation

34. Notwithstanding the widespread changes and consequent improvements brought about in the course of modern socio-economic growth, the gains derived have not only been unevenly distributed among countries and social groups, but they have also been unequally shared by men and women. Challenging the premise that economic growth and development is a sufficient condition for advancing women's social position, contemporary research has pointed out the adverse effects of modernization on women's economic roles and has examined, in this context, the discriminatory aspects of female labour utilization in industry and the impact of modernization of agriculture and crafts on female employment, as well as the functions of unpaid female labour in the process of economic growth.

35. An attempt to evaluate the conditions for effective mobilization and enhancement of women in the development process should include a comprehensive assessment of the impact of recent economic trends on the division of labour between the sexes in the different economic sectors and an evaluation of the potential resources which could be made available to women to channel better their productive capacities and improve their welfare.

36. In both sections II and III an attempt has been made to meet these two objectives. Section II focuses on certain priorities which have been shown to be more crucial for national and international policies, in line with the implementation of the new international economic order. Section III represents an

26/ As a reminder, the reader should consider that, as stated in the general introduction the present section is based on official data provided by States Members of the United Nations in response to a note verbale sent by the Secretary-General, in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 3505 (XXX), which requested information on women's participation in development, particularly in the areas of agriculture, industry, trade and science and technology. It is also based on data provided by a questionnaire sent to Governments on the review and appraisal of the World Plan of Action, as well as on information from United Nations organizations and other research institutions. Replies were received from the following 38 Governments: Algeria, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Burma, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Central African Empire, Chile, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Honduras, India, Iran, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Kuwait, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Mauritius, Morocco, New Zealand, Niger, Norway, Pakistan, Poland, Romania, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; additional information was included from countries which responded to the questionnaire on the review and appraisal of the World Plan of Action and presented information pertinent to this study, bringing the total to 43 responses.

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effort to corroborate with a more in-depth data analysis some of these crucial issues raised in section II. In addition, section III has also dealt with other issues, as requested in the resolutions concerned with this study.

37. Accordingly, section III.B provides a detailed account of the working conditions and economic roles of women in agriculture. It includes their role in subsistence and commercial agriculture and the effects of technological changes on their working and employment conditions. Section III.C deals with the various patterns of women's participation in industrial employment, both in developed and developing countries. Section III.D deals with the extent to which women have access to incentives that could facilitate their participation in economic development. It reviews more specifically the effects of land reforms on the socio-economic status of women and the availability to rural women of adequate technology and educational training, as reported by national Governments and international organizations. Finally, section III.D also summarizes information on women's participation in grass-roots organizations, such as rural co-operatives.

B. Women's economic roles and working conditions in agriculture:
a general survey

38. Depending on the socio-economic trends in the agricultural development of the different regions of the world, women's participation in agriculture takes a variety of forms and levels of participation. They range from full proletarianization to a temporary labour force which is responsive to agricultural labour's seasonal demands, or to subsistence producers on plantations, haciendas and independent land parcels.

39. In most cases, the established division of labour by sex in the rural areas reflects the survival strategy of the family group faced with over-all economic constraints, that is, tendencies in prices of agricultural commodities, trends in technological development and investment policies, which are beyond the control of the rural population. ^{27/} Thus, for example, as was stressed in section II.B above, studies have frequently pointed out that, in many developing countries, the export sector, faced with rising costs and uncertain markets, has contributed to the maintenance of low wages for males, a fact that reinforces and leads to the intensification of female work in subsistence agriculture and seasonal employment in the large estates, and/or to a greater involvement of women in petty-trade and other low-paid service activities in order to complement their family's income. In the case of many developed countries, this intensification of women's work in agriculture has also taken place owing to the modernization of the agricultural sector, which has often posed a threat to the economic position of the small farmers and pushed the men (who most frequently are the better trained) into non-agricultural jobs, thereby increasing the workload of women on the farms.

^{27/} Carmen Diana Deere, "Rural women's subsistence production in the capitalist economies", Review of Radical Political Economy, vol. 8, No. 1, Spring, 1976 pp. 9-17.

40. This section specifies and analyses some of these broad economic constraints, focusing on certain ways through which they have affected the economic roles and the working conditions of women in agriculture both in the developing and developed countries.

41. The analysis will centre on major trends in women's agricultural employment which are considered to be more representative for each region and deserve careful examination by policy-makers. It is organized by region in the following order: Africa, Asia, Middle East, Latin America, the developed market economies and the centrally planned economies.

1. Africa

42. Labour is the most important input into traditional agricultural systems. In Africa, a significant proportion of this labour is provided by women. Throughout the histories of their societies, African women have made important contributions to the rural economy in agriculture, animal husbandry and fishing. They have also been active in trade, especially in the distribution of agricultural produce in the rural centres. With some exceptions, women in Africa have traditionally been confined to small-scale food production and distribution, whereas men have been mainly absorbed by the modern market sector in commercial agriculture and mining. Boserup's analysis demonstrates how this contemporary division of labour by sex stems from colonial policies, which used women's labour in subsistence agriculture to subsidize the export economies.

43. In Africa, the methods of food production were such that women could do nearly all the operations unaided by men. It was therefore possible to economize in labour costs on the plantations and the export industries by recruiting only male workers at wages insufficient to provide for the family, leaving the dependent children and old people to be supported in the home villages by the able-bodied women. 28/ A striking example of this functional relationship between the subsistence and the modern sector may still be found in contemporary Lesotho.

44. South Africa provides 95 per cent of the cash earned in Lesotho. At any given time, close to 40 per cent of the working-age male population of Lesotho resides in South Africa, thereby leaving the villages with a substantial numerical predominance of women. Since the men's earnings are not sufficient, the subsistence output provided by women is necessary for family survival. Research shows 29/ that the bulk of the males' wages goes to major purchases (home improvement, school fees and livestock) whereas the daily maintenance of the family is mainly provided by the

28/ Ester Boserup, Woman's Role in Economic Development (New York, St. Martin's Press, 1970), pp. 77-78; see also International Labour Organisation, "African labour survey", Studies and Reports, New Series, No. 40, p. 138.

29/ Martha Mueller, "Women and men - power and powerlessness in Lesotho", in Women and National Development: The Complexity of Change, Ed. The Wellesley Editorial Committee (Chicago, Illinois, University of Chicago Press, 1977).

work of women as cultivators and petty traders. Agriculture is the major economic activity of Lesotho and women constitute 85 per cent of the agricultural labour force. According to ECA 30/ estimates, the value of female work reached 72 per cent of the total value of the agricultural product of the whole country between 1967 and 1975.

45. Male migration from rural areas continues to affect women's agricultural employment and socio-economic status in other parts of contemporary Africa. Thus, for example, the Algerian Government reported that female participation in agriculture more than doubled between 1966 and 1973, primarily owing to male migration, which resulted in an increased importance of female labour in self-managed farms. In many countries, women remaining behind in the home villages comprise a sizable segment of the farm managers and thus strongly influence the decisions concerning the types of crops that will be cultivated as well as the techniques used in agriculture. 31/ For example, one third or more of the farm managers in eastern and southern Africa are women. In Mozambique, 34 per cent of the employers and self-employed workers are females. In the United Republic of Tanzania and Ghana, this proportion is as high as 54 per cent and 41 per cent respectively. 32/

46. Besides participating in agricultural management, women in Africa have been the traditional cultivators of the land - planting, weeding, harvesting, processing and trading. In 1970, according to the ILO, 76 per cent of the total female work-force in Africa was employed in agriculture, whereas 69 per cent of the male labour force worked in farms. 33/ In eastern and central Africa, 89 per cent and 94 per cent of the working women, respectively, were in agriculture. In many of the predominantly agrarian countries, 34/ more than 50 per cent of the total economically active population are women.

47. The continuing importance of women's work in agriculture was acknowledged by most countries. The Central African Empire, the Niger, Sierra Leone and the Ivory Coast emphasized that, although current statistics were not available, women were responsible for a variety of activities at almost every stage of agricultural

30/ Economic Commission for Africa, "The new international economic order: what roles for women" (E/CN.14/ATRCW/77/WD.3 of 31 August 1977).

31/ Kathleen A. Staudt, "Administrative resources, political patrons, and repressing sex inequalities: a case from western Kenya", Journal of Developing Areas (to be issued).

32/ ILO, Year Book of Labour Statistics, 1977, pp. 54, 58 and 170.

33/ ILO, Labour Force Estimates and Projections, 1950-2000, vol. I, p. 41.

34/ Such as Botswana, Burundi, the Central African Empire, Lesotho and the Upper Volta. Women comprise also 52 per cent of the economically active population in Ivory Coast and Madagascar and 51 per cent of the agricultural work force in the United Republic of Tanzania. See ILO Year Book of Labour Statistics, 1977.

production - from sowing to harvesting. The Central African Empire reported that women predominated in fishing activities and that they were the main food-producers in agriculture. The Niger stressed the role of women in animal husbandry and the importance of their participation in dairy production. Sierra Leone pointed out that women are the main distributors of staple items, such as rice, palm oil and yams.

48. In those regions which are characterized by female farming traditions, women also dominate the food trade of the urban and non-urban markets. In some countries of West Africa, it is estimated that more than 80 per cent of the petty traders are women. In Ghana, for example, around 87 per cent of the sales workers are female; they constitute 90 per cent of the employers and self-employed workers in commerce. ^{35/} In general, women in the Congo, Dahomey and Nigeria dominate most of the local markets, making up more than 60 per cent of the total number of traders.

49. In the African countries, women have been fully occupied in cultivating the family plots for food crops and have only rarely been employed as regular workers on the plantations; Kenya and Mauritius are two noteworthy exceptions. Mauritius reported that the majority of its working women were employed on the sugar, tea and tobacco plantations, the main agricultural products of the country. In 1972, women constituted about one fourth of the wage earners in agriculture. ^{36/} African women are, however, engaged in considerable numbers as casual or temporary labourers, particularly in the coffee, tea and cotton plantations. In the Central African Empire, for example, women and young workers make up some 50 to 100 per cent of the seasonal labour force on coffee plantations. In Zaire, they constitute 75 to 100 per cent of the seasonal labour force on tea and coffee plantations. ^{37/}

50. Despite these now rather commonplace generalizations about women's central role in the African rural economy, development programmes have frequently ignored or adversely affected women's employment and working conditions. ^{38/} The recent trends in economical and technological change have often undermined the economic activities in which women are most involved and only rarely have been oriented to decrease their work-load and to improve their productivity. Thus, the position of women in subsistence agriculture and traditional trade have been eroded by the expansion of large-scale commercial farms, the importation of industrially processed food, the population pressure on the areas of food production, the

^{35/} E. Boserup, Woman's Role in Economic Development (New York, St. Martin's Press, 1970) p. 91; and "The role of women in agricultural development" (E/CONF.66/BP/8, April 1975), p. 81. See also ILO, Year Book of Labour Statistics, 1977, p. 170.

^{36/} See para. 21 above for Kenya.

^{37/} ILO, "Conditions of work of women and young workers on plantations, report III of the sixth session of the Committee on Work on Plantations, 1970, p. 21.

^{38/} See sect. II.E above.

extensive male out-migration and the development of modern supermarkets. ^{39/} Finally, labour-saving techniques have displaced women workers on the modern plantation. Some of the field operations in which women have been traditionally employed on plantations, such as planting, weeding and the application of manure, insecticides and fungicides, are being substantially altered by the advance of technological change. In Uganda and Kenya, for example, the use of chemical herbicides and knapsack spraying reduced the number of days needed for weeding per acre by 80 to 85 per cent on certain coffee and tea plantations, while in some estates the use of chemicals for decouching has cut down the demand for labour for this work traditionally done by women by nearly 75 per cent. ^{40/} Thus, technology has been used in a way that has had detrimental and paradoxical consequences for African rural women. While, on the one hand, the technological changes in the modern agricultural sector have deprived women of employment, the shortage of simple technological improvements in food-processing, energy and water supply, on the other hand, has left the rural women overburdened in their daily tasks.

2. Asia

51. In Asia, as in other developing regions, the women's labour force participation is concentrated in agriculture: in 1970, 73.1 per cent of the economically active Asian females were occupied in agriculture. In western and middle South Asia, this proportion was as high as 79 per cent and 81 per cent, respectively. ^{41/}

52. Among the reporting countries, however, there are considerable differences in the proportion of women in agriculture between Pakistan, Malaysia, Thailand and India, on the one hand, where the participation rates in agriculture are high and Singapore, on the other hand, which reported relatively low participation rates of women in the agricultural labour force. ^{42/} In the countries of high female participation, the proportion of working women in agriculture ranges from over 50.1 per cent in India to 83 per cent in Thailand.

^{39/} Ester Boserup, Woman's Role in Economic Development (New York, St. Martin's Press, 1970); Emmy B. Simmons, "Economic research on women in rural development in northern Nigeria", Overseas Liaison Committee, American Council of Education, Washington D.C., Paper No. 10, 1976, pp. 21-22. For an analysis of subsistence agriculture, see G. Williams, "Lesotho, economic implications of migrant labour", South African Journal of Economics, vol. 39, June 1971.

^{40/} ILO, "Conditions of work of women and young workers on plantations", report III of the sixth session of the Committee on Work on Plantations, 1970, p. 23.

^{41/} ILO, Labour Force Estimates and Projections, 1950-2000, vol. II, pp. 45-46.

^{42/} ILO, Year Book of Labour Statistics, 1977, pp. 246-247; and "Conditions of work of women and young workers on plantations", report III of the sixth session of the Committee on Work on Plantations, 1970, pp. 14-16.

53. In contrast with Africa, where women are primarily engaged in subsistence agriculture as self-employed farmers and family workers, a large number of women engaged in agriculture in Asia work as wage earners in commercial farms and on plantations. Thus, in Sri Lanka 72 per cent of the female work-force in agriculture are salaried workers, comprising almost 40 per cent of the total number of wage earners. In the tea estates, women workers outnumber men and in the rubber estates they make up about 43 per cent of the labour force. In the tea plantation industry of India, where around two thirds of the total plantation labour force is engaged, women constitute approximately 50 per cent of this labour force. In the coffee and rubber estates, their proportion is somewhat lower, but they still form a significant proportion - 44 per cent in the coffee estates and 30 per cent in the rubber estates. In Malaysia, about 45 per cent of the hired labourers for all types of crops were women. 43/

54. Among the major determinants of the utilization of women in agricultural labour, three factors have been frequently singled out. They are the particular system of cultivation prevalent in a given country, the system of land tenure and the degree of socio-economic differentiation within the rural population, determining, for example, the availability of a landless class which could be hired as wage-earners in agriculture. The specific characteristics of Asian agriculture can be accounted for, in most cases, by a given combination of these elements.

55. Thus, Boserup has demonstrated that, in many parts of Asia, particularly in South Asia, a high population density requires the use of labour-intensive techniques and the sowing of labour-intensive crops in order to obtain an adequate level of income from a small area of land. In situations where the wage labourers are few, women become very active in agricultural jobs. In areas of extensive irrigation systems, for example, women perform the heavier work in weeding and the transplanting of paddy, while men are occupied with the digging of irrigation ditches in the fields, the lifting of water from wells and canals and the repair of terraces.

56. The plantations and the large commercial estates in Asia have had to adapt to a situation where the predominant type of cultivation in the food production sector lends itself to full familial participation. Male labour cannot, therefore, be recruited without providing for the women and the children, in contrast with Africa, where subsistence agriculture is predominantly women's work.

57. The most expedient means of keeping the effective wage rate low, then, is to employ the entire family. 44/ In Sri Lanka, Malaysia and India, the bulk of the

43/ ILO, "Conditions of work of women and young workers on plantations", report III of the sixth session of the Committee on Work on Plantations, 1970, pp. 17-19.

44/ In both the Asian and African cases, the plantation avoids paying a "family wage" to the male workers by relying on the fact that women are actively participating in agriculture either as food producers in the subsistence sector in the latter case, or as rural wage-earners in the former.

labour force on the plantations is constituted by the families recruited and brought in from long distances in the years before the Second World War and which now reside on the estates.

58. Inevitably the employment opportunities and conditions for women on the Asian plantations are strongly influenced by a developing price-cost squeeze in the production of export commodities. Thus, while price instability, the competition of new producing areas, stagnant demand and markets, restrictions on export etc. tend to force down revenues, the need for greater capital expenditure on agricultural equipment and machinery and current capital for fertilizers, pesticides, oil etc. forces costs up. 45/

59. Caught in this squeeze between declining revenues, on the one hand, and steadily rising costs of production, on the other, the Asian plantations have attempted to reduce their labour costs by resorting to labour-saving techniques that would increase productivity and allow them to cut down the permanent labour force to a minimum. At the same time, owing to the wage differentials between male and female workers, women labourers have begun to replace, to a certain extent, adult males in the field work.

60. In Sri Lanka, for example, the average minimum wages of females on both the tea and rubber plantations was about 80 per cent of the male wage for the period 1960-1966, in spite of the fact that women tended to work longer and produce more than men in certain tasks. 46/

61. During the same period, the price of rubber and tea exports declined steadily. The participation of women on the rubber and tea plantations then increased from 46 per cent to 49 per cent and from 40 per cent to 43 per cent, respectively.

45/ ILO, "Conditions of work of women and young workers on plantations", report III of the sixth session of the Committee on Work on Plantations, 1970, p. 5.

46/ See "Conditions of work of women and young workers on plantations", report III of the sixth session of the Committee on Work on Plantations, p. 40. The report points out that, "although women's minimum daily wage rates are lower than those for men, the effects of these discriminatory rates are to some extent mitigated by the use of payment by results systems for tappers and pluckers. The incentive rates are generally the same for men and women. According to the superintendent of one of the rubber estates visited by an ILO mission in 1969, this fact plus the higher output of women tappers enabled them to close much of the gap created by a lower statutory minimum wage. On the tea estates at present the earnings of pluckers (who are all monthly women) apparently tend to be higher than those of men in spite of the lower basic minimum wage rate for women because of two facts - their greater diligence in plucking and the fact that pluckers get more days of employment than the other field workers".

62. As mentioned above, female participation rates in agriculture vary widely in Asia. In certain countries, such as Singapore, agricultural employment constitutes only a small part of the total labour force, that is, 2.1 per cent of the working men and 2.4 per cent of the working women are engaged in agriculture.

3. Middle East

63. The participation of women in agriculture in Middle Eastern countries is low. In Israel, for example, the participation rates in agriculture are low both for males and females - 7 per cent and 4.31 per cent, respectively.

64. In Muslim countries, such as the Syrian Arab Republic and Iran, women's participation in agriculture has received different (though not always conflicting) interpretations. It has been observed, for example, that the low level of Muslim women's involvement in employment may be explained by the religious and cultural values regarding the intermingling of the sexes. Indeed, sex segregation and seclusion norms have played a vital role in curtailing the size of the non-agricultural female labour force, but no systematic examination seems to have been made as to whether or not such norms are strong enough, specifically with regard to agricultural work. ^{47/} In any case, the pressure of cultural norms would explain, in part, the underenumeration of working women in agriculture, since farmers are generally reluctant to report that their wives and daughters have a gainful occupation. ^{48/}

65. It has also been said that women in Islamic societies do not have a tradition in farming, nor do they bring to agriculture any particular skills, in contrast to the situation in parts of Africa. Given the current low level of agricultural development, however, one could assume that women's lack of skills would not prevent them from being integrated into the work process. What appears to be the major hindrance to their participation is the prevalence of male unemployment or underemployment in agriculture. In this context, as Youssef ^{49/} points out, "women's agricultural work serves as a buffer. Having no specific role or skills of their own, they have to adapt themselves to whatever employment opportunities appear seasonally, depending on the intensity of demand for male labour". In fact, in the southern part of Egypt, for example, where cotton is the basis of the local and national economy, women work quite intensively side-by-side with men. In this case, the traditional values do not seem to have been such a difficult barrier to overcome, and their adaptation to these employment opportunities appear to have been easier.

^{47/} Nadia Youssef, "Women and agricultural production in Muslim societies", in Studies in Comparative International Development, vol. XII, No. 1, 1977, p. 51.

^{48/} Ibid., p. 52.

^{49/} Ibid., p. 56.

4. Latin America

66. In the Latin American region as a whole, the participation of women in agriculture, compared to other sectors of the economy, is relatively low. In 1970, 67 per cent of the female working force was employed in services, 17 per cent in industry and 16 per cent in agriculture. ^{50/} The relative weight of the agricultural sector for the entire region has been declining in recent years and the rate of labour absorption in agriculture has been decreasing steadily. Nevertheless, the labour force absorption rates for men are considerably above the rates for women. ^{51/} There is a significant underenumeration of women's work participation, particularly in the rural areas, which gravely affects the characterization of the major trends of rural female employment, in particular in the less industrialized areas of Latin America. For example, in Bolivia, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru and in the north and north-east of Brazil, as well as in other similar regions, the rates of female participation in agriculture has been estimated to be high above 50 per cent to 60 per cent (see ESA/CSDHA/AC.10/4/Rev.1 of 15 February 1976).

67. The constraints on women's agricultural participation may be understood in the context of the broader changes in the forms of agricultural production which have affected the different occupational categories within the agricultural labour force during the last decades. Although there are important regional variations in the types of agricultural organizations and forms of employment of the work force, certain major patterns may be identified throughout the region.

68. For example, large estates operating at low levels of productivity keep a permanent male and female labour force who work for the land-owner in exchange for plots of land, which are cultivated for the personal consumption of the workers. Women usually work on the individual subsistence land parcels as temporary labour on the large estates and they also perform various services, such as domestic service for the land-owners, and the production of various consumer goods such as manioc flour and dairy products. This type of latifundia has persisted in the less developed regions, where the percentage of female participation in agriculture is high. ^{52/}

^{50/} ILO, Labour Force Estimates and Projections, 1950-2000, vol. I, 1977, p. 42.

^{51/} See ibid., pp. 2-42. Between 1950-1970, the total Latin American labour force increased by 55 per cent, whereas the agricultural labour force increased by 18 per cent. The total and agricultural female labour force rose by 85 per cent and 6 per cent, respectively, while the total and agricultural male labour force increased by 49 per cent and 20 per cent, indicating a higher absorption of male over female labour in agriculture.

^{52/} For an analysis of the relationship between economic development, forms of production and women's labour participation in Latin American agriculture, see Patricia M. Garret, "Some structural constraints on the agricultural activities of women in the Chilean hacienda", Land Tenure Center, Madison, Wisconsin, 1976 (mimeographed); Carmen Diana Deere, "Changing social relations of production and peasant women's work in the Peruvian Sierra", paper presented at the Fourth World Congress of Sociology, Torun, Poland, 1976; Glaura Vasques de Miranda, "Women's labour force participation in a developing society: the case of Brazil", in Women and National Development: The Complexity of Change, Ed. Wellesley Editorial Committee, (Chicago, Illinois, The University of Chicago Press, 1977). /...

69. In the regions where commercial crops, such as coffee and sugar, are cultivated on plantations, women have fewer opportunities to work as permanent labourers. On the plantations of Central and South America, similar to the plantations in Africa, women are engaged mainly as seasonal labour. In the various Central American countries, the ILO reports that large numbers of women and young workers are taken on for coffee harvesting either for the entire season or for shorter periods as casual workers. In Colombia, the limited information available seems to indicate that in the coffee estates, which recruit their seasonal labour force from neighbouring villages, the proportion of women and children varies between one third and one fourth of the total. In the French overseas territories, the number of women and young workers employed on the plantations ranges from a low of 10 per cent in Guyana to a high of 65 per cent in the banana and pineapple estates of Martinique. 53/

70. Whether working as permanent or temporary labourers, women in different countries of South and Central America appear to receive lower pay than men. In Colombia, for example, the basic wage for the permanent adult female workers was 40 per cent lower than that of males and, for the temporary workers, the basic wage was 32 per cent lower for the women. Similar sex-based differentials were found to be the usual practice on the sugar cane and coffee plantations in Costa Rica, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Peru, as well as in the cotton estates in the various countries. 54/

71. In regions where minifundios were prevalent, men and women often have to search for outside employment in order to supplement the insufficient income derived from the small plots. Thus, the surplus of labour in subsistence economies forms the labour reserves for the neighbouring crop economies. In Peru, for instance, large numbers of peasants migrate seasonally from the Sierra to the coast or the Selva for the harvest. In North-eastern Brazil, the food-producing areas around the sugar plantations also furnish the plantations with labourers for the harvest. 55/ As this temporary migratory movement tends to be male-dominated, the women's work on the minifundios significantly increases, particularly the intensity of their work, owing to the absence of males from the farms. 56/

72. The advance of a more capitalized and commercialized agriculture has led to a drastic proletarianization of the labour force and the permanent workers have been replaced by wage-earners, who are no longer given land for personal cultivation and who work, most often, on a temporary basis. Frequently, in the course of

53/ ILO, "Conditions of work of women and young workers on plantations", report III of the sixth session of the Committee on Work on Plantations, 1970, pp. 13 and 14.

54/ Ibid., p. 44.

55/ See C. D. Scott, "Peasants, proletarianization and the articulation of modes of production: the case of sugar-cane cutters of northern Peru, 1940-1969" in Journal of Peasant Studies, vol. III, No. 3, 1976; and M. C. Andrade, A Terra e o Homem no Nordeste (Brasiliense, São Paulo, Brazil 1963).

56/ Carmen Diana Deere, "Changing social relations of production and peasant women's work in the Peruvian Sierra", paper presented at the Fourth World Congress of Sociology, Torun, Poland, 1976.

this development, men tend to occupy the fewer, permanent and often more qualified positions in the large holdings, which are becoming more specialized in commercial production. On the other hand, although mechanization has reduced employment for all workers, the increase in the number of unemployed and underemployed males has undermined the competitive position of women, who were thus excluded in greater numbers, even from temporary jobs. 57/ Furthermore, in many parts of the region, the minifundios have experienced population pressures and the impingement of the spreading large estates. As a result of these factors, there has been a growth of both large and small holdings - the former are increasingly adopting labour-saving techniques of cultivation, while the latter are unable to absorb the growing population in the smaller plots.

73. Thus, during the last decades, the number employed as permanent workers on the large estates tended to decline in both relative and absolute terms, the temporary wage-earners increased in agriculture as did the number of people confined to the smaller farms as proprietors and unremunerated family helpers. During the same period, the occupational distribution of the male and female labour force became increasingly dissimilar. Women were displaced from permanent employment on the large estates and they were not absorbed into the temporary wage labour. Rather, they were more and more confined to the smaller plots as unremunerated family helpers. Table 2 below shows that in Brazil, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela, the female agricultural labour force has, during the last decades, become more concentrated in the categories of employers, self-employed workers and family workers, while there has been a decline of women in the category of wage-earners. Even though the changes in the occupational categories for men in Brazil and Peru have paralleled those of the women, in all four countries males tend to be more employed than women as wage earners.

57/ See Glaucia Vasques de Miranda, op. cit.; Patricia Garret, op. cit.; Verena Martinus Allier "As Mulheres do Caminhão de Turma", Debate E Crítica, No. 5, March 1975; F. R. Madeira and P. Singer, "Structure of female participation and work in Brazil, 1920-1970", Journal of Inter-American Studies and World Affairs, vol. 17, No. 4, November 1975.

Table 2

Male and female agricultural labour force by employment status
in Brazil, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela

		Employers, family workers and workers on own account		Wage-earners		Total, in thousands	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
		Percentage		Percentage			
Brazil	1950	65	75	35	25	9,609	761
	1970	74	83	26	17	11,833	1,258
Ecuador	1950	65	14	35	86	552	89
	1974	63	65	37	35	857	40
Peru	1950	66	69	34	31	1,061	486
	1972	77	82	23	18	1,432	149
Venezuela	1950	65	56	35	44	668	36
	1975	59	75	41	25	639	49

Source: ILO, Year Book of Labour Statistics, 1957 and 1977.

74. In Cuba, changes in women's participation and responsibilities in agricultural work were reported to be related to the major transformations introduced in the land tenure system and forms of production in the rural areas. Since the revolution, land reforms have eliminated the latifundio and introduced a system of collective ownership in a large part of agriculture. In the private sector, mainly comprised of small farms, there have been special efforts by the Government to organize co-operatives, to diversify food production and to improve food distribution through the expansion of rural credit, technical advice and the construction of roads in the countryside. The integrated development of rural areas has been a priority in the Cuban revolutionary programme. As part of this programme, wage differences between rural and urban workers are reported to be almost eliminated today. Moreover, during this process of change, women are reported to participate actively on an equal par with men. In this context, the government report emphasized the importance of the recently approved Family Code, which legally regulates male/female family responsibilities on a 50-50 basis. More specifically, in the rural areas, two major organizations are reported to involve actively a good number of women workers: the National Union of Rural Workers and the National Association of Small Farmers. Women's involvement was said to be particularly important in the latter organization, in which they comprise a significant proportion of the delegates in recent national conventions.

5. Developed market economies

75. Since women are used for hand operations in agriculture in under-developed societies, it might seem that the utilization of female labour would be drastically reduced as agriculture is modernized. 58/ In fact, the participation of women declined steadily during the last decades as the relative importance of the agricultural work force diminished in the developed areas.

76. The participation of women in agriculture in most of the market-economy countries is, thus, fairly low: the range is from a low of 1.2 per cent in North America to a high of 26.5 per cent in Japan. 59/

77. The modernization of agriculture, however, has not necessarily displaced women from agricultural employment entirely. In most of the developed areas the shrinking of the agricultural labour force has been accompanied by an increase in the proportion of women in agriculture (see table 3 below). 60/ Among the reporting countries, Canada, Denmark, Germany, the Federal Republic of, Italy, Norway, Spain and Sweden had shown a growing number of women occupied in agriculture, in contrast to the decline of the male participation rate during the last years (1971-1976). 61/

Table 3

Proportion of women in the total labour force in agriculture
in the developed market economies: 1950-1970

(In percentages)

	<u>1950</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>Per cent change</u>
Australia and New Zealand	5.9	16.6	+10.7
Japan	48.6	52.8	+ 4.2
North America	8.3	10.8	+ 2.5
Northern Europe	18.3	20.1	+ 1.8
Southern Europe	25.0	31.1	+ 6.1
Western Europe	42.7	36.3	- 6.4

Source: ILO, Labour Force Estimates and Projections, 1950-2000, vol. I, pp. 43-47.

58/ Ester Boserup, Woman's Role in Economic Development (New York, St. Martin's Press, 1970), p. 80.

59/ ILO, Labour Force Estimates and Projections, 1950-2000, vol. I, pp. 41-44.

60/ The only exception for the period is Western Europe. Within the region, France is the major country where the proportion of women in agriculture has declined. In contrast to France, the percentage of women in farms has increased in Austria, Belgium and the Federal Republic of Germany.

61/ See ILO, Year Book of Labour Statistics, 1977, pp. 122-155.

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78. Most of the decline in the number of women in agriculture in industrialized countries is a result of the diminishing number of female wage-earners. In many of the Western European countries, for example, rural workers increasingly comprise migrant labourers, most of whom are males.

79. As women moved from salaried agricultural jobs, a reduction of wage differentials between the sexes in agriculture as a response to these changes in the labour supply was observed. ^{62/} The ratio of female to male wages has decreased in the reporting countries for which data are available, although the wage differentials remain. In Denmark and New Zealand, women's agricultural wages have become equal in the last few years, while in Austria the female wages were actually slightly higher than the men's between 1971-1976. In Belgium, the Federal Republic of Germany, Norway and Sweden, sex wage-differentials persist, although they have declined during the last decade: female rural workers received 63 per cent of the male agricultural wages in Belgium, 71 per cent in the Federal Republic of Germany, 87 per cent in Sweden and 96 per cent in Norway. ^{63/}

80. The increasing participation of women in agriculture relative to men seems to be primarily a result of a shift in the division of labour among sexes in family-operated farms. In the developed countries the larger proportion (around 80 per cent or more) of women working in agriculture are family workers. In many of these countries, as Boserup points out, the wives of small farmers are becoming more burdened by agricultural work because their husbands take on non-agricultural jobs. In Japan, for example, women comprise more than 50 per cent of the agricultural labour force (see table 3 above), the vast majority of them being family workers (81 per cent). A new type of "housewife farming family" is thus becoming increasingly frequent ^{64/} (one fourth of the employers of independent workers are females). ^{65/} There, women take most of the farm's responsibility, while men engaged in off-farm employment.

81. In this sense, Norway reports that the prevalence of small, low-productive farms has led to the intensification of female work. In one year only (1972-1973) women completed almost 34 million work-days, whereas the corresponding figure for men was 28 million work-days. The reason for this difference comes from the fact that many of the holdings are so small that they are incapable of providing a family with an adequate standard of living. Each year many farms are abandoned, owing to the difficulties of operating them at a profit. That is why many operators have had to switch over to combination holdings, where the man has taken up work outside the farm, turning most of the work on the farm over to the women.

6. Centrally planned economies

82. In Eastern Europe and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, women's participation in agricultural production was reported to be significant. During

^{62/} Ester Boserup, op. cit., p. 81.

^{63/} ILO, Yearbook of Labour Statistics, 1977, pp. 768-774.

^{64/} Ester Boserup, op. cit., p. 81.

^{65/} ILO, Year Book of Labour Statistics, 1977, pp. 768-774.

the last decades, when the proportion of workers in agriculture declined substantially as a result of the over-all economic development, women have maintained their relative predominance in agricultural employment. Thus, between 1950 and 1970, in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, although the female agricultural labour force was greatly reduced, women still comprised 52 per cent of the total employed in agriculture. In the Eastern European countries the relative proportion of working women in agriculture slightly increased from 50 per cent to 53 per cent during the same period (see table 4).

Table 4

Male and female in agriculture: the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Eastern Europe (1950-1970)

	Male		Female	
	In thousands	%	In thousands	%
Eastern Europe				
1950	11,913	49.6	12,128	50.4
1970	8,701	47.0	9,855	53.0
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics				
1950	21,559	41.0	30,759	59.0
1970	14,526	48.0	15,670	52.0

Source: ILO, Labour Force Estimates and Projections, 1950-2000, vol. I, pp. 46-48.

83. In both the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Eastern Europe as a whole, during the period 1950 to 1970 important changes in the occupational distribution of women within the total female labour force occurred. In the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics 63 per cent of the gainfully employed women were engaged in agriculture in 1950 and in 1970, this percentage declined to 26 per cent. In the Eastern European region, the percentage of women in the agricultural labour force decreased from 63 per cent in 1950 to 41 per cent in 1970.

84. All of the reporting socialist countries emphasized that the reorganization of the forms of production and the modernization of agriculture have had a significant impact on the work and employment status of women. Thus, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic reports that "women engaged in agriculture share leading posts in collective and state farms, members of boards, team leaders, chiefs of cattle-breeding farms, chair-person of collective farms and directors of state farms". Women also comprise 27 per cent of the agronomists, 47 per cent of zoo technicians and 31 per cent of the veterinarians in the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic. In the German Democratic Republic women

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were said to be "increasingly taking over managerial jobs in crop and animal production. About 30-35 per cent of the board members in the agricultural co-operatives and 51 per cent of their chief accountants are women".

85. In Poland, private farming comprises a large part of the agricultural sector. Among the 3.2 million women working in agriculture, 3 million are in individual farms. Of the 3.4 million individual farms in Poland, about 44 per cent are run by women, sometimes single-handedly.

86. Most of the countries stressed the implementation of policies aiming to free women from rural work and direct them to productive non-agricultural employment. Although considerable improvements in production and growth in agricultural productivity are reported, there still remain differences in the working and living conditions between rural and urban women. Thus, Poland reports that women in agricultural employment work more years than women in the urban areas: while 72 per cent of the women between 18 and 24 years of age in rural areas are active in agriculture, only 59 per cent of the urban women in the same age group are gainfully employed. The activity rates are higher for rural women in all age categories, as in other parts of the world. The retirement age, however, is particularly high for rural women in Poland: 54 per cent of women 60 years of age and over are still working in agriculture, while only 11 per cent are at work in the urban areas.

C. Analysis of some of the effects of industrialization
on women's employment

1. Developed market economies

87. Current research has identified a number of consequences for employment, occupational structure and division of labour by sex brought on by industrialization in most of today's developed market economies. Thus, for example, by and large, the expansion of industry tended to undermine artisanal manufacturing, in which women were engaged in great numbers, thus driving them out of employment. During the first period of industrialization, however, the established industries, such as clothing, textiles and food-processing, were labour-intensive and provided jobs for at least a part of the women who were displaced from agriculture and the crafts. In the early stages of industrialization, women were thus absorbed by the unskilled factory jobs and domestic service, petty trade and other low-status service activities in the emergent urban sector.

88. In most of the advanced economies, the development of capital-intensive heavy industries, primarily employing men, had a negative impact on women's industrial employment. It has been shown, for example, that about the same proportion of American women are engaged in factory production now as in 1890, although industrialization has, since then, increased significantly. ^{66/} As the real income

^{66/} See Robert W. Smuts, Women and Work in America (New York, Schocken Books, 1971).

of male workers grew during this century, there was less need for women to work in factories. ^{67/} However, the intermittent mobilization of the female industrial labour force in periods of war or times of sustained economic growth, followed by the dismissal of women whenever the need for labour decreased, has been a characteristic of the industrialized countries.

89. The most outstanding feature of female employment in today's developed market economies has been the striking numerical increase of women in the tertiary sector. Between 1950 and 1970, whereas the proportion of women in the total industrial labour scene has risen from 25 per cent to 29 per cent, the percentage of women in the tertiary sector increased from 39 per cent to 47 per cent. ^{68/} More than half of all working women were engaged in the tertiary sector services, this proportion being as high as 78 per cent in North America. Most of the women employed in this sector are clerks, sales women etc., while very few have been incorporated in higher occupational positions. For example, according to the replies of Governments to the note verbale, the percentage of women in the total number of managerial and administrative positions ranges from a low of 9 per cent in New Zealand to a high of 20 per cent in Austria. ^{69/} This pattern of segregation of women in the lower-paid and less-skilled positions, as well as sex-based wage differentials, is also present in industry.

90. Although the right of women workers to equal remuneration is generally acknowledged in principle, there are still some areas where unequal pay exists. Even though statistical data on wage differentials of men and women in the various sectors and occupations are very inadequate, the ILO studies suggest that in many industrialized countries women's wages are about 50 per cent to 80 per cent those of men for the same work time. ^{70/}

91. Earning differentials between men and women are, for the most part, due to

^{67/} Helen I. Safa "The changing class composition of the female labour force in Latin America", Latin American Perspectives, vol. 4, No. 4, 1977.

^{68/} ILO, Labour Force Estimates and Projections, 1950-2000, vol. I. Most of the increase in women's participation in the industrial sector was owing to the growing proportion of female industrial workers in the socialist countries.

^{69/} In New Zealand and Austria, women comprise 30 per cent and 39 per cent, respectively, of the total active population.

^{70/} ILO, "Women workers in a changing world", preliminary report, chap. 6, 1973.

A recent inquiry by the ILO (see Bulletin of Labour Statistics, Geneva, 2nd quarter, 1977) throws some light on the national situation in respect to wage differentials in six occupations (spinners, sewing-machine operators, machine-sewing bookbinders, laboratory assistants, retail grocery sales persons, and accounting-machine operators) in more than 50 countries. The information available shows that equal remuneration has not become a reality in many countries. Thus, women machine-sewing bookbinders were paid from 10 to 20 per cent less than the male workers in Austria and the Federal Republic of Germany, and over 30 per cent less in Canada, Ireland and Switzerland. Women spinners were paid 10 to 15 per cent less than men in Czechoslovakia, Italy and Portugal, and 5 per cent less in New Zealand. Women laboratory assistants' wages were lower by about 20 per cent in Norway.

the concentration of women in lower-paid jobs. For example, most of the developed countries report that women are over-represented in non-durable manufacturing, particularly in clothing, textiles and food and beverage industries. The working conditions tend to be poorer in these industries than in many others, with longer hours of work, lower pay and with fewer fringe benefits. Consequently, there is still a considerable gap between the average male and female wages in the industrial sector in many developed countries, as table 5 indicates.

Table 5

Female-male wage ratio in industrial employment for
selected developed countries

(1975)

	<u>Female wages/Male wages</u>
Australia	0.84
Belgium	0.69
Denmark	0.84
France	0.85
Germany, Federal Republic of	0.72
Netherlands	0.78
Switzerland	0.68
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	0.66

Source: ILO, Year Book of Labour Statistics, 1977.

The data for these countries for the decade 1965-1975 do not indicate that the gap is declining significantly.

2. Centrally planned economies

92. In the socialist countries, on the other hand, despite the tendency for growing numbers of women to be employed in the service sector, many more jobs in industry are held by women. The proportion of women in the total labour force in manufacturing ranges from a low of 36 per cent in Romania to a high of 44 per cent in the German Democratic Republic.

93. Since women do not constitute a marginal labour force for industry, they tend to represent an important proportion of the skilled workers. Although women were said to be employed in diverse industries, some countries reported a concentration of women in certain branches; thus, the German Democratic Republic stressed that women's participation had increased particularly in the most mechanized branches of

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the industry, such as in the electronics and the electro-technical industry. In the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, female employment is also concentrated in the more mechanized types of production, 71/ while in Poland, according to the Government's reply to the note verbale, women are mostly employed in light industries, such as textile, clothing and the food industry. None of the above countries, however, reported on the consequences of the respective patterns of concentration of women in particular branches of industry on their income or work opportunities.

3. Developing countries

94. Most of the developing countries remain predominantly agrarian and a sizable segment of their population is still engaged in agricultural pursuits. In these countries, women are involved in the artisanal manufacture production and they comprise an important part of the labour force of house industries. Among the reporting countries, the Central African Empire, Ecuador, Honduras, the Niger and Sierra Leone stressed the participation of women mainly in handicrafts and food-processing. In Honduras, for example, women constitute 38 per cent of the industrial labour force, a large proportion of whom (74 per cent) are self-employed workers and family helpers.

95. In the developing countries undergoing industrialization, the development of modern industry differs considerably from the process of industrialization which took place in the advanced countries with respect to the rate and scope of industrialization and its impact on female labour.

96. Since the Second World War, many developing countries have experienced a phase of import-substitution in manufacturing in which foreign capital has played an important role. These industries tend to reproduce technologies which have already been developed and put to use at home. Such technology is apt to be capital-intensive. Import-substitution processes using capital-intensive technology were facilitated by the practice of many countries which kept the cost of capital artificially low through accelerated depreciation and investment allowances, low interest rates and taxes and duty exemptions for the imported capital equipment. 72/

97. As a consequence of these developments, the evolution of female employment in these countries differs from the experience of today's developed countries in the earlier phases of their industrialization. Thus, while in Western Europe and North America large numbers of women at the beginning of industrialization were drawn away from agriculture, the crafts and domestic services and into the factories, in the import-substitution countries, the use of capital-intensive technology has restricted the incorporation of labour into the modern sector for

71/ E. Sullerot, Women, Society and Change (London, World Industry Library. 1971), p. 140.

72/ The Impact of Multinational Corporations on Development and on International Relations, E/5500/Rev.1 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.74.II.A.5), p. 69.

both men and women. The presence of a substantial male labour force in the urban areas, however, prevented women from being absorbed into blue-collar jobs and confined them to marginal employment in domestic service and petty trade.

98. This pattern is common for many Latin American countries. For example, in Brazil, where very rapid industrialization took place in the past decades, the percentage of women employed as industrial labour did not increase between 1950 and 1970, that is, it remained at 10 per cent, while the percentage of men in industrial jobs doubled from 10 per cent to 20 per cent. 73/ In Guatemala, most of the recently created industry has been capital-intensive and has thus transformed or eliminated existing artisan industries, replaced old job categories with new ones and has not substantially increased over-all employment. As a result, the number of people working in agriculture and services remains high. However, the participation of women in manufacturing production actually declined after 1950, because the independent artisan industry was partially eliminated, men had displaced women in some of the traditional industries, such as, clothing, food and textiles, and the few new jobs created by the modern industries were male-dominated. 74/

99. Women are frequently excluded from the slow-growing blue-collar jobs in Latin America owing to their lack of marketable skills and a marked absence of programmes to provide them with the necessary training. 75/ At the same time, the legislation, supposedly designed to assist women in industrial employment, has actually worked against them, because employers prefer to hire men, who are free of the costly restrictions of protective legislation. 76/ The unions have also been held responsible for the decline in the number of women working in industries, particularly, in Mexico and Puerto Rico. 77/

100. As the growth of agricultural employment is almost stagnant or declining and the expansion of the modern industrial sector has not been able to incorporate women in sufficient numbers, a large part of the expansion of the female labour force in Latin America is owing to the increased female participation in the service sector. Between 1950 and 1970, the service sector was responsible for 85 per cent of the increase in the female labour force in Latin America. Most of

73/ Glaura Vasques de Miranda, "Woman's labour force participation in a developing society: the case of Brazil", in Women and National Development: The Complexity of Change, Ed. Wellesley Editorial Committee (Chicago, Illinois, University of Chicago Press, 1977).

74/ Norma S. Chinchilla, "Industrialization, monopoly, capitalism and women's work in Guatemala", in Women and National Development: The Complexity of Change, Ed. Wellesley Editorial Committee (Chicago, Illinois, University of Chicago Press, 1977).

75/ Report on the World Social Situation, 1974 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.75.IV.6), p. 40.

76/ D. Chaplin, The Peruvian Industrial Labour (Princeton University Press, 1970).

77/ Helen I. Safa, "The changing class composition of the female labour force in Latin America", in Latin American Perspectives, vol. IV, No. 4, 1977, p. 131; see also June Nash, "Certain aspects of the integration of women in the development process" (E/CONF.66/BP/5), para. 74.

the jobs created were low-paid and low-status jobs. It is well known that domestic service is the occupation of large numbers of women in urban Latin America, 78/ especially for those poor and uneducated young women who come from the rural areas. In 1970, the data for the metropolitan areas of Buenos Aires show that among economically active females, 50 per cent of the internal migrants and 63 per cent of the recent migrants from the neighbouring countries work as domestic servants. In Belo Horizonte, Brazil, survey data for 1972 show that 73 per cent of the economically active migrants and 45 per cent of the native population work in personal services, a large proportion of whom are concentrated in domestic services. In Lima, Peru, 30 per cent of all female migrants coming to the city between 1956 and 1965 entered domestic service upon arrival. 79/

101. More recently, however, in contrast with the process described above, in some developing countries, the creation of jobs for women in the manufacturing sector is becoming increasingly common. This change is the result of the growth of what is often termed "offshore sourcing", the location by transnational corporations of plants in developing countries to manufacture consumer products and components for export. In contrast with the import substitution pattern of industrialization where the main attraction for foreign capital is the existence of protected markets created by favourable government policies, the export-oriented industries are in search of low cost labour.

102. Typically, these industries - electronics, textiles, clothing and toys, are labour intensive, that is, they have a high ratio of labour costs to total costs of production. Because of the importance of low wages, even while they were operating in their mother countries, such firms employed those segments of the labour force which were less qualified, less likely to organize in unions and willing to work for very low pay. In the United States, for example, this labour tended to be predominantly female and non-white, as it remains until today. 80/ In recent years, cost-cutting competitive market pressures drove a large number of international firms to search for low-wage workshops, mainly in Asia, but also in the Caribbean

78/ Nadia Youssef, Women and Work in Developing Societies, Population Monograph Series, No. 15 (Berkeley, California, Institute of International Studies, University of California, 1974).

79/ Elizabeth Jelin, "Migration and labour force participation of Latin American women: the domestic servants in the cities", in Women and National Development: The Complexity of Change, Ed., Wellesley Editorial Committee (Chicago, Illinois, University of Chicago Press, 1977), p. 133.

80/ Linda Y. C. Lim, "Women workers in multinational corporations: the case of the electronics industry in Malaysia and Singapore", Department of Economics, Swarthmore College, Pennsylvania, 1978, (mimeographed).

and in Central America. ^{81/} The wages in these countries are substantially lower than in the developed countries. In Singapore, where the wage rates for the "offshore industries" are the highest in Asia, workers receive for a day's work less than the hourly wage of an American worker doing the same job. Wages in Malaysia are about one half of the rate in Singapore and, in Indonesia, they are about one fourth the rate in Singapore. ^{80/}

103. In general, it is the female labour-intensive industries which have had the greatest propensity to move offshore; ^{82/} and, in their Caribbean and Asian plants, these industries continue to employ mostly women. In two of the reporting countries, Malaysia and Singapore, the development of these export-oriented industries led to a significant expansion of the female industrial employment: in Malaysia, between 1957 and 1970, the proportion of women in manufacturing rose from 17 per cent to 29 per cent. In Singapore, the economic and employment expansion was particularly rapid during the period 1970-1974, when the proportion of women in manufacturing grew by 118 per cent as against the corresponding increase of only 36 per cent for men. In 1974, the proportion of females in manufacturing reached 45 per cent as opposed to 18 per cent in 1957; most of this increase occurred in the four main exporting industries of wearing apparel, foot-wear, textiles and electronics.

104. The employment opportunities opened by this rapid industrialization were more likely to be in subordinate and unskilled jobs. In Singapore between 1970 and 1974, the proportion of working men in professional and technical jobs increased from 6.9 to 10.7 per cent, while the proportion of women in these positions

^{81/} Governments of host countries offer export-oriented firms large investment incentives because of the contribution they are expected to make to foreign exchange earnings and because they can create unskilled and semi-skilled jobs on a large scale (see Linda Y. C. Lim, *op. cit.* and Thomas W. Allen, "Policies of Asian countries towards direct foreign investment" Paper by the South East Asia Development Advisory Group, Asia Society, 1973). "Runway shops" also had their search facilitated because the technology used by them allows the hiring of relatively low-skilled workers and the management could rely on on-the-job training to secure the necessary qualifications. In Singapore, for example, the typical basic hiring requirement in the major expanding manufacturing industries of the late 1960s and early 1970s - electronics, textiles, wearing apparel - was a primary education (see "Female labour force participation and earnings in Singapore", Clearing House for Social Development in Asia, Thailand, 1976). At the same time, the training of workers requires a relatively short time: semi-skilled assembly work in the electronics industry, for example, has a very short "learning curve", so that the worker reaches maximum productivity for a given type of technology within six to nine months of work (see Linda Y. C. Lim, *ibid.*).

^{82/} See Lee Reynis, "The proliferation of US firm third world sourcing in the mid-to-late 1960s: an historical and empirical study of factors which occasioned the location of production for the US market abroad", Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Economics, University of Michigan, 1976.

declined from 14 per cent to 11 per cent. At the same time, while the proportion of male production workers remained constant, the proportion of women increased from 32 to 39 per cent. During the period 1966-1973, the ratio of female/male average monthly earnings declined drastically (from 0.86 to 0.62), reflecting the entry of young working men in the low-paid positions. 83/

105. There has been some concern about the future trends and impact of the export-oriented industries on employment in developing countries. Such industries are said to be more sensitive to the needs of the international market than to those of the host countries. Although they are important for creating employment and for providing foreign exchange earnings, in other respects, their impact on the domestic economy is minimal, since virtually all their inputs are imported and all their outputs exported. The Governments of host countries seem to view such enterprises, for the most part, as short-run solutions to creating employment, but for development in the long run, the Governments prefer industries that will engage highly-skilled workers. If these long-term plans become a reality, female labour-intensive manufacturing could be only a temporary phase of industrialization in developing countries. 84/

106. For the moment, however, where the conditions allow for the expansion of these industries, it is rather the quality of the jobs created by them that has been questioned. In particular, it has been pointed out that most of the workers are paid a subsistence wage with little hope for a raise; 85/ sometimes, instructional pressures are exerted in order to prevent the organization of unions, so as not to discourage foreign investment. Finally, the skills taught in most of these industries are not transferable, which thus increases the insecurity of the workers in a situation where employment would be dependent on the fluctuations in the world market.

83/ "Female labour force participation and earnings in Singapore", Clearing House for Social Development in Asia, Thailand, 1976,

84/ Linda Y. C. Lim, op. cit. pp. 46-48.

85/ Robert Show, "Dependent development and the new industrial worker: the export processing zone in the Philippines", Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Sociology, Harvard University, 1977.

D. Access of women to essential incentives and participation of women in grass-roots organizations

107. Economic changes are taking place in most parts of the world giving rise to a vast array of consequences, the effects of which are often controversial if not outright unfavourable to the socio-economic status of women. The above survey of employment trends and the working conditions of women reveals that their lot in the labour market, particularly the position of rural women, is rather incongruous. On the one hand, confined to the subsistence sector and forced to use primitive technology and equipment, rural women in developing countries are overburdened rather than underemployed, a situation which becomes even more dramatic in view of the yields obtained. ^{86/} On the other hand, the introduction of new technology in the cash-crop estates has contributed to the undesirable displacement of both men's and women's labour and has facilitated the concentration of the profits extracted into a few hands. In addition, such a utilization of technological improvements has obstructed the diversification of small crops for basic nutritional foods and has reinforced the confinement of women to subsistence agriculture. In developed countries, rural women also lag far behind other socio-economic groups or urban women in their access to the gains brought by modern economic development. Thus, even though the proportion of persons actively engaged in agriculture has decreased significantly, the proportion of women as farm managers or family aids, particularly in those small, low-income-generating farms, not only did not experience a corresponding decline, but in most cases increased.

108. Whereas rural women are overworked, women in the urban areas, especially in developing countries, are largely underemployed or confined to low-paid and marginal jobs. Moreover, where new employment opportunities are opened up, women are frequently cheap-labour targets, as in the case of the recent expansion of female employment in the export industries in Asia, and they have remained noticeably under-represented in the higher-status and high-qualified positions.

109. A comprehensive strategy to mobilize women in the development process, therefore, should be aimed at aiding not only those women wholly or partially excluded from economic activities by virtue of unemployment or underemployment, but also at those whose efforts do not enable them to earn more than a bare livelihood. Thus, particular attention should be given to the position of rural women, in order that access to essential incentives, such as land, adequate technology and technical training, could be guaranteed which would enable them to utilize better their productive capacity and would enhance their economic well-being. Furthermore, efforts to incorporate women into national development should also aim to strengthen their participation in the decision-making organs of such institutions and organizations that would enable them to be the full beneficiaries of economic growth.

110. In accord with these two major objectives, Governments and international organizations have provided information with special reference to programmes for

^{86/} E. Boserup, "Preface" to Women and National Development: The Complexity of Change, Ed. Wellesley Editorial Committee (Chicago, Illinois, University of Chicago Press, 1977).

rural women gauged to offer technical training, to promote the creation of locally-based technology and to stimulate women's participation in co-operatives and rural associations. Information on women's participation in trade unions was also made available.

1. Technology and rural women

111. Recently, increasing attention by governmental, non-governmental and international institutions has been given to questions related to equal access to, and the introduction of, appropriate technology to reduce the heavy workload of women and to increase their productivity, particularly in the rural areas. The first initiatives have been directed towards basic research and the implementation of some pilot projects, since the overwhelming majority of the producers in the subsistence sector are women and their contribution is largely underestimated by official surveys and development planning. ^{87/}

112. Among the reporting countries, the Federal Republic of Germany stressed that for many years its Government, in co-operation with non-governmental organizations, has provided organizational and specialists' assistance for women's self-help activities. Thus, 40 million DM, subsidizing 100 projects of special relevance to women, were provided to non-governmental organizations for co-operation with their partners in developing countries. One such project, allotted 7 million DM, was for the improvement of water supplies in the Kandra district in Kenya. This project, supported by local self-help organizations, has brought visible improvements in the socio-economic situation of women in the area.

113. In reviewing the various ways in which the division of labour between the sexes has been established in different regions of the world, it has been emphasized that agricultural output depends ultimately on the total labour resources of the family unit. Any effort, therefore, to speed rural development and to enhance the welfare of the rural population depends on the introduction of appropriate technological or institutional changes that would improve the productivity levels of the entire family unit.

114. In this sense, the recent development of small-holder agriculture in tropical Africa provides important lessons regarding rural development. The viability of small peasant farms as a source of growth and employment depends on the adaptability of families, who produce over 90 per cent of the value of agricultural production in that region. ^{88/} Some studies on these areas point out the difficulties of raising food production by increasing men and women's participation in farm work owing to the attractiveness of wages in non-farm work for men and the time spent in household tasks by women, which decrease the availability of agricultural

^{87/} Thus, for example, FAO is carrying out a study on the living conditions and work of rural women in West Africa. UNDP is giving financial support to an action-oriented study of the role of the women in rural development in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. In Rwanda and Uganda, UNICEF assisted in food-conservation and food-storage projects and the introduction of village-level technologies.

^{88/} John H. Cleave, African Farmers: Labour Use in the Development of Smallholder Agriculture (New York, Praeger Publishers, 1974).

labourers. Innovations in tasks such as the grinding of grains, water portage and firewood picking are, therefore, not only profitable for women but for agricultural productivity as well. 89/

2. Education and technical training

115. Making available opportunities for education and training to women in the rural areas can have a significant impact not only on the economy, but it could also influence the growth and formation of coming generations, since early child-rearing is often the exclusive responsibility of women. Moreover, owing to the lack of day-care centres for the poor, women suffer an additional barrier to the increase of their productivity and economic rewards.

116. By law, most countries grant equal access to education for both sexes, but in actuality girls' educational attainment is, more often than not, considerably below that of boys. This is true for primary education, while for the higher levels the gap between females and males widens further. Where illiteracy is conspicuous, the percentage of illiterate females is invariably higher than that of males. In 1960, the world illiteracy rates were 33.5 per cent for men and 44.9 per cent for women. In 1970, the rates were 28.0 per cent and 40.3 per cent, respectively. 90/

117. For rural women, non-formal education is of primary importance. Yet, despite their responsibilities, their access to non-formal training in the economic areas of agriculture, animal husbandry and co-operatives is very limited, as some of the developing countries have reported. In Africa, where women's role in agriculture is prominent, the available data show that few women have the opportunity to learn about such training programmes, while men have little or no teaching about the nutritional or health needs of their families (see table 6).

89/ For example, it is estimated that traditional ways of carrying water by women in the United Republic of Tanzania requires a labour time of 312 hours per year. If a \$10 wheelbarrel is used, which can contain a much larger quantity of water, the reduction in labour time will be 208 hours a year. If the time saved can be transferred to paid agricultural work, the net increase in agricultural production of \$20 would more than cover the cost of the wheelbarrel. Uma Lele, Design of Rural Development Lessons from Africa (Baltimore, Maryland, John Hopkins University Press, 1975), p. 27.

For a detailed analysis of the importance of appropriate technology, as it affects women's socio-economic status in the rural areas, see: "Water, women and development", (E/CONF.70/A.19 of February 1977) and "Appropriate technology for developing countries and the needs of rural women" (ESA/S and T/AC.7/CRP.3/Add.3 of May 1977).

90/ UNESCO, Statistical Yearbook, 1972. For a more comprehensive evaluation of women's educational attainment, see "Current trends and changes in the status and roles of women and men, and major obstacles to be overcome in the achievement of equal rights, opportunities and responsibilities" (E/CONF.66/3 of 1975).

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Table 6

Areas of access to non-formal education	Percentage of women's participation
Agriculture	15
Animal husbandry	20
Co-operatives	10
Arts and crafts	50
Nutrition	90
Home economics	100

Source: Adapted from "The changing and contemporary role of women in African development" (M74-11), ECA, Addis Ababa, 1974.

118. Some efforts by international organizations, as well as by Governments, to develop programmes of assistance, training and technical advising for women working in rural areas have been reported. Most of the international organizations' programmes stressed the importance of assisting women in agricultural production, processing and marketing, with special reference to food preparation, preservation and consumption. 91/

119. Many countries, such as Ecuador, Honduras, Pakistan and the Syrian Arab Republic reported specific projects on the education of rural women, the development of rural-oriented school programmes, courses in health, nutrition and home improvement; others reported more comprehensive programmes. Thus, in both India and Iran, programmes for rural women are given priority and a fairly extensive infrastructure is being established in the form of training centres and social welfare provisions. India furnishes a notable example of inclusion of women at the national level in a Division of Rural Women in the form of a special governmental committee, whose task is to create and co-ordinate national development activities for rural women and children. Furthermore, the Government of India, through its Directorate of Extension, carries out special projects for rural women's training, including 100 farmers' training centres spread out over the country which train women in agricultural production, resource management and the promotion of nutritional status. Iran not only is planning specialized programmes for assisting and training rural women in the area of agricultural production, but the Government reports that efforts to increase the profitability of the rural handicraft industry are being made. To this end, special training courses providing women with carpet-weaving and needlework skills have been developed and

91/ For example, FAO, in collaboration with WHO and UNICEF, carries out an applied nutrition project in Rwanda, including training of nutrition extensionists, promotion of a national network of community nutrition centres and diffusion of village-level programmes for small farmers' development.

these training courses extend to teaching new skills required in the food industry for the processing and preserving of fruits and vegetables. Furthermore, in order to compensate for the lack of services for the rural population, 1,022 special "rural houses of culture" have been established, which provide services benefiting women, such as child-care facilities, allowing women to avail themselves of work opportunities and to attend literacy and vocational classes. 92/

3. Land reform, co-operatives and women

120. Contemporary analyses of economic development have emphasized that processes of social change should not be seen as smooth operations by virtue of which changes in one sector of society will induce comparable changes throughout. New technology introduced to raise productivity may remain encapsulated just as development programmes which do not take into account the socio-economic status of women may fail to extend benefits for them. 93/ Thus, for example, it may be suggested that land reform, although designed to improve the socio-economic status of both men and women in rural areas, has had negative consequences on the status of women. First, although most land reform legislation does not make distinctions between males and females among beneficiaries, both the land distribution organizations and the services connected with them not only function within the prevailing norms and values upholding the role of man as the major farm producer and women as farm-helper or consumer, but also, in some cases, women, who have been the actual land-cultivators, have been deprived of their land-property rights. 94/

121. Furthermore, the emphasis on agricultural modernization accompanying land reform, which has, in general, been conceived in terms of increasing production for sale and export and cash income, has had adverse effect on the status of women through its neglect of the traditional role that women play in subsistence agriculture. 95/

122. Finally, it may also be argued that women have not benefited adequately from rural development, because they were not fully incorporated in those locally-based organizations which were conceived to be the vehicle for transformation as well

92/ Other organizations, such as the Farah Pahlavi Welfare and Educational Organization and the Women's Organization of Iran, have developed special networks of services for the rural population, including a comprehensive system of social welfare, health and community services.

93/ Carolyn M. Elliott, "Theories of development in assessment", Ed. Wellesley Editorial Committee, Women and Natural Development: The Complexity of Change (Chicago, Illinois, University of Chicago Press, 1977).

94/ Achola O. Pala, "African women in rural development research: trends and priorities", Overseas Liaison Committee, American Council of Education, Washington, D.C., Paper No. 12, December 1976.

95/ Ingrid Palmer, "Rural women and the basic need approach", in International Labour Review, vol. 115, No. 1, January-February 1977, pp. 97-98.

as the units of rural development programmes. For example, the co-operative movements of agricultural producers accept women as the natural labour force in many of the lower levels of co-operative employment and women's involvement is restricted to the preparation and delivery of produce for marketing, while men who are members have voting rights and control the proceeds from the sale of produce. Here again, the same factors preventing women from full participation in development, for example, lack of education, heavy schedule in the home and in the fields and cultural and traditional attitudes, militate against their full participation in co-operatives.

123. In some cases, restrictive legislation tends to deny or limit membership rights to women, particularly regulations relating to land ownership. Thus, Denmark reports that, in most cases, although farmers' wives are members of their husband's association, "he is the real member and, as such, he is the one who has the right to vote". A study conducted in seven countries of Africa and Latin America indicates that husbands are the principal decision-makers in matters concerning the joining of co-operatives, obtaining credit and selling cash crops, although the husband's decision may be influenced directly or indirectly by the wife, who often participates in the activity once decisions are made. Thus, for example, in Peru, both husband and wife decide to obtain credit and, in South Ghana, the selling of cash crops is also a joint decision. In none of the surveyed countries had wives participated equally with the husbands in the decision to join co-operatives, while at the same time, once the husbands decide to join the co-operatives, in Kenya and South Ghana, both husband and wife actively participate in the work. 96/

124. There are, however, successful co-operative enterprises, where women who are self-employed or independent wage-earners participate exclusively. Colombia provides a notable example of how deliberate government policies promote women in co-operative activities. The Colombian Institute of Agrarian Reform has established a rural feminine credit programme supplying credit to women for individual or group enterprises, such as commercial gardens and orchards, co-operative dairy projects and craft industries. Lesotho supplies an example of situation where women's participation in co-operatives has been affected indirectly by general social and political circumstances. There, wives have had traditionally an independent status from that of their husbands, although status derived from private wealth, which usually depends upon the husband's income, is very important; women have been the organizers and participants in the co-operative activities surrounding subsistence agriculture in the absence of the men who have migrated to work outside the country. 97/

96/ For details, see "A seven-country survey on the roles of women in rural development", Agency for International Development, Monograph AID/CM/ta-C-73-41, December 1974, chart 13, p. 48.

97/ Martha Mueller, "Women and men - power and powerlessness in Lesotho", in Women and National Development: The Complexity of Change, Ed. Wellesley Editorial Committee (Chicago, Illinois, University of Chicago Press, 1977).

125. Among the reporting countries, in India, for example, the self-employed Women's Association was established with a view to attracting credit and training assistance to promote self-employment among women who were already engaged in earning a livelihood as street vendors, cart-pullers, junksmith, and garment-makers. Another example is Pakistan, where small co-operatives for the purchase of property, poultry farming and market facilities for women have been established through credit provided by the Muslim Commercial Bank. In 1973 in Poland, where women manage a significant proportion of the private farms and play an important role in the co-operative organizations, women constituted 32 per cent of the membership in rural supply and marketing co-operatives, 23 per cent in dairy co-operatives, 21 per cent in market gardening and 26 per cent in savings and credit co-operatives.

126. In Jamaica, the Government reported that it was moving away from plantation-style sugar-cane development to co-operative farms for the workers. Women form 20 per cent of the sugar co-operative membership and have 15 per cent representation at the management level. They are also being involved in training courses in co-operative principles. The Government of Jamaica also reports a progressive land-reform programme, whereby 21,185 persons were given access to agricultural land through the Land Lease Programmes, 2,466 of whom were women leasing land in their own names in addition to the large number of women involved as family members of other lessors.

E. Conclusions and policy implications

127. The access of rural women to essential incentives that would enhance their participation in the development process needs to be more extensively evaluated. The data submitted by Governments did not permit a thorough examination of such a broad subject. A number of international conferences ^{98/} will have a direct bearing on the question of enhancing women's participation in the development process, especially those concerned with technology, rural development and agrarian reform, and technical and financial co-operation among developing countries.

128. The material prepared for and the conclusions reached at these conferences should pave the way for a more comprehensive assessment of the availability of adequate technology, which could lighten the workload of women and for a more detailed analysis of the impact of land reform on women and the importance of women's participation in grass-roots organizations. In this respect, the limited incorporation of women into trade unions as members or leaders has undoubtedly contributed to the prevalence of unfavourable working conditions for women and to the continued disparities of income and training opportunities between men and women, which remain unchallenged. Thus, the need for Governments and non-governmental organizations, as well as the United Nations system, to promote

^{98/} The United Nations Conference on Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries, the WHO/UNICEF Conference on Primary Health Care, the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development and the Conference on Science and Technology for Development.

more systematically the actual mobilization of women into trade unions, co-operatives and other interested groups. For example, forthcoming international conferences of both UNIDO and FAO should take into serious consideration, within their special concern with women, the possibility of launching a world-wide programme of principles and rights of both urban and, in particular, rural working women with respect to their rights to be mobilized into trade unions and co-operatives. Thereby it is expected that they would have an actual opportunity to struggle more effectively for better and equal socio-economic conditions.

129. Even in many developed countries, women in industrial development still remain segregated within the traditional industries, which offer little opportunity for technical training and adequate pay. Thus, assessing these conditions of women's work and employment in industry is also of crucial importance. It was emphasized in section III.C above that contemporary trends of industrialization in developing countries have either excluded women from blue-collar jobs or have incorporated them only as unskilled and low-paid labour. At the same time, it was pointed out that, for the most part, industrialization in these countries was closely related to the expansion of transnational corporations, whose development has influenced not only the choice of technology, but also other factors which are responsible for levels of employment and the quality of working conditions. In this respect, it is pertinent to stress the importance of the roles of UNIDO, UNCTAD and the United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations in assisting developing countries in their ongoing efforts to establish an international code of conduct on the transfer of technology and a code of conduct on transnational corporations. In these efforts, specific provisions to ensure equal socio-economic rights for women should be included.

130. Finally, it must be pointed out that a striking common denominator concerning women's role in agriculture has been found throughout the data analysis both for developed and developing countries, in spite of the existing clear differences depending on the socio-economic levels and political forms of development. That common pattern reveals that the working conditions of rural women constitute a stark index of the levels and quality of development in their respective countries and regions. Even in the developed countries this fact has been true, because although they might have highly modernized agriculture, such as in northern Europe, women still remain a major part of their less-privileged agricultural labour force constituting the main working force in family-operated farms. This fact clearly shows the prime importance of rural women's work, in particular to the survival of a self-sustained agriculture both in agricultural export-oriented developing countries and in several highly industrialized countries, such as Japan.
