



## MODULE 8

# Gender Issues in Agricultural Labor

## Overview

Making the rural labor market a more effective pathway out of poverty is . . . a major policy challenge that remains poorly understood and sorely neglected in policy making.

—World Bank 2007

**T**otal labor in agriculture has declined in most countries, and this trend will continue as countries industrialize. Over half of all laborers worldwide, however, rely on the agricultural sector. In sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, 70 percent or more of the labor force works in agriculture. In many regions more women than men are employed in agriculture. In the Middle East more than twice as many women work in agriculture as men, and in South Asia close to one-third more women are working in the sector than men (fig. 8.1). Most work in agriculture is onerous, and the returns are lower than in other sectors. Improving the quality and quantity of jobs in rural areas, and in agriculture, for both women and men, has been identified as a means of promoting economic growth and reducing poverty (Heintz 2006; World Bank 2007). The most significant positive impact on agricultural labor will come through creating a dynamic rural economy in both the agriculture and the nonfarm sectors, focusing primarily on creating a good investment climate (World Bank 2007). This dynamism will assist poor men and women laborers, who both face many constraints in terms of lack of access to resources and power.

An extensive literature exists on labor issues in general and agricultural labor issues in particular. This Module

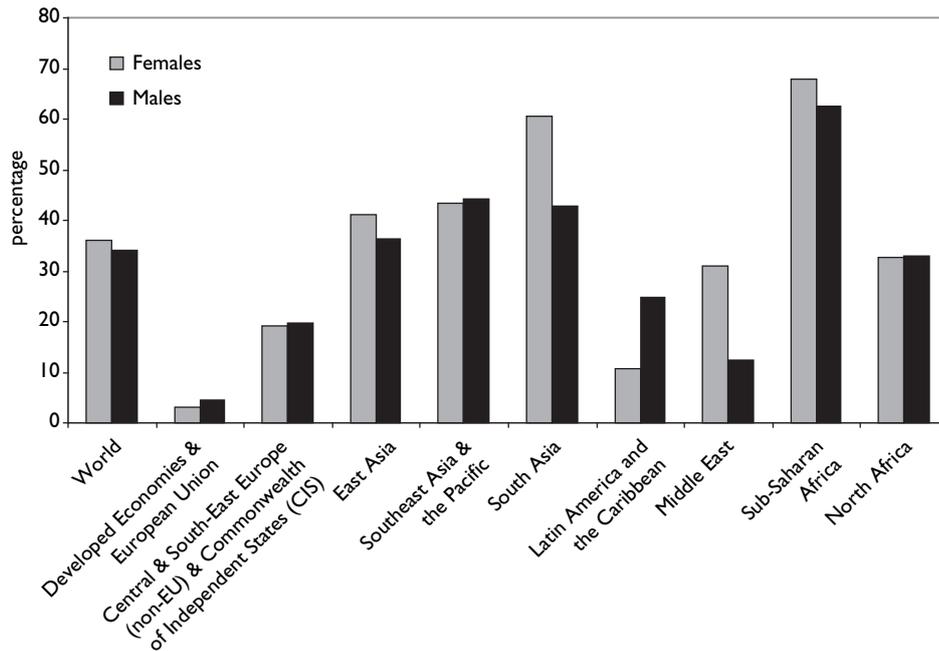
focuses specifically on the gender equalities in the agricultural labor market and the implications to project and program design.

Gender inequalities in all labor markets are pervasive. Gender inequalities in the agricultural sector are more difficult to quantify but are equally extensive. Reducing labor inequalities makes good development sense. Reducing labor market segmentation and wage inequalities improves the mobility of labor and increases employment. Simulations of Latin American economies show both a reduction of poverty and an increase in economic growth by increasing women's labor force participation; a 6 percent expansion of growth was shown to be possible if men's and women's wages were equal (Tzannatos 1999).

Increasing labor opportunities and returns for poor women in rural areas is pro-poor and improves family and social welfare as increasingly evidenced in literature. Increasing women's earnings and share of family income has been shown to empower women by strengthening their bargaining power in the household. Empirical evidence shows that women invest more than men in the development of children;<sup>1</sup> thus, higher levels of employment and earnings for women not only contribute to current economic growth but also have intergenerational implications (see relationships in fig. 8.2). A global increase in women-headed households, which are asset-poor, heightens the importance of improving employment opportunities to reduce poverty.

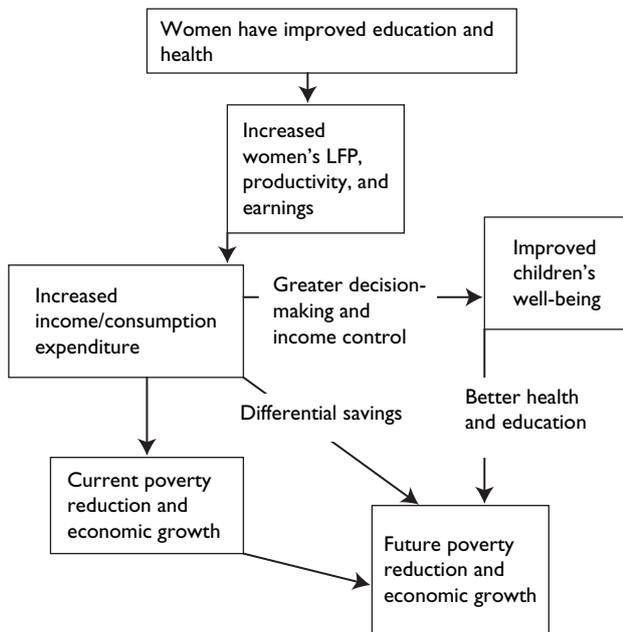
The contribution of women's work to family and society is significant, through their productive and reproductive

Figure 8.1 Percentage of Women and Men in Agriculture by Region, 2007



Source: ILO 2006 (see also table 8.1).

Figure 8.2 Relationship between Women Labor Force Participation (LFP), Poverty, and Economic Growth



Source: Based on Morrison, Raju, and Sinha 2007.

roles; however, if the quantity and quality of that work are poor, or if they reinforce patriarchal gender practices, the negative effects on their health and that of their children can attenuate the development impact. Yet, to the extent that the empowerment of women is an end in and of itself, responsible

employment for rural women can increase confidence, promote participation in community activities, and contribute to a perception on the part of women of a better life (Vargas-Lundius 2007).

## DEFINITIONS AND TRENDS

This section defines and discusses the trends in agricultural labor.

### Definitions of agricultural labor

*Agriculture* in this Module entails all production, marketing, and processing activities related to agricultural products, including crops, livestock, agroforestry, and aquaculture. *Agricultural labor* means human efforts in these areas; *agricultural wage labor* consists of those activities that are remunerated. Agricultural labor, given this definition, can take place on-farm (for example, agricultural production activities such as planting, weeding, harvesting, milking, or fishing) or off-farm (for example, agroprocessing activities such as cleaning, cutting, packaging, labeling, or marketing). Agriculture is not synonymous with the rural sector, although most agricultural activities take place in rural areas. Increasingly, however, agroprocessing activities take place in factories that may be located in semiurban areas closer to marketing or export sites. Agricultural labor can be unpaid (such as on-farm family labor), paid-in-kind (such as barter or labor exchange), self-employed (such as marketing of one's own produce),

or wage labor. Given the coexistence of these forms of labor across crop and noncrop products, the measurement of agricultural labor is challenging, as will be discussed below.

This Module focuses largely on on-farm agricultural labor and agricultural wage labor, with the emphasis on wage labor. The constraints based on gender differences facing agricultural entrepreneurs (self-employed producers, farmers, and business owners), such as access to land, markets, and technology, are detailed in other Modules (see Modules 4, 5, 7, and 12). Strong linkages exist between these different agricultural categories: these economic activities can all be conducted by the same person. A small business owner may also be working on a farm or in another business as a laborer. The Module focuses on agricultural wage labor but recognizes that improvements in labor conditions are dependent on other subsectors (for example, finance, marketing, and rural infrastructure).

Wage laborers may work in formal markets, where workers make individual agreements, or bargain collectively with employers to secure contractual agreements about wage and benefits. But the majority of agricultural wage laborers in many countries, particularly women, either are working on land owned by spouses, families, or neighbors or are hired in informal markets. Most women working in agriculture thus typically do not have contracts that provide them direct control over the returns to their labor or that legally oblige employers to provide benefits or adhere to existing labor laws. This Module provides a detailed analysis of several areas of intervention designed to promote decent work in agriculture throughout developing countries, focusing largely on issues related to women's employment. The Innovative Activity Profile in this Module provides a best practice example from Thailand.

### **Trends in gender and agricultural labor**

The agricultural workforce is estimated at around 1.1 billion, of which 450 million are estimated to be hired farm workers (Hurst, Termine, and Karl 2005). The number of waged workers, including women wage workers, is growing even though the agricultural workforce as a whole is shrinking. Migrant labor in agriculture is increasing. As agriculture industrializes and global competition increases, downward pressure on the costs of employment leads to more informal and flexible employment contracts, termed the "casualization" of labor. Independent smallholder farmers increasingly supplement their earnings with wage labor. These trends have important gender implications.

The growing proportion of women in the labor force has been one of the most striking trends of recent times. A large

body of literature has debated the "feminization" of labor markets.<sup>2</sup> This discussion has, however, been for the most part based on analyses of data on urban employment statistics for industrial or middle-income countries. Assessing levels and trends in agricultural labor, particularly by gender in poor countries, is far more difficult. To the extent that women are concentrated in both unpaid and casual labor, their efforts in agriculture are grossly underrepresented. The *2008 World Development Report* estimated agricultural labor from multiple country surveys and identified key trends; some of these trends are summarized below.

*There is declining agricultural labor.* Labor in the agricultural sector is declining for both men and women, with the exception of women in the Middle East and North Africa (see table 8.1). Although men are migrating out of agriculture faster in some areas, the declines in women's agricultural employment are also significant. Over the long run, migration out of agriculture is necessary. Migration poses opportunities and risks for both men and women. Young women who migrate from rural areas for work are particularly vulnerable to abusive contracts and work situations. Underage Khmer, Lao, and Myanmar girls migrate to work in agriculture in Thailand, where some are held captive working under poor conditions (Pearson and others 2006).

*More women than men work in agriculture.* Data show that when both self-employment and wage labor are considered, women provide more employment in agriculture than men in many regions (see tables 8.1 and 8.2). Women represent a larger proportion of laborers than men in the agricultural sectors of Asia, sub-Saharan Africa, and the Middle East and North Africa. Women also dominate in some Caribbean and Central American countries, especially in economies with low per capita income. And women's proportion in agricultural wage labor markets has increased, although it still lags behind that of men in all regions. Further regional data are also presented in table 8.3.

*The number of waged women workers in agriculture is rapidly increasing* because of globalization, high-value agricultural production, and the "casualization" of labor. One stimulus for the growth in women's agricultural wage labor has been the "industrialization" of agriculture, particularly the growth of high-value agriculture production and agro-processing for export. Vegetable production can require up to five times more labor than cereal production. Between 1986 and 1994 in Chile, women agricultural workers in the fruit export industry increased by more than 20 percent, and men agricultural workers declined by 20 percent (Lastarria-Cornhiel 2006). Table 8.4 shows the high proportion of women workers for some of these crops. These trends and the implications for labor conditions for women

**Table 8.1 Men's and Women's Share in Total Employment by Sector, 1997 and 2007**

	Employment in agriculture (%)		Employment in industry (%)		Employment in services (%)	
	1997	2007	1997	2007	1997	2007
<b>Women</b>						
World	43.5	36.1	16.8	17.6	39.6	46.3
Central and Southeast Europe (non-EU) and CIS	26.9	19.2	22.2	17.9	50.8	62.8
Developed Economies and European Union	5.3	3.2	16.7	12.5	78.1	84.3
East Asia	51.9	41.0	22.8	25.5	25.3	33.5
Latin America and the Caribbean	14.6	10.7	13.6	14.5	71.9	74.8
Middle East	28.4	31.0	20.0	18.8	51.5	50.2
North Africa	31.2	32.6	19.1	15.2	49.7	52.2
South Asia	74.0	60.5	11.2	18.4	14.7	21.1
Southeast Asia and the Pacific	50.3	43.4	13.9	16.3	35.8	40.3
Sub-Saharan Africa	74.8	67.9	5.9	5.8	19.2	26.4
<b>Men</b>						
World	40.0	34.0	24.0	25.6	36.1	40.4
Central and Southeast Europe (non-EU) and CIS	27.0	19.8	33.2	32.6	39.8	47.6
Developed Economies and European Union	6.7	4.6	37.1	34.3	56.1	61.1
East Asia	44.6	36.3	25.6	28.0	29.8	35.7
Latin America and the Caribbean	28.6	24.7	24.8	27.1	46.5	48.2
Middle East	19.6	12.5	27.2	28.0	53.3	59.4
North Africa	36.6	32.9	20.1	22.3	43.3	44.8
South Asia	53.5	42.9	17.0	23.0	29.5	34.1
Southeast Asia and the Pacific	47.7	44.3	19.4	21.0	32.9	34.7
Sub-Saharan Africa	70.0	62.4	10.4	12.4	19.6	25.2

Source: ILO 2006.

Note: CIS = Commonwealth of Independent States.

are documented in Thematic Note 3 on Labor-Intensive Export Agriculture.

Growth in agricultural employment has come in areas such as horticulture, floriculture, aquaculture, pigs, and poultry, in which factory-style operations are possible and economical. Economies of scale apply, so the bulk of the work is carried out by paid employees (ODI 2007). Women figure prominently in these sectors, such as shrimp-processing plants in Argentina, Bangladesh, India, and the Pacific Islands and poultry processing in Brazil. An increasing number of these industries employ labor under temporary conditions or through third parties.

A rapid expansion in the use of contract labor has been seen, with labor provided on a third-party basis to producers. In India men casual workers increased from 65 percent in 1972 to 80 percent in 2002; women casual workers increased from 89 percent to 92 percent over the same period (World

Bank 2007). Between 25 and 50 percent of labor in the Chilean fruit export market is contracted. Casualization in Chile, and many other countries, has a distinct gender bias: Between 52 and 70 percent of temporary workers are women, whereas permanent workers are mostly men (Barrientos and Barrientos 2002). Under these temporary employment conditions, women are subject to low levels of protection in terms of wage levels, employment security, health and safety, and environmental standards and social protection.

*Representation of women in traditional labor institutions is weak.* The deregulation, globalization, and competitive pressure described above have also been influential in, or have accompanied, the erosion of trade unionism and traditional forms of collective action, although, for example, foreign direct investment is not necessarily detrimental to rights to association and collective action (Brown 2007). Where collective bargaining functions, it can play a role in protection

**Table 8.2 Rural Employment by Sector of Activity and Type of Employment, Selected Countries**

Sector of Activity	East Asia and the Pacific (excl. China) (%)	Europe and Central Asia (%)	Latin America and the Caribbean (%)	Middle East and North Africa (%)	South Asia (%)	Sub-Saharan Africa (%)
<b>Men</b>						
Agriculture, self-employed	46.8	8.5	38.4	24.6	33.1	56.6
Agriculture, wage earner	9.4	10.1	20.9	9.4	21.8	4.0
Nonagriculture, self-employed	11.5	7.4	9.2	8.8	11.8	6.9
Nonagriculture, wage earner	17.4	31.4	17.2	30.9	15.4	8.6
Nonactive or not reported	14.4	27.5	13.4	26.0	14.6	21.7
<b>Women</b>						
Agriculture, self-employed	38.4	6.9	22.8	38.6	12.7	53.5
Agriculture, wage earner	5.7	5.4	2.3	1.0	11.4	1.4
Nonagriculture, self-employed	11.3	1.6	11.7	2.8	2.9	6.8
Nonagriculture, wage earner	8.4	18.1	11.5	3.9	2.7	2.8
Nonactive or not reported	35.5	46.9	51.2	53.3	64.3	32.7

Source: World Bank 2007, table 9.2.

wages. New forms of national and transnational movements have emerged, including women's associations such as the Self-Employed Women's Association (see Thematic Note 1) and international movements, such as those against child labor or toward fair trade.<sup>3</sup> These movements increasingly have the power to influence labor conditions. (see Thematic Note 3).

## KEY GENDER ISSUES

This section discusses the gender issues specific to agricultural labor markets.

### Women's time allocation

Worldwide, women are the primary workers in the "reproductive economy": maintaining households, raising children, preparing food, and taking care of sick and indigent relatives, including parents. In rural areas where these activities are more onerous because of the paucity of basic services such as electricity and water, women are more constrained. In the Middle East and North Africa, IFAD found that solutions to water and fuel supply freed women to participate in income-earning activities.<sup>4</sup> Concomitantly, practitioners must avoid interventions (such as new technologies) that increase women's labor without corresponding financial benefits (Deutsch, Duryea, and Piras 2001).

Parental care for children consumes a significant proportion of women's time. Lack of adequate child care represents

one of the principal barriers to women's employment and may be a principal reason for the larger proportion of women in agricultural activities. In labor markets women pay for the inflexibility by being consigned to the informal sector or to jobs with lower wages. Studies demonstrate that the provision of affordable child care increases women's labor force participation and earnings (Deutsche, Duryea, and Piras 2001).

### Unemployment and the casualization of labor

More women than men as a proportion of their labor force are seeking work but unable to find it in almost all regions of the world. In 2003 the global women's unemployment rate was 6.4 percent compared to 6.1 percent for men (Elder and Schmidt 2004). Women living in rural areas are more likely than men to be unemployed or underemployed and without access to a cash income. Men are more able to migrate for employment, whereas women have primary responsibilities for households. The proportion of women among categories of nonpermanent workers is increasing (ILO 2003). Women are the first to be laid off, because casual and seasonal laborers have little security.

### Wage gaps

Women represent the largest group of "unpaid" workers in both rural and urban areas. Globally the proportion of women who are "contributing family workers" is 34.5 percent,

**Table 8.3 Regional Characteristics and Key Issues of Women's Agricultural Labor**

Region	Characteristics of women's agricultural labor force	Key issues for women's agricultural labor
<p><b>Central and Southeast Europe (non-EU) and Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)</b></p> <p>Employment to population ratios: Women: 45.6%; men: 63.8%</p> <p>Working women in agriculture (2007): 19.2%</p> <p>Working women in wage jobs (2007): 78.5%</p>	<p>Low percentage of men and women in agriculture, but high percentage of women vs. men</p> <p>Formal market stronger in most countries</p> <p>Wage inequities in formal market</p> <p>Young women's employment to population ratio higher than for young men</p>	<p>Rural productivity low</p> <p>Labor legislation not enforced</p> <p>Women not included in agricultural productivity-enhancing programs, such as training</p>
<p><b>Latin America and the Caribbean</b></p> <p>Employment to population ratios: Women: 47.1%; men: 73.7%</p> <p>Working women in agriculture (2007): 10.7%</p> <p>Working women wage and salaried jobs (2007): 64.6%</p>	<p>Considerable variability across countries</p> <p>High on-farm labor (some countries)</p> <p>Low ratio of participation in agriculture in comparison to men's participation</p> <p>Growing women's informal labor market participation</p> <p>Highest rates of occupational segregation</p>	<p>Women's employment opportunities in rural and urban areas low</p> <p>Occupational segregation</p> <p>Social protection for women in growing informal agricultural labor markets</p>
<p><b>North Africa</b></p> <p>Employment to population ratios: Women: 21.9%; men: 69.1%</p> <p>Working women in agriculture (2007): 32.6%</p> <p>Working women in wage and salaried jobs (2007): 58.4%</p>	<p>Lowest women's employment levels of all regions</p> <p>Only region where women's employment in agriculture increased</p> <p>Wage labor concentrated in urban areas</p> <p>More women in rural areas than men due to migration</p> <p>High percentage of women as on-farm labor</p> <p>Women responsible for small livestock</p>	<p>Low productivity of on-farm labor</p> <p>Heavy household labor burdens</p> <p>Social constraints to market work</p> <p>Limited access to nonagricultural employment</p>
<p><b>South Asia</b></p> <p>Employment to population ratios: Women: 31.4%; men: 78.1%</p> <p>Working women in agriculture (2007): 60.5%</p> <p>Working women in wage and salaried jobs (2007): 15.5%</p>	<p>High percentage of informal agricultural labor</p> <p>Higher percentage of women in agriculture (60.5% of women vs. 42.9% men)</p> <p>High percentage of self-employment</p> <p>Overlap of culture and caste with gender in discrimination</p> <p>Occupational segregation in wage market</p>	<p>Unequal access for women in formal sector employment</p> <p>Few legal protections</p> <p>Undeveloped labor market institutions</p>
<p><b>Southeast Asia and the Pacific</b></p> <p>Employment to population ratios: Women: 62.5%; men: 78.4%</p> <p>Working women in agriculture (2007): 43.4%</p> <p>Working women in wage and salaried jobs (2007): 39.2%</p>	<p>Highest women's labor participation</p> <p>High percentage in agriculture</p> <p>High involvement in fisheries</p> <p>Overlap of culture and race with gender in discrimination</p> <p>Large gender wage gap</p>	<p>Improvement in work conditions in agroprocessing and agricultural wage markets needed</p> <p>Discrimination in all forms to be addressed</p>
<p><b>Sub-Saharan Africa</b></p> <p>Employment to population ratios: Women: 56.9%; men: 79.7%</p> <p>Working women in agriculture (2007): 67.9%</p> <p>Working women in wage and salaried jobs (2007): 15.5%</p>	<p>High percentage of on-farm labor</p> <p>Gender-specific on-farm tasks and crops</p> <p>Occupational segregation in wage market</p> <p>Large involvement in informal sector (processing)</p> <p>Growth in women's labor in high-value crops</p> <p>Unskilled labor force</p>	<p>Limited employment opportunities for women in rural areas</p> <p>Unequal access for women in informal sector development</p> <p>Few legal protections, especially for informal workers</p> <p>Undeveloped labor market institutions</p> <p>Productivity levels of women's labor low</p>

Sources: ILO 2008; World Bank 2007.

Note: Data for North Africa exclude Middle East data, but Middle East data are similar; data exclude East Asia.

**Table 8.4 Proportion of Women Wage Laborers in High-Value Crops**

Country	Crop	Women as share of workers
Northeast Brazil	Vineyards	65% of field workers
Chile	Fruit	50% of temporary workers
Colombia/Mexico	Flowers	60–80% of workers
Kenya	Horticulture	70–80% of packing, labeling, and bar coding
Sinaloa, Mexico	Vegetables	40% of field workers 90% of packers
South Africa	Deciduous fruit	69% of temporary workers
Uganda	Flowers	85% of workers

Sources: Dolan and Sorby 2003; ILO 2003.

compared to 24.9 percent of men (ILO 2008). In agriculture women labor on family farms but rarely control farm income. When women are employed, they are usually paid less than men, even for the same tasks. In India the average wage for agricultural casual work is 30 percent lower for women than for men, 20 percent lower for the same task (World Bank 2007). Studies indicate that wage gaps between men and women in many sectors have narrowed over time, but they persist in many countries. Recent studies in agroprocessing show large wage gaps. For example, in Bangladesh women fry catchers and sorters earn about 64 percent of what men fry catchers and sorters earn (USAID/GATE Project 2006).

### Occupational segregation

In general, women and men work in distinct activities that offer different rewards and career opportunities, even when they have similar education and labor market skills. In agricultural production, women usually produce the food crops for the household, whereas the men are responsible for crops that will be marketed or sold. Some tasks are “feminized,” such as weeding on the farm, or poultry processing and flower packing in the factory, despite evidence of the ability of men to perform these tasks equally well in other companies or countries. The reverse also holds, and generally men run equipment and handle tools, jobs that usually require training and elicit higher wages. Occupational segregation is particularly strong in some countries in South

Asia, Southeast Asia, and Latin America. The high-value agricultural export industry is highly segmented and gender segregated, as discussed in Thematic Note 3.

Stereotyping of gender roles is ubiquitous. For example, a manager in a cut-flower-processing plant in Kenya said that “women are more dexterous, which is good for flowers” (Collinson 2001). Confining women to a limited number of occupations has high equity and efficiency costs, and it contributes to misallocation of labor and suboptimal investments in women’s education because girls’ potential is usually gauged through current market opportunities (Tzannatos 1999).

### Violence, health, and safety

The high prevalence of women in casual, low-paid employment with limited security leads to other abuses. Violence and sexual harassment in the workplace are more frequent under these conditions. Men supervisors control decisions concerning work performance and hence remuneration for the “task.” Studies have shown that women must trade sex for job security, markets, and other employment benefits that should be part of the labor contract. In studies of the cut flower industry in Kenya, women reported that supervisors required sexual favors for job security, and refusal could lead to dismissal (Dolan, Opondo, and Smith 2002). This harassment occurs in spite of company codes of conduct that prohibit such behavior. An example cited in Module 13 of this volume indicates that the increasing competition between local fish traders, who are generally women, and external buyers is resulting in risky fish-for-sex exchanges that have negative social consequences for local fishing communities.

The prevalence of HIV and AIDS rises in communities where unequal labor relations leads to increased sexual activity in the workplace. An additional safety risk for women arises under shift work that entails traveling at night. However, regulations controlling women’s access to different jobs can be discriminatory (see Thematic Note 2).

Women face health hazards in the cultivation of many crops reporting back pain and pelvic problems in rice cultivation and weeding. Agricultural work can be arduous for both sexes, but to the extent that women are concentrated in specific activities, they will experience greater exposure to some risks. Occupational safety risks can be high in factories and agroprocessing plants, including equipment accidents, exposure to unsafe conditions, and contact with chemicals and toxic substances. Women who work in fish- and shrimp-processing experience arthritis and other negative health effects of standing or sitting in wet, cold environments for

10 to 12 hours a day (USAID/GATE Project 2006). In a recent study of the fish and shrimp industry in Argentina, the majority of the women interviewed held temporary jobs and therefore had no medical or social coverage. More than two-thirds of the women interviewed work more than five days a week, and 63 percent work more than eight hours a day (Josupeit 2004).

Health risks in the growing horticulture industry include exposure to toxic products through inadequate training and protective clothing, poor hygienic conditions, and physical demands and long hours. Every year at least 170,000 agricultural workers are killed as a result of workplace accidents, and some 40,000 of these are from exposure to pesticides (ILO 2003). To the extent that women predominate in some of these activities, they have greater exposure. See Thematic Note 3 for a more detailed discussion.

Under conditions of temporary, seasonal, or limited contracts, no health insurance is provided. Where there are no on-site medical facilities, these women, in greater proportion than men, bear the cost of medical services. In factories or on plantations, such as in fruit-producing areas in South Africa, medical facilities may be few or lacking, and workers may even be dependent on employers for transport to medical facilities.

### Gender and child labor

In certain areas the issues of gender and child labor overlap. The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates that some 70 percent of child labor occurs in agriculture (ILO 2003). Studies of the fisheries industry in India indicate that 60 percent of workers in the factories are young women and girls under the age of 25 and as young as 14.<sup>5</sup> A recent study of the cotton industry in India estimated that 450,000 children under the age of 14 are working in hybrid cotton fields, mostly in Andhra Pradesh, under conditions of “bonded labor” (Ventkateswarlu n.d.). Girls may be particularly at risk in some countries because they are the least likely to get schooling. A study in Ghana showed that children between the ages of 12 and 16 frequently quit school to work on agricultural farms and plantations.<sup>6</sup> In Ecuador children between the ages of 9 and 11 work in the flower plantations (ILO 2000). The hazards for working young girls are great: physical abuse, no protective gear, and exposure to chemicals that may increase risks to reproductive capacity, little information on hazards, and no medical services. However, surveys also indicate that families would prefer to send their children to school but need the income additional family members provide (ILO 2004).

## KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR PROGRAM AND PROJECT DESIGN

The following summarizes the key principles and guidelines in designing gender-responsive projects and programs. Details and concrete examples are presented in Thematic Notes 1–3 and Innovative Activity Profile 1.

### Ensuring equitable agricultural labor impacts when designing policies and programs

Remarkably, gender impact is still frequently ignored in the design of policies and programs. Most, if not all, policies and programs designed to impact economic growth in urban or rural areas, agriculture, or industry will have gender impacts on agricultural labor. These impacts can result in a positive change in the gender distribution of participation and returns on labor, as industrial growth in China has promoted opportunities for young women, but in each case the earnings, productivity, and employment impacts must be examined.

A gender analysis is important for development policies and programs directed at agriculture. A review of the gender effects of trade agreements shown in box 8.1 demonstrates

### Box 8.1 Gender Impact of Trade Agreements

*Labor demand:* Relative prices of factors change demand for labor, and sectors expand and contract. If women are located in sectors with comparative advantage for trade, they will benefit from employment, and, if not, they will be displaced. In Zimbabwe a reduction in tariffs on imported clothing closed the domestic industry, which employed predominantly women.

*Wages:* The convergence of factor prices as a result of liberalizing trade is postulated to benefit both consumers and producers. But in regions where unions are weak or nonexistent, workers may not be able to capture these benefits. In Mauritius, following liberalization in the 1970s and declines in wages, between 1985 and 1995 wages rose and women benefited from employment in the growing textile sector. But in the *maquila* sector in Mexico, with a very elastic supply of labor, wages fell between 1980 and 1999.

*Source:* Gammage, Jorgensen, and McGill 2002.

the price, employment, wage, and consumption effects and differing impact on men and women.

### **Designing gender-equitable agricultural labor programs and projects**

Given that agriculture is a declining sector, expanding agricultural labor markets is not a policy objective on its own, for men or women. Other policies must complement policies targeted at improving the quantity and quality of rural labor. Facilitating migration out of the rural sector may be more urgent in some countries. An increase in nonfarm opportunities implies a potential reduction in the supply of agricultural laborers, which would increase agricultural wages.

### **Generating more rural employment opportunities, on- and off-farm**

The *World Development Report 2008* argues that the most significant positive impact on agricultural labor will come through creating a dynamic rural economy in both the agriculture and the nonfarm sectors, focusing primarily on creating a good investment climate. Key government actions should be taken to “secure property rights; invest in roads, electricity, and other infrastructure; remove price interventions adverse to rural products; develop innovative approaches to credit and financial services; and aid in the coordination of private and public actors to encourage agro-based industry clusters” (World Bank 2007).

The promotion of dynamic regional towns and small cities is crucial to improve conditions for rural laborers through spillover effects. In Indonesia, even within rural areas, wage employment as a percentage of total nonfarm employment increases with village size (World Bank 2007). Many rural workers migrate to try to find better jobs, often in urban areas or manufacturing industries. Many poor households in developing countries now combine farm and off-farm activities seasonally. Improvements in communications and transport have created conditions for the large-scale internal movement of people. In India up to 40 percent of some villages commute daily to urban areas. Patterns in China are similar. Policies that support development in semirural areas will reduce the burden of migration on households. Active labor market programs, described below, can be instrumental in facilitating the successful migration from rural to urban areas. The challenge is to ensure that these programs and policies remain gender-neutral or reduce gender inequalities where they exist.

### **Extending legal rights frameworks for women agricultural laborers to increase decent work**

Agricultural labor rights are mainly determined by *labor law*, and particularly by two broad groups of norms: those concerning all workers, both men and women (minimum wage, safety and health, trade union rights, and others), and those specifically concerning women (nondiscrimination, maternity benefits, “protective” legislation) (FAO 2006). International legislative frameworks exist largely through UN and ILO forums. The promotion of these international conventions has assisted in improving labor conditions in adopting countries, although not all are implemented to the same extent. Most of the conventions and recommendations are outlined in Thematic Note 2.

Even if international conventions have been ratified, national legislative frameworks may be inadequate. For example, Kenya does not have explicit provisions against sex discrimination (FAO 2006). And, where legislation exists, an *affirmative action strategy* is usually necessary to implement the legislation. Beyond labor law, other norms such as family law and case law are also relevant. For instance, in some countries family law allows the husband to demand his consent for his wife’s signature on an employment contract or allows him to terminate the contract. Case law can establish a basis for women’s employment rights. See Thematic Note 2 for a more detailed discussion.

*Labor contracts* also function as a legal framework regulating women’s labor rights and responsibilities. Recently *corporate social responsibility (CSR) codes*, established by companies (often under pressure of international and national nongovernmental organizations [NGOs]), have become important instruments for establishing standards of decent work. Although many definitions of CSR can be found, most of the codes have grown out of demand from social groups and consumers that corporations “treat stakeholders in an ethical or responsible manner” (Hopkins 2004). The Fair Trade and Ethical Trading Initiatives are two groups of stakeholders that have established standards, institutions, and infrastructure to bring about change in corporate behavior. Not all codes of conduct (or codes of practice) benefit women and men equally, and greater attention needs to be paid to gender impacts of these codes. Codes of conduct and their application in the horticulture industry are discussed in Thematic Note 3.

Multilateral organizations are in a position to encourage national government actions on promotion of ratification of international labor conventions, support for development of national legislation and implementation frameworks, and promotion of affirmative action strategies. One

example is external support for the integration of gender into Chile's legal framework. Presenting the economic arguments to governments and companies for improvements in labor conditions is a cost-effective component of a strategy. Overall arguments for improved labor allocation as well as research in areas such as productivity enhancement and social protection should be presented.

### **Increasing employment opportunities and active labor market programs**

Rural wage employment has the potential to provide an escape route from poverty for many women. Increasing employment is best achieved through sound economic policies to stimulate the private sector. However, governments and other organizations can facilitate the process under conditions of market failures or instability, such as economic downturns, and, in the case of agricultural laborers, seasonal fluctuation and periodic market volatility.

Affirmative action programs address discrimination in the market where social factors create barriers to full market information. Affirmative action employment programs can promote gender equality in the formal sector in countries with fairly well-developed labor markets and reasonable law enforcement. Despite concerns about reverse discrimination and productivity costs, recent studies from the United States find little empirical evidence that affirmative action hires are less productive than other workers (Holzer and Neumark 1999). Programs do not have to be restricted to quotas but can include special recruitment efforts, broader screening practices, and special assistance programs, such as training and changes in hiring, pay, or promotion standards (World Bank 2001).

In cases of downsizing, governments and other organizations can provide employment information and networking, unemployment insurance systems, small start-up loans, and legal aid and can develop training capacity and new venture services (USAID/GATE Project 2005).

In an economic downturn or under other economic or sector-specific changes, a wide range of programs have been attempted to lower unemployment rates: these programs have been termed *active labor market programs* (ALMPs). ALMPs, used in Europe to reduce unemployment, have been implemented in many countries, but their application in agriculture has been largely to support migration out of the sector. For example, a job-matching program for migrants in China provided off-farm employment to about 200,000 upland laborers over six years. Women made up 25 percent of these laborers and reported more confidence,

reduced work burdens when returning home, and greater economic independence (World Bank 2007). ALMPs have been successfully implemented in Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries to reduce the risk of unemployment and to increase the earnings capacity of workers. Particular interventions include employment services, training, public works, wage and employment subsidies, and self-employment assistance. A recent evaluation indicated that although ALMPs were not a panacea for unemployment, some types of interventions, properly designed, could be effective for some workers (Betcherman, Olivas, and Dar 2004). Many findings from industrialized countries seem to apply broadly to transition countries, but this is not always true in the case of developing countries (on the basis of what is still a small sample of studies). The ingredients for successful interventions, however, do seem to apply for all countries. Good design features include comprehensive packages of services, programs that are oriented to labor demand and linked to real workplaces, and careful targeting. Nevertheless, it should not be assumed that women will be automatic beneficiaries of these programs. To ensure that women benefit as much as men in ALMPs, gender analysis should be included in the design.

The most effective set of ALMPs were employment-based training (Betcherman, Olivas, and Dar 2004). The interventions that are successful often feature an integrated package of services (education, employment, social as needed) to complement the training. Employment services are generally the most cost effective of the ALMPs.

Public works programs have variable success rates at short-term income transfer and even more uncertain effects on long-term employment. Longer-term employment effects are more often found where these programs generate viable infrastructure. In India the Maharashtra Employment Guarantee Scheme, designed in large part to fill the seasonal employment gap due to seasonal fluctuations, famines, and natural disasters, has been able to provide significant amounts of work, leading to increased wages in the economy, although other rural employment generation projects have not been as successful (ODI 2007). Public works programs in South Africa with the objective of contributing to long-term employment, including the popular Work for Water program, have generated interest among planners. Although the infrastructure and social impacts are positive, few studies document whether skills development in equipment use or financial management has succeeded in increasing rural employment. In any type of public works program, the design must consider gender roles to avoid excluding women.<sup>7</sup>

### Reducing wage gaps and strengthening institutions

Women must be able to recognize the wage differential, understand the legal context, and organize within institutions or create new ones to negotiate equal wages and engage with employers, and employers must also comply with legislation. Stronger community organizations, including unions and women's organizations, can raise the issues.

One of the means of raising awareness of women's rights among workers has been to strengthen local organizations by training on alliance formation and networks. The ILO has developed a program with Danish and Norwegian support (Women's Education for Integrating Women Members in Rural Workers' Organizations) with the objective of increasing empowerment of rural women in Tamil Nadu and Madhya Pradesh. The program has two objectives: increasing awareness in trade unions of ILO standards as applied to gender and promoting the involvement and representation of women in trade unions. Small grants were provided by USAID to assist Latin American organizations working to improve women's labor conditions (WID TECH 2003b). These grants facilitated training in worker's rights and the sponsoring of community awareness events. The role of unions is discussed in Thematic Note 2.

### Diversifying occupational choice

To achieve the full economic benefit from employment, women need to have greater choice over their occupations. Education programs can help through scholarships and mentoring programs and through ensuring curricula are not biased toward segregation by theme and occupation lines. Affirmative action programs have been successfully implemented in some countries.

One of the most effective ways of ensuring gender balance is to increase the number of women among "front-line staff" (IFAD 2000). Programs and projects can hire qualified women candidates or train women for occupations associated with "segregated" occupations, such as hiring women extension staff (for example, in Sudan) or by giving extension responsibilities to women's group promoters. In Ghana community-selected women extension volunteers have proved effective as an interface between women's groups and government extension services. In other countries, such as Cambodia and Indonesia, women volunteers have been trained as auxiliaries for animal vaccination (IFAD 2000). Women can be trained in workplace safety programs (WID TECH 2003b) as agricultural or fisheries extension workers or fishnet weavers trained to become fisherwomen. The "Projovent" program in Peru is noted to have reduced

occupational segregation during 1996–2000 through supplying semiskilled training and work experience to urban, low-income, young people in specific trades that are in demand in the productive sector (Betcherman and others 2004).

### Improving social protection

The disproportionate number of women in casual and seasonal jobs and the attendant risks for women and children have heightened the need to increase social protection for women in all sectors of the labor market. Social protection can focus on reducing risks or on maintaining assets.<sup>8</sup> In the context of agricultural labor, social protection refers mainly to medical and unemployment benefits and pension provision.

The extension of public social protection programs to temporary, casual, and seasonal laborers will address some of the issues of gender inequity in agricultural labor. (Box 8.2 provides several brief examples of social protection programs.) Unemployment insurance, health insurance, and pension programs are all inaccessible to temporary and casual workers in most developing countries. General agreement holds that the private sector should not have to bear the full cost of these programs, but the balance between private and social costs and benefits needs to be evaluated. Barrientos and Barrientos (2002) develop a social responsibility matrix and discuss the roles of each stakeholder (see Thematic Note 3).

#### Box 8.2 Social Protection Programs

Turkey has taken steps to establish public social security schemes for agricultural workers. A voluntary program was established in 1983. Contributions paid at a prescribed level for at least 15 working days each month provide entitlement to old-age, invalidity, or survivor's pensions. A number of trade union initiatives have evolved from pressure from workers' organizations. In Argentina, Union Argentina Trabajadores Rurales y Estibadores (UATRE: Union of Rural Labourers and Dock Workers) operates a health and unemployment fund, and the union's initiative to extend protection to large numbers of unregistered and unprotected workers was recently formalized in national legislation. A national registry of agricultural workers and employers (RENATRE) was an important first step to the development of an unemployment fund and benefit system.

Source: ILO 2003.

Programs to extend social protection to workers in the informal sector in India and temporary agricultural workers in Chile present an opportunity to assess the costs and benefits of these programs (see Thematic Note 1).

A recent approach to extending social protection can be found through private sector codes of conduct. These codes are increasingly being applied along the global value chain in horticulture. Building the business case for improving labor standards performance is critical to engage the private sector (see Thematic Note 3). The role of social dialogue should not be neglected because collective bargaining is instrumental in improving social protection.

### Improving health, security, and safety

Providing a healthy workplace and maintaining the health of workers should be good business, but managers of companies may have to be convinced of the economic benefits of, or be forced into, applying basic standards. Health concerns for women include violence and sexual harassment in the workplace, exposure to HIV and AIDS, as well as occupational safety issues surrounding, for example, accidents and exposure to unsafe conditions, chemicals, and substances. Overtime and night shifts can also create safety concerns for women, although these can also be used to restrict women from employment categories.

Improved information and data provided by laborers and labor organizations concerning a perceived problem can help lead to its resolution (see box 8.3). Dissemination of policies is important, and the implementation of training programs is necessary.

The workplace is an extremely effective center for HIV and AIDS awareness campaigns. Plantations in Uganda were experiencing extremely high rates of mortality, but as government campaigns were complemented by company information and condom distribution, the mortality rate has fallen significantly. Human rights work in some regions has been expanded to domestic violence and its social and economic repercussions. Some companies have recognized the cost of violence and facilitated support for abused women.

### Increasing the information base

Integral to convincing governments, businesses, and civil society of the efficacy of change is accurate, up-to-date analysis based on reliable statistics. The quality of agricultural labor data is weak, and for the women agricultural

#### Box 8.3 Nicaragua and Guatemala: Improving Information for Health, Security, and Safety

A representative sample survey was introduced by the Maria Elena Cuadro Women's Movement in Nicaragua, which represents over 7,000 women members. As the influence of the organization has grown through publicity campaigns and increased membership, information from the survey supports arguments for better work conditions. The publication of the results has been influential.

In Guatemala organizations for women in *maquilas* supported occupational health workshops and formation of health and hygiene committees; women represented workers to lobby companies for compliance with environmental health standards (Izabal Labor Union).

Source: WID TECH 2003a.

labor force, it is even worse. Estimates of temporary women workers in horticulture in Chile alone vary from a low of 57,000 to a high of 162,500. Each program, project, or activity should have gender-disaggregated data to support it, or the means to collect the data built into the initiative. Efforts should be made to integrate gender-disaggregated variables into international, national, and local statistical databases on labor markets. UNIFEM has supported redefinitions of work and labor to ensure that data on unpaid and informal sector workers, much of which would be in agriculture, are included in employment databases (Chen and others 2005). Detailed and accurate costs are also required to convince governments and employers of the efficiency and effectiveness of programs that promote women's labor market participation.

### MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Table 8.5 gives some ideas for indicators and sources of verification, though clearly modifications are required for each specific program. Further information is provided in Module 16 Monitoring and Evaluation.

Depending on the country or region, it may also be relevant to consider ethnicity and caste alongside gender (both as comparative indicators and when collecting data), because women of lower castes or ethnic minorities are usually in the most disadvantaged situation.

**Table 8.5 Monitoring and Evaluation Indicators for Gender and Agricultural Labor**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Sources of verification and tools</b>
Number of entrepreneurs or business operators trained in occupational health and safety issues and corporate social responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program records</li> </ul>
Incidence of occupational health and safety incidents, and measures taken to prevent future incidents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administrative records</li> <li>• Review of procedures as against local and national regulations training records</li> </ul>
Spread of HIV and AIDS, prostitution, alcoholism, and other problems from in-migrant workers, compared with baseline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community health surveillance</li> <li>• Health records</li> <li>• Local authority reports</li> </ul>
Differences in wage and employment conditions, if any, between women and other disadvantaged groups, and men for positions of comparable content and responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case studies</li> <li>• Labor audits</li> <li>• Project management information system or administrative records</li> </ul>
Percentage of time spent daily in household on paid and nonpaid activities, disaggregated by gender and age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender analysis</li> <li>• Time use studies</li> </ul>
Age of school leaving, disaggregated by gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School records</li> </ul>
Percentage of women and men in activist or leadership positions in labor unions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Union records</li> </ul>
Membership of unions or informal labor networks, by gender and compared with number of men and women in workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholder interviews</li> <li>• Union or labor group records</li> </ul>
Number of women and men receiving training on labor standards, social clauses, and employment rights per quarter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program records</li> <li>• Training records</li> <li>• Union records</li> </ul>
Access of women and men to social security and unemployment insurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government social security records</li> <li>• Stakeholder interviews</li> <li>• Union or other insurance scheme records</li> </ul>
Change in number of cases of women and men accessing legal advice regarding labor rights (measured over a set period before the project intervention and compared with a set period after the project intervention)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal authority records</li> <li>• Records of paralegals</li> </ul>
Change in knowledge in sample group (the general community, employers, or legal tribunal staff) regarding labor rights and dispute resolution procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group interviews or focus groups</li> <li>• Interviews, before and after</li> </ul>
Change in women's and men's perceptions of levels of sexual harassment experienced before and after program activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus groups</li> <li>• Stakeholder interviews</li> </ul>
Number of women and men from district employed in agricultural enterprises, annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administrative records</li> </ul>
Over a set period, an increase of <i>x</i> percent in household incomes from agriculture or forest enterprise-based activities among women-headed households and poor households in program areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Household surveys</li> <li>• Project management information system</li> <li>• Socioeconomic data from statistics office</li> </ul>
Changes over <i>x</i> -year period of project activities in household nutrition, health, education, vulnerability to violence, and happiness, disaggregated by gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Household surveys, before and after</li> <li>• Project management information system</li> <li>• School records</li> </ul>
Proportion of household income coming from women and girls versus men and boys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Household surveys</li> </ul>

Source: Authors, with inputs from Pamela White, author of Module 16.

## Gender and Informal Labor

The term *informal economy* is widely used and can refer to such disparate economic activities as shoeshine workers in Calcutta, garbage collectors in Cairo, or street cassava sellers in East Africa. The important characteristics of activities in the informal economy are a mode of organization different from a firm or corporation, unregulated by the state, and excluded from national income accounts (Swaminathan 1991). Chen and others (2005) add that “the workers in these activities are not likely to be protected by labor legislation or organized by formal trade unions.” The ILO defines informal work as self-employment in small unregistered businesses and wage employment in unregulated and unprotected jobs (ILO 2002).<sup>1</sup>

Informal workers include those for whom marginal, risky, and low-paid work is better than no work. Such workers do not have any safety net and earn low income or benefits provided by an uncertain or dangerous job. There is also a clear gender dimension to such employment: in general, women are less likely than men to have formal jobs, more likely to work in the informal economy, and, within the informal economy, more likely to work in the lowest-paid and most precarious forms of employment.

The largest number of informal workers is in the developing world, where institutions providing regulation and support to business and labor are the weakest. Although informal work does provide income, it does not necessarily provide a wage sufficient to meet household needs. In the short run such employment provides a means of livelihood to a majority of women workers. However, income gaps between formal and informal workers remain, and so there is a concentration of poverty and related antisocial activities and a degradation of the environment. A poor and deprived women’s labor force leads to unhealthy future generations and wide income disparities.

### INFORMAL WORK IN AGRICULTURE

The following categories of agricultural labor are considered part of the informal sector: (1) agricultural laborer—spouse or other family members, generally unpaid; (2) wage laborer, for cash or in-kind compensation, on small, family-owned agricultural land; (3) casual wage laborers on registered agribusiness; and (4) seasonal wage laborer on registered agribusiness. In developing countries, and in some industrial countries, almost all agricultural labor could be considered informal.

In general, rural women are the main producers of the world’s staple crops—maize, rice, and wheat—which provide up to 90 percent of the rural poor’s food intake. Women are involved in sowing, weeding, applying fertilizer and pesticides, and harvesting and threshing of crops. Moreover, in many countries they are responsible for the household’s legumes and vegetables and participate in the livestock sector, feeding and milking larger animals and raising poultry and small animals, such as goats, guinea pigs, rabbits, and sheep. Furthermore, rural women provide most postharvest labor, arrange storage, and take care of handling, stocking, processing, and marketing of the produce. Studies have shown that rural women in particular are responsible for half of the world’s food production and produce between 60 and 80 percent of the food in most developing countries. However, women generally do not own the land on which they labor, and in many cases they remain unremunerated for their family labor.

As agriculture becomes industrialized with globalization, women remain concentrated in the labor-intensive parts of the agricultural value chains, without contracts and with low wages and limited benefits. In horticultural enterprises one of the growth areas in developing countries, women are concentrated in the “cool chain” distribution and the retail end, both of which are more labor intensive and dominated

by women's employment (Lund and Nicholson 2003). The horticultural sector is discussed in Thematic Note 3. Fisheries and poultry are other agricultural industries in which women represent a significant part of the informal labor force. Women assist spouses in artisanal fishing, net preparation, and fish cleaning and marketing (see Module 13). In the growing fish and shellfish industries, women work in the labor-intensive parts of the value chain, as in the horticultural industry. Women are also involved in the growing poultry processing industry as casual and seasonal laborers and dominate informal food preparation and street vending in many areas, such as sub-Saharan Africa. In Nigeria, for example, all informal cowpea processors and street vendors are women.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF LABOR IN THE INFORMAL SECTOR

Informal employment is particularly important in developing countries, where it constitutes one-half to three-quarters of nonagricultural employment, and for the year 2000 the shares specifically are 78 percent in Africa, in the range of 45 to 85 percent in Asia, and 57 percent in Latin America (see table 8.6). Women's collaborative, self-help, and traditional practices and initiatives in the informal sector are a vital economic resource (Chen 2004).

Within the informal economy, women are concentrated in work that is insecure and badly paid, with high risks of poverty. A gender gap in earnings exists across almost all employment categories, including informal wage employment and self-employment. Therefore, a hierarchy of earnings is found in different types of informal employment, ranging from employers and self-employed workers, mainly men, at the top to home-based workers, mainly women, at the bottom. This corresponds to a hierarchy of poverty risk among households, depending on whether they have some formal sources of employment income or are limited to informal

sources and depending on what type of employment provides the main source of employment income.

Today in India as in many other developing countries, the informal or the unorganized economy accounts for an overwhelming proportion of the poor and vulnerable population (table 8.7). In 1990–2000, informal women workers in India made up 85 percent of all workers, most of whom were employed in agriculture. The wage gap is significant globally between women and men workers. Women tend to be employed in a wider variety of levels compared to men, so their earnings can be more fragmented.

In the 1960s and 1970s it was widely assumed that, worldwide, development of the modern economy would shrink and absorb informal sector employment. Instead, the global economy has shown a tendency to encourage precarious forms of work. The modern industrial system has not expanded as fully in developing countries as it did at an earlier period in industrial countries. Informal production more typically takes place in family businesses or in single-person units, whereas traditional, more personalized systems of production and exchange still exist in agricultural and artisan production. But in today's global economy, both traditional and semi-industrial relations of production and exchange are being inserted into the global system of production. Also, women are highly involved in traditional and home-based work, which is on the rise because of shrinking overhead costs of formal employment.

### LESSONS LEARNED AND GUIDELINES FOR PRACTITIONERS

Understanding the gendered impact of economic and social policies is critical. The impact of policies on men and women is not the same because men and women are involved in different types of activities, have different ownership of resources, and have different needs in relation to health and education. Recognizing that a single policy prescription for the informal economy would not be able to help improve the conditions of such workers is very important. A good practice should be *participatory and inclusive* and allow for policies to be developed through consultation with informal workers themselves and through consensus of relevant government departments and other appropriate social actors.

#### Labor laws need to govern informal sector work

A legal framework is an important prerequisite to improve labor conditions; however, it is not sufficient to change

**Table 8.6 Informal Employment in Developing Countries**

Informal employment as a percentage of	Africa (%)	Asia (%)	Latin America and the Caribbean (%)
New jobs	93	n.a.	83
Nonagricultural employment	78	45–85	57
Urban employment	61	40–60	40

Source: Charmes 1998 (updated 2000).

**Table 8.7 India: Type of Workers Distributed by Gender**

Type of Worker	Gender	Share of Workers, 1999–2000 (%)		
		Rural Sector	Urban Sector	All India
Casual worker	Men	45.98	24.28	37.77
	Women	78.55	38.79	68.54
Self-employed worker	Men	42.01	33.64	38.84
	Women	15.53	21.03	16.92
Employer	Men	1.50	1.45	1.48
	Women	0.49	0.41	0.47
Regular wage/salary earner	Men	10.52	40.63	21.91
	Women	5.42	39.77	14.07
Total	Total men	72.25	82.48	75.81
	Total women	27.75	17.52	24.19
Total	All	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: Various rounds of National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) survey data.

conditions. Thematic Note 2 discusses international, national, and other legal frameworks in detail. Experience in Ghana demonstrates how laws can affect the informal sector. Labor laws there were outdated and fragmented and did not fit with the work conditions guaranteed in Ghana's constitution. However, in 2003 the New Labour Act was negotiated through a tripartite process, involving the government, trade unions, and employers. The act applies to all workers (excluding the armed forces, police, and others). The major objective of the act was to extend important protective elements secured by formal workers to informal workers. It contains special provisions relating to temporary and casual workers that allow them to benefit from the provisions of collective agreements, such as equal pay for work of equal value, access to the same medical provisions available to permanent workers, full minimum wage for all days in attendance, and public holidays (Government of Ghana 2003). Such laws can be examples for other developing countries with growing informal labor forces.

### Information technology and skills training for informal workers

In Africa many women entrepreneurs who are traders—ranging from those microtrading in foodstuffs to those doing large-scale import-export trade—are in need of market information and are beginning to use information and communications technologies (ICTs). In Senegal the Grand Coast Fishing Operators Union, an organization of women who market fish and are fish producers, uses ICTs to exchange information on supply and demand between their

different locations along the Atlantic coast. The women feel that this tool has improved their competitiveness in the local market. They have a Web site to enable the nearly 7,500 members to promote their produce, monitor export markets, and negotiate prices with overseas buyers before they arrive in Senegal (Hafkin and Taggart 2001).

The Centre for Mass Education in Science, an NGO founded in Bangladesh in 1978, uses a flexible skills training program that leads to immediate income generation. The program is directed at adolescents and youth who cannot afford school and must work. It serves about 20,000 students in 17 rural areas and has a specific gender empowerment program aimed at helping young women fight discrimination and stereotypes and obtain more skilled employment. It identifies and pilots small, untried income-generating activities in villages, including soap and candle making, solar electrification, and computer use (ILO 2002).

ICTs can also be used by informal producers to increase productivity and competitiveness. The National Development Dairy Cooperative in India, whose 10.7 million member-owners produce the major share of processed liquid milk, introduced a computerized system to measure and test the milk that small producers delivered to their local collection centers, reducing perceptions of malfeasance and underpayment. In Samoa, through a computerized system, dairy farmers, many of whom are women, receive immediate payment by using an identification card and save considerable time. In many centers the entire transaction takes no more than 30 seconds from delivery to payment. The system is currently installed at 2,500 milk collection centers, benefiting more than 50,000 dairy farmers (Jhabvala and Kanbur 2002).

## Social protection for the informal sector

South Africa has a healthy private pension regime for its population of 40 million. The pension is a vitally important source of household security, plays a role in the promotion of small enterprises, and has a household income-smoothing function: families spend it on “social” items such as children’s schooling and transport to health services and use it for agricultural inputs and for small enterprise development. A number of signs of its importance in local and rural economies are visible: major hire purchase firms have changed their collection schedules to coincide with pension days, and clients of a microfinance organization have asked for coordination between pension payment dates and dates of microfinance loan repayments (Chen, Vanek, and Carr 2004).

Although most of the labor force in Costa Rica is not covered by occupationally related social insurance, a voluntary insurance is available for independent workers, own-account workers, and unpaid workers (family workers, housewives, and students). It is aimed at those either who have never contributed to a health or pension plan or who did not do so for long enough to accumulate adequate benefits. To join, families must have a per capita family income that is lower than the basic basket of food products determined by the Statistics Institute. The insurance is funded by the contributions of the state and the individuals who join. This is an interesting example of where a country with a good history of social provision is attempting to adjust in flexible ways to changes in the labor market—in this case the increasing numbers of informal workers (Martínez Franzoni and Mesa-Lago 2003).

Over 90 percent of India’s workers are in the informal economy (including agricultural workers), with little, if any, statutory social security (see box 8.4). Most are casual laborers, contract and piece-rate workers, and self-employed, own-account workers. The government of India recently launched the Unorganised Sector Workers’ Social Security Scheme on a pilot basis in 50 districts. The scheme provides for three basic protections: old age pension, personal accident insurance, and medical insurance (Lund and Srinivas 2000).

The ILO Work Improvement in Neighbourhood Development (WIND)<sup>2</sup> project in Vietnam is an example for improving health conditions for rural people. ILO WIND is a voluntary, participatory and action-oriented training program that promotes practical improvements in agricultural households through the initiatives of village families. It is currently being adapted to local conditions, translated and pilot-tested in Ethiopia, the Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, and Senegal.

In Bolivia the Mutual Health Insurance Scheme covers basic health services for its members, half of whom are

### Box 8.4 India: National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganized Sector (NCEUS)

One of the major highlights of the Fourth Report of NCEUS (2007) was the official quantification of unorganized or informal workers, defined as those who do not have employment security, work security, and social security. These workers are engaged not only in the unorganized sector but in the organized sector as well.

Examination of the regulatory framework for ensuring minimum conditions of work for unorganized wage workers shows that (1) there is a lack of comprehensive and appropriate regulations in India and (2) even where regulation exists, inadequate and ineffective implementation mechanisms exist. The commission reviewed and analyzed the various perspectives on a comprehensive legislative framework for unorganized wage workers and made appropriate recommendations. The commission established at a very high government practice level the need to make separate policies for informal workers and women workers.

Source: NCEUS 2007.

informal economy workers excluded from other social security systems. The program is run by an NGO and financed through member contributions and grants from development agencies.

In Brazil the Rural Social Insurance Program is a rare Latin American example of state-sponsored social protection for those outside the formal sector. The program is a noncontributory pension and disability program for the rural poor, instituted by the 1988 constitution, which extended basic pension benefits to elderly and disabled people in informal rural employment. It has not only alleviated poverty but has also led to recipients moving from subsistence agriculture to sustainable household production. Ancillary social benefits include increased school enrollment among children in beneficiary households (Lund and Srinivas 2000).

India’s welfare funds, many of which are sponsored in the state of Kerala, are also good examples of effective social protection for informal workers. Many funds have been started for informal workers in both agricultural and nonagricultural enterprises, including head-load workers, in 1981; fishermen, 1986; cashew workers, 1988; coir workers and khadi workers,

1989; agricultural workers, 1990; tailors, 1995; beedi workers, 1996; and bamboo workers, 1998. Welfare funds may be contributory or tax based, or a combination thereof. In the tax-based programs, a tax is levied on the production or export of goods. Workers have access through the funds to different types of coverage, some of which may be medical care, education of children, housing expenditures, and other forms of assistance. Coverage varies across the projects; some require cards to access benefits (Subrahmanya 2000).

Approaches have also been developed to address health care for the informal sector. The Indian government has started a health initiative as described in box 8.5. In Chile the Ministry of Health's national program of Occupational Health Surveillance has been underway since 2001 in nine regions of the country, covering basic health, risk prevention, protection

#### **Box 8.5 India: Health Insurance Plan for Workers in the Unorganized Sector**

The government of India has designed a Health Insurance Scheme for the Unorganized Sector Workers to be implemented by the Ministry of Labor and Employment. The eligibility criteria for getting benefits in the program are being planned so that informal workers living below the poverty line would be beneficiaries. Innovatively for India, the beneficiaries will be issued smart cards for the purpose of identification. The in-patient health care insurance benefits would be designed by the respective state governments based on the requirements of the people and geographical area. The regional governments have to incorporate at least the following minimum benefits: coverage of the informal workers and their families (units of five); total sum insured Rs. 30,000 per family per year on a family floater basis; cashless attendance to all covered ailments; hospitalization expenses, taking care of most common illnesses with as few exclusions as possible; all preexisting diseases to be covered; and transportation cost (actual with a maximum limit of Rs. 100 per visit) within an overall limit of Rs. 1,000. The program is not specific to women workers, but the criteria of workers below the poverty line would ensure that many women workers would be covered under this plan.

*Source:* National Advisory Council, "Draft, The Unorganized Sector Workers' Social Security Bill," Government of India, New Delhi, [http://pmindia.nic.in/nac/communication/Draft\\_Unorganized\\_Sector\\_Workers\\_Bill.pdf](http://pmindia.nic.in/nac/communication/Draft_Unorganized_Sector_Workers_Bill.pdf).

of personnel, handling and control of agrochemicals, hazardous waste containers, and expired pesticides. The work is based on a set of standards issued by the ministry that includes suggestions from businesses in the sector. The results from the inspection of 770 farms were delivered in March 2002.

The Occupational Health Commission in Chile has promoted a special program for women seasonal workers that covers five aspects: supervision of occupational health conditions, supervision of pesticide use, health examinations, information on health rights, and training. In the fisheries sector tripartite roundtables have been established in three regions of the country where most women fishery workers are concentrated to reach consensus on measures for improving their working conditions. In this context information workshops have been conducted on occupational health, firms have been inspected, child care centers have been opened, and meetings of women fishery workers have been held.

#### **Networks, organizing, and institutional support**

Three networks of informal workers have established good practice standards for organizing and providing support to these workers: Streetnet, Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO), and HomeNet. Box 8.6 summarizes relevant information on these groups. These networks have been effective in providing training to informal workers in finance and leadership skills. The organizations disseminate relevant information to members and have had input into legislative processes in various countries. WIEGO has been effective in working with international organizations to raise the profile of workers in the informal sector.

#### **Develop better targeting mechanisms**

Women also tend to be concentrated in more vulnerable types of informal employment, in which earnings are very low and unreliable. The average earnings from these types of informal employment are too low, in the absence of other sources of income, to raise households out of poverty (UNIFEM 2005). Identifying households by types is important, between those with primary income from informal work and those with primary income from formal work. In a study conducted for India, poor households were defined by examining household member-level data (National Sample Survey Organisation 1993–94, 1999–2000, 2004–05). The study found that more women belong to poor households with earnings from the informal sector (Sinha and Sangeeta 2000). Targeting such households for specific welfare benefits would benefit poor informal women workers.

“At the first international meeting on street vendors, held in Bellagio, Italy in 1995, a group of activists from 11 countries adopted an International Declaration that set forth a plan to promote local and national policies to support and protect the rights of street vendors” (Chen, Vanek, and Carr 2004). For the next several years, they organized regional meetings of street vendors in Asia, Africa, and Latin America and provided support to newly emerging local and national associations of street vendors in several countries. “StreetNet International was formally established in November 2002 and held its first International Congress in March 2004, attended by 58 delegates from 15 organisations, at which an International Council was elected for a three-year term” (Chen, Vanek, and Carr 2004).

*WIEGO: Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing* was established in early 1997 with India’s well-known Self-Employed Women’s Association (SEWA) as a founding member. Through a consultative planning process, WIEGO identified five priorities for its work: (1) urban policies to promote

and protect street vendors, (2) global trade and investment policies to maximize opportunities (and minimize threats) associated with globalization for home-based workers, (3) social protection measures for women informal sector workers, (4) organization of women informal sector workers and their representation in relevant policy-making bodies at all levels, and (5) statistics on the size and contribution of the informal economy. WIEGO now has affiliates in over 25 countries, as well as project partners and activities in more than 12 countries. At the international level WIEGO has been effective at raising the visibility of the informal economy in public policy forums and at working with the ILO and the United Nations (Chen 2004).

*HomeNet:* Recently the government of India asked representatives of SEWA to participate in the formulation of a national policy on home-based work. HomeNet now has active member organizations in over 25 countries and publishes a newsletter that reaches organizations in more than 130 countries (Chen 2004).

## Labor Rights and Decent Work for Women Agricultural Laborers

**P**romoting gender equality in legal entitlements relating to agriculture is crucial for two main reasons: first, the empowerment of women is a highly important end in itself, and second, the legal empowerment of women is “essential for the achievement of sustainable development” (Cairo Programme of Action on Population and Development, para. 4.1).

### LABOR RIGHTS LEGISLATION: INTERNATIONAL, NATIONAL, AND CUSTOMARY<sup>1</sup>

Agricultural labor rights are mainly determined by labor law, and in particular by two broad groups of norms: those concerning all workers, both men and women (for example, minimum wage, safety and hygiene, and trade union rights), and those specifically concerning women (for example, nondiscrimination, maternity leave, and “protective” legislation).

One of the important challenges for agricultural labor workers has been ensuring the coverage of labor law in the sector. In some countries agricultural workers have been deliberately omitted from the law. For example, in Brazil labor law was differentiated for agricultural and nonagricultural workers, to the considerable disadvantage of agricultural workers, until the dualistic laws were completely repealed in 1988 (FAO 2006). Although in many countries labor laws should extend to agricultural workers, in practice little motivation is present for compliance by many of the agricultural organizations and agribusiness companies. Where there is pressure for compliance, means have frequently been found to circumvent compliance—for example, through third-party contracts. The following sections outline the existing international frameworks, with reference to some national examples.

#### Relevant international law

The United Nations and ILO have adopted a series of international instruments that provide an international legal

framework for the realization of human and labor rights relevant to women agricultural laborers. The right to work without discrimination is recognized in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UNDHR, articles 2 and 23), as well as in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR, articles 2(2) and 6–8) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW, article 11). The rights included in these documents are the right to choose freely an occupation, to enjoy a just and favorable remuneration, to work in safe and healthy conditions, and to form and join trade unions. Women have a right to employment opportunities and treatment equal to men, including equal pay for work of equal value. Women also have the right to enjoy special protection during pregnancy and paid maternity leave and the right not to be dismissed on grounds of pregnancy or maternity leave. Among the ILO’s conventions, the core labor standards dealing with freedom of association and collective bargaining, nondiscrimination in employment and occupation, and the elimination of forced labor and child labor are recognized internationally as a minimum floor of principles and rights that all countries must respect. In addition, a number of other ILO conventions are relevant for women agricultural laborers. (See table 8.8 for a more complete description of international conventions and covenants.)

Some countries, unfortunately, have not ratified these conventions, and the challenge remains for those that have to implement the adopted legal frameworks through enacting national legislation and appropriate regulations and enforcement mechanisms. Ratified ILO conventions are supervised, and the ILO Committee of Experts plays a role in revealing and removing gender inequalities. These issues are discussed in greater detail below.

Another deficit in the legislative framework is that temporary and casual workers are not explicitly covered by most legislation. Recent changes in approach at the ILO stress

**Table 8.8 International Law Governing Rights for Women Agricultural Laborers**

International Law	Dates and Articles	Provision
C89 Night Work (Women) Convention (Revised) <sup>a</sup>	1948	Makes provision that women without distinction of age shall not be employed during the night in any public or private industrial undertaking, or in any branch thereof, other than an undertaking in which only members of the same family are employed
ILO Convention 95—Protection of Wages <sup>a</sup>	1949	Makes provision of the partial payment of wages in the form of allowances in kind, considering that such allowances are appropriate for the personal use and benefit of the worker and his family; and the value attributed to such allowances is fair and reasonable
ILO Migration for Employment (Revised) Convention 97	1949	Provides guarantees for lawfully migrant workers, without discrimination on the basis of sex
ILO Equal Remuneration Convention 100	1951	Equal pay for men and women for equal work or work of equal value
ILO Convention 99 Minimum Wage Fixing Machinery (Agriculture) Convention <sup>a</sup>	1951	Creates adequate machinery whereby minimum rates of wages can be fixed for workers employed in the agricultural sector
ILO Maternity Protection (Revised) Convention 183 (103 remains in force in the countries that have ratified it)	1952	Entitles pregnant workers to a maternity leave of at least 12 weeks (with no fewer than 6 weeks after childbirth); allows additional leave in case of late delivery or pregnancy-related illness; prohibits dismissal while on maternity leave; entitles women to medical and cash payments, provided through either compulsory social insurance or public funds; and allows work interruptions for nursing purposes
ILO Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention 111	1958	Prohibits discrimination in both opportunity and treatment and provides for affirmative action
C129 Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention <sup>a</sup>	1969	Maintains a system of labor inspection in agriculture
Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UNDHR)	1948, Arts. 2, 23	Right to employment opportunities and treatment equal to men, including equal pay for work of equal value Right to social security in cases of retirement, unemployment sickness, invalidity, and old age
ILO Termination of Employment Convention 158	1982	Prohibits dismissal on grounds of sex, marital status, and absence during maternity leave
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)	1979, Art. 11	Right to employment opportunities and treatment equal to that of men, including equal pay for work of equal value; principle of nondiscrimination explicitly envisages the elimination of discrimination against women “by any person, organization, or enterprise” Right to social security in cases of retirement, unemployment sickness, invalidity, and old age
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)	1976, Arts. 2(2), 6–8	Right to employment opportunities and treatment equal to that of men, including equal pay for work of equal value Right to social security in cases of retirement, unemployment sickness, invalidity, and old age
C171 Night Work Convention, 1990 <sup>a</sup>	1990	Takes measures to ensure that an alternative to night work is available to women workers, and that the income of the woman worker shall be maintained at a level sufficient for the upkeep of herself and her child in accordance with a suitable standard of living

*(Table continues on the following page)*

**Table 8.8 International Law Governing Rights for Women Agricultural Laborers (continued)**

International Law	Dates and Articles	Provision
ILO Night Work (Women) (Revised) Convention 89 and Protocol	1948, 1990	Prohibits women's work at night (defined) for some industrial occupations (not for agricultural work; this convention is increasingly seen as discriminatory and not promoted)
ILO Plantations Convention 110 and Protocol	1958, 1982	Protects the labor rights of plantation workers, without discrimination on the basis of sex. <i>Plantation</i> is defined, and specific crops are listed, excluding small-scale production Contains guarantees as to recruitment, annual paid leave and weekly rest, compensation for injury, trade unions, and maternity protection

Source: FAO 2006.

<sup>a</sup>Additions from ILO 2006.

that the spirit of the regulations applies to all workers, and particular attention is currently being paid to informal economy workers, implicit in the Decent Work for All declaration. The ILO has developed methods for constructing country profiles based on normative indicators as a tool for progress toward decent work. Country profiles on occupational safety and health are available for many countries (Zarka-Martres and Guichard-Kelly 2005). A recent study of Ethiopia's Poverty Reduction Strategy paper shows that the framework for decent work standards can be applied even to least developed countries (Buckley 2004). Signs are encouraging that some governments, such as Chile and South Africa, are taking steps to incorporate informal workers under labor legislation. Chile established the Program for Women Seasonal Workers in Export Agriculture.<sup>2</sup>

National legal systems, and women's legal status within them, differ greatly from country to country. However, similarities are appearing more and more often across countries. Most constitutions prohibit discrimination based on gender, although the principle might be qualified in some cases to exempt family and customary law. For example, the Kenyan constitution exempts family law and customary law, areas of law that are crucial in shaping women's rights in agriculture. Some constitutions contain an affirmative action clause, and attempts to promote gender equality may be embodied in legislation. In South Africa the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act 2000 prohibits unfair discrimination on grounds of gender and sex in both public and private life and envisages affirmative action.

Legislation other than that which directly addresses gender equality can have an impact on women's labor condi-

tions as well. In 1973 the military government of Chile restricted collective bargaining to firm-level unions. Temporary workers are excluded from these unions; as a result, women who are largely employed in these positions have no access to union organizational skills or bargaining power (Barrientos and Barrientos 2002).

Moreover, some national legal systems include plans of action and/or institutional machinery to promote gender equality and the advancement of women. In many cases these instruments were adopted in the aftermath of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. These plans of action have been useful in promoting an institutional framework to negotiate public-private partnerships and support more localized measures to ensure gender equality. In Brazil Councils for Women's Conditions have been established. In Mexico several states have established commissions for the advancement of women. South Africa formed the Commission for Gender Equality to monitor and evaluate laws and make recommendations and established the Equality Review Committee through the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act 2000 to monitor the operation of that act.

### Customary law

In many developing countries, national laws and policies are little implemented in rural areas. This limited implementation results, on one hand, from a lack of institutional capacity for enforcement, entrenched sociocultural practices, a lack of financial resources, inadequate knowledge of legal rights, and a lack of perceived legitimacy of official rules and

institutions. On the other hand, customary legal systems are commonly applied in much of Africa, in many parts of Asia, and by indigenous communities in Latin America. Customary law is a body of rules basing its legitimacy on “tradition” (FAO 2006). Great diversity is found in customary law resulting from a range of cultural, ecological, social, economic, and political factors. These traditional legal systems may contain rules disadvantageous to women in areas such as income control or asset disposition. The practice of signing wives’ wages over to husbands has been largely removed, but other practices may persist. In Latin America women often must ask for their husband’s authorization before undertaking a job and quit if their husband tells them to (FAO 1994). On the other hand, some customary law may be more advantageous to women and provide them access to specific rights not protected under civil laws. Customary legal systems evolve over time and can be changed.

Beyond labor law, other norms such as family law and case law are also relevant. For instance, in some countries, family law allows the husband to demand consent for his wife’s signature on an employment contract or allows him to terminate the contract (FAO 2006). Women may also be affected by norms founded on religious principles or interpretations. These norms may be applied in countries because they are recognized in the legislation or followed in practice. These norms frequently govern matters such as family relations and inheritance and may affect the existence or exercise of women’s rights. However, as with customary law, these norms vary significantly from locality to locality and country to country. These norms are also flexible and change over time.

## **KEY GENDER ISSUES IN LABOR RIGHTS OF AGRICULTURAL WORKERS**

The legal and extralegal frameworks providing social protection and promoting gender equity and decent work conditions for women are proliferating and improving. More countries are enacting legislation, and more forces are creating a demand for better legislative frameworks. However, some issues remain and require continued attention.

Women’s access to employment may be restricted by family law norms requiring authorization of the husband. Some of these norms have been challenged through courts and at the local level, but many are still applied in practice. The legal case *Maria Eugenia Morales de Sierra v. Guatemala* challenged the civil code in Guatemala that allowed a husband to oppose the employment of his wife. The case, initiated in 1995, was raised to the Inter-American Commission in 2001

before the state was called to fully comply with international human rights obligations (FAO 2006).

Labor law does not prohibit sex discrimination in all countries. For example, neither Fiji nor Kenya has explicit provisions against sex discrimination (FAO 2006). Frequently where there is a provision, no sanction is recommended. Affirmative action measures are envisaged only in some cases.

Only some countries have adopted legislation addressing sexual harassment in the workplace. Field studies document that this is a major problem affecting women working in plantations and in factories, as in many other workplaces. Discrimination in the workplace or in employment based on sexual orientation is also rarely addressed in developing countries. The prevalence of HIV and AIDS has important labor market implications, some of which may be gender specific. With the growth of HIV prevalence in many countries, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, the average age of the active labor force is declining, and girls as well as boys are forced into working earlier. Workplace discrimination in the face of HIV and AIDS is a major challenge for labor law (Fenwick, Kalula, and Landau 2007). Southern African Development Community has developed a Code on HIV and AIDS and Employment, which was introduced in 1992. The code emphasizes human rights principles regarding nondiscrimination and confidentiality and provides a series of specific recommendations about how to manage HIV and AIDS in the workplace. In 2001 the ILO developed the Code of Practice on HIV and AIDS and The World of Work.

Provisions exist for maternity protection in many countries. However, the requirements for application of the protection may be very demanding and de jure or de facto exclude women agricultural workers (who are concentrated in seasonal and temporary labor force). Considerable variation is also found in the provisions of maternity leave. In cases where maternity leave is paid by the employer, the cost of women’s labor is higher, creating an economic disincentive for their employment.

Most laws and standards apply only to permanent laborers in agricultural and other sectors. Seasonal and temporary laborers, many of them women, are omitted and suffer the worst of labor conditions. Large-scale migration also poses a challenge to the protective capacity of labor law in many countries (Fenwick, Kalula, and Landau 2007). Documented migrants, those who enter a country legally, likely work under favorable conditions; undocumented migrants, the majority, are vulnerable to exploitation and abuse and do not have recourse to the protection afforded by labor laws. The informalization or casualization of work has

increased, resulting in a reduction in the number of permanent full-time employees. In Namibia casualization is most predominant in the construction industry, followed by the fishing, retail, and manufacturing sectors (Klerck 2002). Although casual labor is not new in agriculture, as the agricultural sector matures, the potential for decent work, which increases with the development of most sectors, diminishes with an increase in informal contracts.

Workplace safety and exposure to chemicals are two of the most important areas that require stronger legal protections for all workers within the sector. Although strong international standards have been set, most of which are supported at the national level, these are generally not applied in the agricultural sector. Regulations in these areas are applicable to all persons regardless of age or gender, but recent concern over the potential for increasing birth defects has an added gender dimension to exposure to toxins (see Thematic Note 3 for a more in-depth discussion).

Not all laws support the rights of women to decent work. For example, women's access to some agricultural work may be hindered by "protective" legislation prohibiting women's night work in the agricultural sector. Prohibitions may reduce women's choices while attempting to protect them. Cargill's Sun Valley poultry factory in Thailand has chosen to provide all workers with transport, which enables both men and women to work night shifts and overtime and reduces the risk of nighttime travel. Although this is clearly in the interest of the company, it also provides those employees who desire to work more with safe transit (see Innovative Activity Profile 1). In Yemen laws that protect women from working late hours or require employers to provide child care centers if they employ a certain number of women make it more costly for the private sector to hire women rather than men (World Bank 2005). The ILO Committee of Experts has raised this point with the government of Yemen.

## **LESSONS LEARNED AND GUIDELINES FOR PRACTITIONERS**

Many actors are involved in the process of ensuring gender equity and decent work for men and women in agricultural labor markets. Government plays an important role by enacting laws, extending information and training on laws, and establishing structures for enforcing the laws. National and international NGOs can provide information, train NGOs, and act as watchdogs. Private sector entities such as buyers can assist by developing codes and ensuring that they are applied and that compliance is monitored. Trade unions

can negotiate terms of codes and advocate for compliance to existing codes within the country and with firms.

### **Supporting legal reform**

In some countries information about and analysis of labor laws are limited. A recent study of labor laws in southern Africa noted that the very limited information made an evaluation of the coverage difficult (Fenwick, Kalula, and Landau 2007). The lack of information is particularly relevant to sub-Saharan Africa.

Legal reform can be promoted by international organizations, particularly with regard to international conventions and covenants. Dialogue with national leaders on the economic benefits of gender equity in labor markets should be initiated.

In Uganda a Gender Coalition has been created to support the implementation of the International Finance Corporation and World Bank-supported Gender and Growth Assessment (GGA) recommendations. Following lobbying from the coalition, GGA recommendations have been incorporated into four labor reform bills covering employment, occupational safety and health, labor disputes, and labor unions, which were passed in 2006. The Ministry of Finance, acting on GGA recommendations, commissioned new legal drafts of the Companies Act, the Chattels Transfer Act, and other bills (Cutura 2006). The GGA is a tool that can be used to bring information on gender and labor to government, the private sector, and labor organizations. By documenting links to economic growth, the GGA becomes a persuasive tool for change.

Recently legislators in various countries have paid greater attention to gender aspects of labor relevant to agriculture. In South Africa, women farm workers until recently had very little protection. In 1993 legislation on minimum labor standards was extended to agricultural workers. Moreover, the Employment Equity Act of 1998 prohibits direct and indirect unfair discrimination in access and treatment on grounds of gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, and family responsibility. Where discrimination is alleged, the burden of proof is placed on the employer. The act also provides for affirmative action, including preferential treatment and numerical goals, in establishments employing 50 or more workers (including agricultural employers) (FAO 2006).

Some countries have tackled specific issues that typically concern women workers, especially on plantations. Brazilian Laws 9029 (enacted in 1995) and 9799 (enacted in 1999) prohibit employers from requiring sterilization or

pregnancy certifications or examinations as a condition for employment, and bar employers from conducting intimate examinations of employees. Several countries have adopted specific norms on sexual harassment in the workplace (such as the 1995 Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of the Philippines) that apply equally to farms and plantations. (FAO 2006).

Developments have also come through judicial decisions. In India guidelines on sexual harassment in the workplace were developed by the Supreme Court in *Vishaka v. Rajasthan and Others* (AIR 1997 SC 3011), building on the Indian constitution and the CEDAW. Lawsuits have also been brought by women agricultural workers, although the overall number of these cases remains low. In South Africa case law has been developed under the Extension of Security of Tenure Act of 1997, which protects from eviction persons occupying land with the consent of the land owner, including farm workers. A particularly important case is *Conradie v. Hanekom and Another* (1999 (4) SA 491 [LCC]), in which the South African Land Claims Court set aside an eviction order against two farm workers, husband and wife, employed on the same farm. Having dismissed the husband, the landowner had sought to evict both. The court held that the wife had a right as an employee not to be evicted under the 1997 act, and her eviction order was set aside. The court also held that the act guaranteed to her the right to family life, so that her husband (who after his dismissal was no longer a protected “occupier”) had a right to reside on the land as a family member (FAO 2006).

In addition to its traditional strategies for adopting regulations and supervision and providing information about rights, the government of Chile has adopted a program to improve access and working conditions for women, known as Good Labour Practices for Equal Opportunity between Men and Women. This has involved developing a strategy for ongoing dialogue with the private sector. The initiative includes activities for sensitizing the business sector; recognizing firms that adopt good labor practices to promote equal opportunity between men and women; establishing standards for good labor practices; and conducting studies and producing practical guidance for implementing these policies, the contents of which relate to measures inherent to the work process, the reconciliation of occupational and family life, economic measures, and health coverage. Activities include the preparation of model codes of good labor practices in two of the country’s major firms; the sponsoring of seminars and joint work with the Foreign Investment Committee, the Chile-United States Chamber of Commerce, and Acción Empresarial, a body that advises its

member companies on socially responsible business policies (Government of Chile 2004).

### **Raising awareness of conditions and rights**

Increasing the availability of resources in communities on legal rights and documenting labor conditions that violate existing standards are important avenues for combating gender inequities in the sector. In Latin America examples exist of advocacy and public awareness to increase the awareness of women’s issues within the community and nationally. An annual campaign, “Work, yes—but with dignity!” is run by the Maria Elena Cuadro Women’s Movement in Nicaragua. The movement also conducted a representative survey of 20 percent of women in the factories to identify actual labor conditions. The results have been effective when used in dialogues with business and government (WID TECH 2003).

Increasing the monitoring of labor conditions can also contribute to an increased awareness of conditions and establish the conditions for change. COVERCO (Commission for the Verification of Corporate Codes of Conduct), an NGO based in Guatemala, has pioneered the effort in advancing independent monitoring of working conditions in Guatemala’s garment factories and agricultural export industries. COVERCO monitors conditions and evaluates compliance with standards established in codes of conduct and national and international law. COVERCO has also built a coalition of NGOs engaged in monitoring and assists in the capacity building of these NGOs. A study of conditions of women working in coffee plantations, funded by USAID, was relevant in developing Starbucks’s code of conduct for coffee purchases. The government of Chile has engaged private sector companies in several activities to promote the development and adoption of good codes of labor practices. Thematic Note 3 discusses codes of conduct.

### **Increasing access to legal advice**

Increasing women’s access to reliable, affordable legal advice is another means of improving their capacity to achieve legislative support. The Beijing Platform for Action called on governments “to ensure access to free or low-cost legal services including legal literacy, especially designed to reach women living in poverty” (para. 61[a]). Legal support might be as simple as locating documentation of marriage in the case of the death of a spouse or facilitating access to identification cards, as was determined in Brazil (in the case of land transfer, but this could apply to pension access) (Guivant 2001). A movement of legal and paralegal NGOs is

integral to improving access to the legal system through training and awareness raising, counseling and legal assistance, individual and public litigation, and representation and advocacy (FAO 2006).

### **Promoting role of women in institutions that govern women's labor rights**

Women need to be involved in areas of government that have control over labor law. Although ministries devoted to women's and children's affairs have been notably marginalized and ineffective in many countries, examples may be identified of change when specific issues are addressed (such as Chile).

Where unions exist, a need is present to promote gender awareness. CEMUJER, an NGO in El Salvador, used a small USAID-funded grant to help women in unions develop

leadership skills, assist women already in leadership positions, train women union members in legal rights, and provide legal advice for women (WID TECH 2003).

Where there are no unions, or existing unions do not meet women's needs, other organizations have been instrumental in raising specific issues for action. Women's organizations in Central America have implemented education and capacity-building programs for women working in *maquilas* (factories) (see WID TECH 2003 for examples). The National Fishworkers Forum in southern India has been effective in raising the conditions of migrant women workers in fish-processing plants (Nayak 2005). Both international and national NGOs have become instrumental in raising awareness of gender inequalities and workplace conditions in developing countries. For effective change, development of civil society organizations within relevant countries is a prerequisite.

## Gender and Employment in Labor-Intensive Export Agriculture

**A**gricultural exports are significant to foreign exchange earnings, employment, and government revenues of the poorest countries. Agriculture accounts for 61 percent of employment and 14 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in developing countries and an even higher proportion in the least developed countries (85 percent of employment and 36 percent of GDP). Trade in traditional agricultural commodities (such as bananas, coffee, grains, and tea), on which developing countries largely depend, has been beset by adverse world market conditions, restrictive macroeconomic policies, excessive market controls, and political instability. The decline of revenues from these classic export commodities, coupled with trade liberalization and structural adjustment reforms, has prompted many countries to diversify their export portfolios into specialty crops and higher-value agriculture products (floriculture, high-protein meats, horticulture, and processed food products). By 2000 high-value agricultural exports were estimated to account for approximately two-thirds of total agricultural trade (Dolan and Sorby 2003).

The wage labor force in agriculture is highly concentrated in the export sector: large labor forces still exist on plantations growing traditional commodity exports, and in recent years rising numbers of laborers are involved in the production or agroprocessing of high-value commodities. Participation in commodity chains for high-value commodities provides considerable opportunities for growth and poverty reduction. Yet labor conditions under the new export markets echo the frequently degrading conditions found on plantations.

This Thematic Note addresses the labor issues of gender and identifies some of the main features and conditions of work in traditional plantation production and in high-value agriculture export production. Women face similar issues of discrimination in both these areas of employment. Participating in high-value export industries can bring positive

consequences for gender equality, but specific challenges such as occupational segregation and environmental health must be addressed to achieve positive outcomes.<sup>1</sup> The Thematic Note also includes a presentation of governance structures that affect export markets including corporate social responsibility, fair trade, and codes of conduct.

### TRADITIONAL EXPORT COMMODITIES: PLANTATION AGRICULTURE

Conditions for laborers on plantations remain dire in spite of years of publicity and awareness. Permanent employees have better conditions and wage rates, but the increasingly high proportion of temporary and seasonal labor implies that most laborers are working under poor conditions. As has been highlighted throughout the discussions of the agricultural labor force, women are concentrated in these less stable employment positions and thus suffer the worst conditions.

The concern about child labor has recently brought work conditions on plantations back under scrutiny. Studies on plantation banana production in Ecuador and sugarcane in the Philippines, among others, have highlighted the scale of child labor and the hazards these children face at work, including heat, heavy work, long hours, wounds, and risk of poisoning from pesticides (de Boer 2005; Pier 2002). Gender inequities also persist. Women face violence and sexual harassment. Box 8.7 provides an overview of problems faced by women working on plantations.

Although initiatives by governments, private companies, and NGOs have addressed labor conditions, one of the most serious problems facing companies and their labor forces on these large-scale agricultural plantations is the decline in prices over recent years as demand has stabilized and production has increased. Coffee is one of the most important examples: prices have declined because of new technology that uses lower-quality beans and increased coffee production

### Box 8.7 Gender Issues on Plantations

- Discrimination in access to employment, with women concentrated in subordinate and lower-paid jobs in the fields and men in higher positions, particularly as supervisors and headmen
- Discrimination in access to training and vocational courses
- Discrimination in allocation of benefits, such as housing
- Discrimination within trade unions (regarding participation and access to leadership positions)
- Sexual harassment
- Wage differentials, with higher wages for positions typically held by men (such as sugarcane cutters) than for women's positions (such as weederes)

Source: Mbilinyi and Semkafu 1995.

with the entry of Vietnam and growth from crops in Brazil. Coffee prices reached their lowest level in 30 years in 2001. The declining prices limit producers' capacity to improve workers' conditions and cause workers to lose what little negotiating power they had. The world market conditions for tea are similar, although not as drastic as those for coffee.

One of the strategies used to raise the prices of the primary product has been to focus on specialty markets; however, these products count for only a small part of the market. For example, currently the specialty coffee sector accounts for only about 6 to 8 percent of production (World Bank 2007). No studies exist that show whether or not companies entering into specialty production have passed on any of the price premium to workers. See Module 5 for a further discussion of marketing of traditional export crops.

### HIGH-VALUE AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES: AGROPROCESSING INDUSTRIES

For many developing countries, declining revenues from traditional commodities and the opportunities of a globalized market have led to the adoption of high-value agricultural exports. Over the last decade, these exports have generated significant amounts of foreign exchange, contributed to the upgrade of agricultural production skills, and created substantial opportunities for waged employment and self-employment. Women in particular have been able to profit from these new labor market opportunities both as smallholders and as wage employees. However, although high-value

agriculture can be an engine of growth for developing countries, and the employment it generates is empowering for women, it is characterized by several shortcomings (Dolan and Sorby 2003).

### GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES: CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY, FAIR TRADE, AND CODE OF CONDUCT

The following sections describe corporate social responsibility, fair trade organizations, codes of conduct, and their gender dimensions.

#### Corporate social responsibility

The concept of corporate social responsibility is still evolving. However, CSR increasingly refers to the ethical treatment of stakeholders by corporations (Hopkins 2004). CSR covers actions in areas as broad as the environment, health, human rights, governance, corruption, and labor practices. Because CSR has largely grown "up" from stakeholder concerns into corporate actions, the number of international, multinational, and national principles, charters, and codes has proliferated.

CSR initiatives have led to the development of several sets of standards on which companies base codes of conduct (many of these are listed in table 8.9). Some codes have received attention in the development field because of their focus on agricultural producers. The Ethical Trading Initiative, established in the United Kingdom in 1998 as a tripartite forum of NGOs, companies, and trade unions, is one of the largest initiatives. The Fair-Trade Labelling Organisations (FLO) International was established in 1997 as an umbrella organization of 17 national fair trade labeling initiatives.

#### Fair trade organizations

Fair trade initiatives try to provide better market access and better trading conditions to small-scale farmers. This includes a price premium for producers to be invested in social and environmental improvements and sometimes improved conditions for workers. Fair trade products represent only a small percentage of world agricultural trade; however, in the last 10 years fair trade has emerged as an increasingly popular tool to create markets. In 2005 alone an estimated \$100 million was provided to producers and their communities above the conventional price for these goods (Farnworth and Goodman 2006). The yearly growth of fair

**Table 8.9 Principles, Charters, and Codes of Practice for Fair Trade, Ethical Trade, and Corporate Social Responsibility Efforts**

Initiatives	Date	Main Issues
Governmental- or intergovernmental-led:		
Ethical Trading Initiative (U.K. government and NGO)	London, 1998	Labor practices in trade
European Union Principles	Brussels, 2001; revised 2002	Multistakeholder
International Labour Organization Tripartite Declaration on Transnational Corporations	Geneva, 1977; revised 2000	Employment
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Guidelines	Paris, 1976; revised 1977	Employment, triple bottom line (financial, social, and environmental indicators) indicators
U.S. Model Business Practices	Washington, DC, 1996	Community, corruption, environment, health and safety, labor, law
UN Global Compact	New York, 2000	Human rights, labor, environment
NGO-led:		
Account Ability 1000	London, 1999	Social and ethical “assurance”
Amnesty International HR Guidelines	London, 1998	Human rights and security
Fairtrade Labelling Initiative	FLO established 1997	Market access and trading conditions for small farmers
Global Reporting Initiative	Boston, 1997; revised 2002	Multistakeholder, triple bottom line indicators
ICFTU Code of Practice	Brussels/Geneva, 1997	Labor and trade union issues
SA8000	London, 1998; revised 2002	CSR and labor
Company-led:		
Caux Principles	Minnesota, 1994	Multistakeholder
Fair Labor Association (FLA), United States	California, 1998	Labor practices
Global Sullivan Principles	United States, 1999	External stakeholders
ICC Business Charter for Sustainable Development	Brussels, 1991	Environment, health, and safety
World Economic Forum	Davos/Geneva, 2002	Corporate governance
Trade-union-led:		
ICFTU/ITS Basic Code of Labor Practice	ICFTU/ITS Working Party on MNCs, December 1997	Labor practices

Source: Based on Hopkins 2004.

trade volume has been around 20 percent since 2000, although the products represent only a small percentage of world agricultural trade. The biggest volumes have been reached for bananas and coffee.

The FINE criteria, presented in box 8.8, represent the goals of the fair trade coordination platform. FINE is the informal coordination platform composed of the following representative bodies: FLO (Fair-Trade Labelling Organisations International), IFAT (International Federation for Alternative Trade), NEWS (Network of European World Shops), and EFTA (European Fair-Trade Association) (Develtere and Pollet 2005).

Note that product-specific fair trade standards exist for bananas, cane sugar, coffee, cocoa, cut flowers, fresh fruit, fruit juices, honey, rice, sports balls, tea, and wine. In general, gender issues have been underrepresented in the codes and agreements.

### Codes of conduct, gender, and labor conditions

Codes of conduct covering employment conditions of southern producers exporting to European markets mushroomed throughout the 1990s. Over 200 codes related to worker welfare specifically were identified at the beginning

## Box 8.8 The FINE Criteria

The key criteria:

- For workers, fair wages, good housing, health and safety standards, and the right to join trade unions
- No child or forced labor
- Programs for environmental sustainability
- For small farmers' cooperatives, a democratic structure that allows members to participate in the cooperative's decision-making process.

Moreover, the trading terms must include the following:

- A price that covers the cost of production
- A social premium to improve the living and working conditions
- Partial advance payment to prevent small producer organizations from falling into debt
- Contracts that allow long-term production planning.

*Source:* Develtere and Pollet 2005.

of this decade, with over 20 codes applying to agriculture in developing countries (Blowfield 2000). Many companies adopt codes to reduce the risk of negative exposure related to poor employment practices within their supply chain. The large number of codes implies great variability in content: some codes integrate international conventions relating to gender discrimination and inequality, yet other codes make no mention of gender at all. The variability extends to the auditing of codes (Barrientos, Dolan, and Tallontire 2001).

Barrientos, Dolan, and Tallontire (2001) developed a three-level framework for analyzing the gender sensitivity of codes in labor practices. The levels range from those that both men and women confront in employment (for example, collective bargaining, contracts, discrimination, freedom of association, safety and hygiene, wages, and work hours) to broader socioeconomic issues that affect women's ability to access employment types (for example, domestic responsibility, education, gender relations, and social norms and practice). An evaluation of two relevant codes, SA 8000 and ETI, within this framework reveals that although both effectively address issues at Level A, neither is strong in extending coverage to Levels B and C. Neither covers repro-

ductive rights, maternity or paternity leave, or protection for pregnant women or child care.

## KEY GENDER ISSUES

The following sections discuss the key gender issues in export agriculture industries.

### The informalization of labor in high-value agricultural industries

Labor relationships in these new industries vary considerably. Global poultry production generally employs a permanent labor force. In the cut flower industry, the proportion of the permanent labor force can be as low as 35 percent, although companies in Kenya and Zimbabwe have up to 50 percent permanent workers. However, these examples are exceptional, and great variability exists across companies and countries. In the Colombian cut flower industry, only 16 percent of the workforce is temporary, and workers are generally hired for the full year. But in Ecuador, the temporary labor force is hired on a short-term basis, and contracts are often terminated prior to the date of conversion to permanent status (Dolan and Sorby 2003).

Subcontracting is a dominant feature of the labor force in high-value export crop production. In Colombia companies contract with former supervisors to provide labor for piecework. These laborers are hired for periods as short as two weeks or as long as several months. The lack of a direct relationship between company and employee makes the employee more vulnerable. Across many of the countries recently studied, women are concentrated in the temporary, casual, and seasonal labor forces. In the Chilean fruit industry, women represent 50 percent of temporary laborers but only 5 percent of permanent laborers.

### Occupational segregation and wage discrimination

Occupational segregation in plantation agriculture is standard practice. Many of the tasks are divided according to physical strength, but another division is related to the use of equipment. Men are usually accorded jobs that involve training and use of light or heavy equipment. This segregation leaves women in lower-paying positions and provides them with limited upward mobility. Women form the majority of the tea pickers on plantations in Sri Lanka and rarely participate in other occupations. Prior to 1978 women's wages for picking were lower, but now a uniform wage is applied. But women work longer hours for the same wage, and tradition in the

areas studied showed that wages are still frequently turned over to the husband (Wickramasinghe and Cameron n.d.).

Wage disparity results as well from discriminatory undervaluation of the work in occupations in which women are concentrated. Occupational segregation is prevalent in horticultural industries as well, and women are frequently placed in work categories based on perceptions of “women’s” attributes and tasks related to domestic work. For example, a strong gender division of labor prevails in production of high-value crops on smallholder farms such as vanilla producers (Kasente and others 2000), the cut flower industry, and poultry production. Women are responsible for the highly labor-intensive tasks of harvesting, planting, processing, and weeding, while men perform activities related to feed production, fumigation, irrigation, precultivation, and slaughter houses. The occupational sectors in which women are concentrated are usually accompanied by the poorest benefit packages and lowest wages, as illustrated in table 8.10, which shows the gap for wage earners in the Kenyan horticulture industry. The wage differences largely reflect job segregation as described earlier. Wage gaps for similar jobs are difficult to calculate with such extreme occupational segregation.

### Costs versus benefits

The employment versus empowerment debate is difficult to resolve in the context of high-value agriculture industries. On the one hand, employment can (and does) engender some tangible gains for women, who often obtain access to an independent income stream, increased autonomy, and new social networks. Data also show that certain employment benefits, such as education, health care, and training, bolster women’s “human capital” and further women’s empowerment. In contrast to their informal income-generating activities, which have long been overlooked, women’s participation in waged work also makes them more visible in the economy.

However, women also experience clear costs by working in agroprocessing industries. One set of costs arises from the often poor working conditions and flexible and insecure

employment. A second set has to do with the social and economic consequences of the increase in women’s time burdens, an increase that affects the health and well-being of women and their families. The extent of these implications varies considerably across industries and countries, but they do signal cause for concern. Nevertheless jobs in these industries provide many women with the best chance they have for improving their lives in a context of limited to non-existent alternatives.

### Occupational health and safety and sexual harassment

One of the most serious problems on large plantations is the lack of adequate protective measures and training related to the use of fertilizers, insecticides, and pesticides. Aerial spraying of bananas in Ecuador exposes all workers, but in activities in which either men or women are concentrated, one gender may be more affected than the other. Crowded conditions in housing, poor sanitation, and drinking water in fields or factories are all cited in studies of plantations.

In the flower, poultry, and vegetable industries, women are most vulnerable to repetitive stress and joint injuries. Rotation of jobs can reduce these injuries, and the poultry industry has introduced this practice (Dolan and Sorby 2003).

Exposure to chemicals during storage, mixing, and spraying is far too common in these industries. Problems arise in particular from the use of pesticides and other chemicals in confined spaces, such as greenhouses and packinghouses, where exposure tends to be high and the workforce is largely women. Effects of chemical exposure can include skin irritation, respiratory problems, nausea, and dizziness. The longer-term effects can be more serious. Some health concerns are specific to women: damage of reproductive organs and damage to unborn children (malformed fetuses, higher instances of miscarriage). Although most countries have established occupational health standards, compliance is variable in the horticulture industries. Some of the harmful exposure is due to inadequate training.

**Table 8.10 Kenya: Wages in Horticulture by Skill Level and Gender**

Type of Labor	Packinghouse		Farm		All	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Unskilled	21.00	17.80	12.80	12.60	15.00	14.70
Semiskilled	22.00	23.30	17.00	14.10	17.40	19.40
Skilled	49.00	n.a.	15.30	n.a.	23.80	n.a.

Source: Dolan and Sorby 2003.

Note: Figures in Kenyan shillings; on April 16, 2001, 10 Kenyan shillings equaled \$0.12912.

In Uganda evidence suggests that spraying is conducted when workers are unprotected in greenhouses (Dijkstra 2001 in Dolan and Sorby 2003).

Child labor is still evident in many traditional export crop production systems. Children as young as 11 years old work on banana plantations in Ecuador, sugarcane plantations in the Philippines, and tea plantations in Sri Lanka (de Boer 2005; Pier 2002).

Sexual harassment on plantations is widespread. Women are frequently concentrated in menial tasks, such as tea leaf picking, with men supervisors who abuse their positions by requesting sexual favors in exchange for job security, bonuses, or lighter workloads. Studies in many countries have found evidence of sexual harassment in many factories and fields (Dolan and Sorby 2003). Its prevalence is mediated by local gender norms.

### GOOD PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED

Several methods may extend social protection to informal workers. A social responsibility matrix outlines the roles of various stakeholders in a global value chain. The social responsibility matrix for the horticulture sectors in Chile and South Africa provided in table 8.11, which was developed by Barrientos and Barrientos (2002), outlines international and state actors, market actors, community actors, and household resources.

International and state actors, such as the ILO and national labor laws, set the legislative framework (details are discussed in Thematic Note 2). For example, Chile has developed a strategy for mainstreaming the gender perspec-

tive in the country's major agricultural business organizations through the Public-Private Committee on Women Seasonal Farm Workers.

Social protection from market actors generally protects only workers in the formal market. In Chile social protection is government mandated but privately provided. In both Chile and South Africa low coverage is provided for temporary workers in agriculture from these sources. However, roles are in place for both corporations and unions at this level. One of the significant differences between traditional plantation export crop production and the relatively newer industries focused on high-value export crops is the degree of unionization. Workers on large-scale plantations for crops such as tea and coffee are more likely to have union representation than those companies in cut flowers or vegetables. Several explanations may be given for this imbalance, including the differing ages of the industries, the deliberate sabotage of unions by multinational and national companies, and the predominance of casual, temporary, and seasonal labor in the industry, which is a result of both the nature of the products and management decisions.

A more recent approach can be found through private sector codes of conduct. Initiatives in developed countries—for example, the Fair Trade Initiative and the Equitable Trading Initiative—have raised premiums on prices of commodities for companies that are willing and able to comply with the prescribed standards. Pressure from civil groups and NGOs in industrial countries on buyers has increased the demand for these products.

Codes of conduct have been particularly important in the high-value crops area. The initiative on the part of the

**Table 8.11 Chile and South Africa: Social Responsibility Matrix for Informal Workers in Horticulture**

Domain	Domestic	International
State	Labor inspectorate Ministries National government	Economic Commission of Latin America and the Caribbean, European Union, International Labour Organization, International Social Security Association, World Health Organization, World Bank
Market	Employers/producers Exporters Labor contractors Private insurance and welfare providers (pensions, health, etc.) Trade unions	Ethical trade initiative Importers Multinational enterprises Supermarkets
Community	Church organizations Community organizations Domestic NGOs Political parties Trade unions	Consumer organizations International NGOs
Household	Extended household	Migrant relatives

Source: Barrientos and Barrientos 2002.

### Box 8.9 Uganda Code of Practice

The Uganda Code of Practice for the Horticulture Sector, finalized in 2002, sets down strict guidelines for farmers and managers in occupational safety, worker welfare, discrimination, and equal pay. The code puts the industry ahead of other agricultural sectors in labor standards, while bringing Uganda in line with other flower exporters in the region. An ILO report released in 2000 found that flower farms provided workers accommodation, free tea and lunch, medical care, adequate leave, prompt payment of salaries and salary advances, and the right to leave for the day at 5 P.M.

A study conducted in 2006 by the Canadian International Development Research Centre found that most women employees are hired as permanent workers with full benefits. The report claimed that all workers have contracts and get 60 days of paid maternity leave. They also have a doctor and dispensary where drugs are distributed at very low cost to workers and their families with money raised for a medical fund for operations or for family members who suffer complications. The study also indicated that a fully equipped lab for HIV and malaria testing was being established for floricultural workers.

*Source:* Asea and Kaija 2000.

horticulture industry in Uganda to provide consistent labor practices through a code of practice is described in box 8.9.

A recent multicountry review of codes of conduct by the Ethical Trading Initiative concluded that the overall impact of these codes was positive, particularly on health and safety, but the effect on important gender issues such as discrimination was minimal (Institute of Development Studies 2007). The greatest concern was that few codes cover temporary workers, and therefore the codes exclude a large proportion of women in many industries (see box 8.10). Codes of conduct are frequently less relevant to informal employment conditions, and they are weak or negligible in their coverage of issues such as equal pay and sex discrimination. Few codes extend to employment-related issues such as reproductive rights, child care provision, or sexual harassment. Reasons for the deficiencies in the application of codes center on the inability of the buyers to enforce principles. Many companies

operate in complex value chains, in which suppliers deal with multiple buyers and agents, so any one buyer has limited influence. Communication and monitoring weaknesses also limit the application of the codes of conduct.

Another major problem with codes of conduct is compliance. External and independent monitoring is the surest way of evaluating adherence to the codes, but few industries have initiated these procedures. This has been highlighted in a case study of South Africa that identifies that the labor inspectorate is poorly resourced and lacks the capacity to monitor widely dispersed, isolated farms (Barrientos, Kritzinger, and Roussouw 2004). Private or nonprofit organizations also play an important role in monitoring codes of conduct.<sup>2</sup> Codes of conduct can be advantageous to companies, but a code of conduct is not necessary to motivate a company to implement good labor practices. The case of Cargill's Sun Valley poultry factory in Thailand indicates that good policies lead to high productivity (see Innovative Activity Profile 1).

Access to the fair trade market is also an incentive for corporations to enact equitable labor practices. An example involving a large banana plantation in Ghana shows how a traditional plantation can provide better conditions for the workforce (see box 8.11).

Better work environments can also be achieved through partnerships between private companies, NGOs, and governments. One such example is a cashew nut factory in Mozambique. Established by a private entrepreneur, the government cashew institute and other organizations contributed to the development of a guaranteed loan. A USAID-financed NGO assisted in the design of the factory, and a Dutch NGO, SNV, has assisted with marketing. In 2002 the factory had two cashew plantations with 50 tons of production per year. Workers receive a free meal at work, and according to their contracts they have access to health assistance, paid annual holidays, and severance pay in case of professional illness or work accidents. A trade union has been set up, and a child care facility has been constructed, where women can leave their children if they bring a child care provider with them (Kanji 2004).

### **GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTITIONERS**

Ultimately, standards for decent work and gender equity need to be enacted at the national level, as presented in Thematic Note 2, but initiatives organized by multiple stakeholders within industries, preferably including labor as well as suppliers and buyers, can be an effective intermediate

### Box 8.10 Ethical Trading Initiative

The *Ethical Trading Initiative Impact Assessment*, implemented by the Institute of Development Studies in Sussex, found that codes of labor practice were having a positive effect on improving certain “visual issues.” The biggest impact was on health and safety, with positive changes found on 20 out of 25 sites. This led to improvements in the lives of workers’ families through observance of health and safety at home. For example, banana workers no longer hugged their children while wearing overalls used for pesticide spraying. Other changes were in better adherence to legal minimum wages and documented employment benefits for regular workers. On a Costa Rican banana plantation, women had seen some decline in occupational segregation, although they were not better represented at management levels.

Codes are helping to raise supplier awareness of the need to comply with national regulation. But codes

*Source:* Institute of Development Studies 2007.

have had little impact on the improvement of “less visual issues,” such as freedom of association and no discrimination. No workers at the sites felt more able to join a trade union as a result of codes (although unions had already existed before codes on some sites in the study). Codes had little effect on discrimination in the hiring, training, and promotion of women and migrant workers. Another important finding was that regular and permanent workers were most likely to have benefited from changes resulting from codes. Casual and migrant workers (international or internal) were found in all case study countries, and the use of third-party labor contractors was found in most countries except Vietnam. These workers were least likely to have benefited from the implementation of codes of labor practice, and on many sites they faced significant discrimination.

### Box 8.11 Access to the Fair Trade Market Can Significantly Improve Working Conditions

The Volta River Estates, Ltd. (VREL) is a Ghanaian-registered commercial plantation that has been producing bananas for the European fair trade market under the Oke label (marketed by Agrofair) since 1996. VREL is the only exporter of bananas from Ghana, in the top 40 Ghanaian companies for both turnover and number of employees, and one of only two initiatives in Ghana serving the fair trade market. The company has 900 full-time workers. VREL meets the social and labor standards established by the Fair Trade Organization and Max Havelaar, and it has increased wages to 30 percent above Ghana’s minimum wage. One-third of the fair trade premium is allocated toward meeting environmental standards, and two-thirds is given

*Source:* Mick Blowfield and Stephanie Gallet, “Volta River Estates Fairtrade Bananas Case Study,” [www.nri.org](http://www.nri.org); [www.vrelorganic.com/fairtrade.htm](http://www.vrelorganic.com/fairtrade.htm).

directly to workers, who choose investments through a premium committee, consisting of two management members and eight worker representatives, all chosen through elections. Bicycles were a recent investment by the company when workers received a particularly large premium. Permanent employees get paid annual and sick leave as well as maternity leave. Only 16 percent of VREL employees are women, partly because of the nature of the work, but mainly because of social and economic constraints. VREL, however, has established a development project and has focused on increasing gender participation. Health care is provided for workers through an on-site clinic, and the company is considering building a hospital.

step, particularly where multinational companies operate in countries with weak governance. National and intermediate initiatives include the following:

*Raise the gender implications of the growth of agroprocessing and production of high-value agricultural exports in global*

*discussions.* Multilateral organizations have the opportunity to articulate a strong policy position in international conventions and debates, securing the rights of women working in these industries. The gender implications of high-value agricultural export production could be highlighted and

disseminated in a variety of forums, raising the profile of these issues in policy circles.

*Support ratification of international conventions.* Following the recommendations in Thematic Note 2, national governments need to be encouraged to ratify ILO conventions. International standards are binding to all countries. The economic and social arguments for applying these standards should be presented at the national level to relevant policy makers. Incorporating informal workers fully under existing labor legislation must be given top priority.

*Identify appropriate institutions to educate women on their employment rights, the content of codes, and relevant national regulations.* In high-value agriculture women's empowerment requires education and training and must be based on participatory approaches to development. The development community could advocate for the provision of training and educational programs to workers. These programs also could disseminate information on labor standards, social clauses, employment rights, and the content of codes of conduct. Supporting the entry of temporary, casual, and seasonal laborers into labor unions will eventually bring greater awareness of their issues.

*Expand codes of conduct.* In general, retailers in the United Kingdom and continental Europe have progressed much further than the United States in the application of labor codes. Consequently companies supplying retailers in European markets are more likely to provide better employment conditions and more equitable opportunities to men and women. A wider range of agribusiness companies and large retailers, in the United States and in other major demand markets, could be encouraged to support the introduction and monitoring of codes throughout their supply chains, thereby extending the coverage of labor standards.

*Support the inclusion of gender issues in codes of conduct.* Several gender issues are not adequately covered in codes of conduct addressing labor conditions in developing countries. Policies against sexual harassment must be given more importance, especially training across companies. Codes are not effective if workers are not aware of the principles in the codes.

*Ensure temporary workers are covered under codes of conduct.* Suppliers are more willing to respond when a critical mass of buyers request codes of labor practices. Collaboration between buyers can help to enforce the message of inclusion of temporary workers. Social auditors need to include casual migrant and contract workers in monitoring and engaging with trade unions and NGOs who are aware of these workers. Local multistakeholder initiatives can play an important role, such as that of the Wine Industry Ethical Trade Association (WIETA) in South Africa. Bringing labor contractors into the dialogue is a more effective means of ensuring improved labor conditions.

*Enable local organizations to participate in monitoring of codes of conducts relevant to labor standards.* Involvement of civil society organizations should be encouraged in monitoring and auditing labor standards and the social aspects of codes of conduct. This involvement is essential to protect and enhance the working conditions and employment rights of all workers in these industries. A need is also present to establish mechanisms for ongoing and confidential reporting of violations of the code by all groups of workers, including those in less secure and temporary work. For example, Kenya stakeholders in the flower export industry developed their own participatory auditing methodology.<sup>3</sup>

The entry of rural women in developing countries into the industrializing agricultural labor market can expose them to new risks and poor employment conditions, but these jobs can also create new opportunities to raise living standards for the rural poor. Additional work is required in more countries, particularly in Asia, to better understand the role that national and international organizations can have in improving labor relations and reducing gender inequalities. For example, the East Africa Business Summit from Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda has been held annually since 2002. In 2003 participants resolved to increase their sourcing of inputs from small- and medium-size enterprises, with a target of 25 percent of total inputs (Kivuitu, Yambayamba, and Fox 2005). Gender equity and the links to improved productivity should be raised on the agendas of these and similar meetings.

## Thailand: Cargill's Labor Improvement Program for Sun Valley Foods

Thailand's relatively low wages afford considerable competitive advantage in labor-intensive industries with low skill requirements. A large number of Western companies have established labor-intensive factories in poultry, shrimp, and other agroprocessing industries. In 1995 Cargill's Thailand division, Sun Valley Foods—the third-largest poultry processor in Thailand, accounting for about 10 percent of the country's exports—began to evaluate human resource management problems. Chief among these was a high voluntary turnover rate among its largely women workforce. In 1995 turnover was 100 percent. There was also a high rate of absenteeism, and although accident and injury rates were low for the industry, room for improvement was identified. In a study for the Gender

Agriculture Project for USAID, John Lawler described the strategy Cargill implemented to improve productivity in its Thai poultry business (Lawler and Atmiyanandana 2000). Cargill's strategy was not radical, but it was equitable and family friendly, and it yielded important lessons about the potential of company-led gender-sensitive policies in an industry dominated by women laborers.

Thailand has one of the highest proportions of women working outside the household (47 percent). The Thai government has implemented policies to improve working conditions for women. The current constitution prohibits discrimination, including employment discrimination based on gender. However, legislation to prohibit gender discrimination in the private sector has not been enacted. For example, employers in Thailand often advertise job openings specifically restricted to men or women, depending on the type of job.

Cargill has operated in Thailand since the early 1960s through two companies in addition to Sun Valley. Sun Valley, with a workforce of about 3,900, is a fully integrated poultry business that produces raw chicken that is further processed (skinned, deboned, and so on) before sale. Almost all of the company's output is exported. The processing plant, located in Saraburi, employed 1,500 or more when operating at peak capacity. In the processing plant supervision and work activities were regulated, with teams of 40 to 50 workers headed by a supervisor and one or more assistant supervisors. Employees wore uniforms that were color coded to indicate general job category. Job and work pace were highly routinized, requiring manual dexterity. Because of the care required in production work, individual workers and work groups had a significant impact on productivity, despite the work pace set by assembly line technology. Base pay for production workers was the local minimum wage.

Jobs were highly segregated. Almost all the workers in the feed mill were men, as well as most of the workers involved in

**What's innovative?** Sun Valley management developed a series of initiatives in human resource management, including a range of family-friendly policies as well as cultural and gender-sensitive incentives such as the following:

- Promoting a culture of community and family through training on company values
- Providing some supplementary assistance, such as payment toward hospitalization fees, and reassigning pregnant women to work that was not physically taxing and did not normally require them to work overtime
- Giving financial assistance for the schooling of employees' children, along with some scholarships for students with particularly good grades
- Providing free bus service to and from work, which women particularly viewed as a friendly policy.

slaughtering animals. In contrast, the vast majority of workers who processed the chickens after slaughter were women.

An analysis of the production facility identified several sources of turnover. Job dissatisfaction led to employees quitting and absenteeism. Family responsibilities were a second cause. Day care did not seem to be such a problem because of the availability of extended family members, but medical care required more time off, and employees frequently ended up quitting to care for family members. Turnover meant that the company was not recovering the training costs of employees. Sun Valley management knew that employees with more than a year of service had double the productivity of employees with only six months of service.

## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES**

Between 1995 and 2000 Sun Valley management determined to turn the employment record around for the company and developed a series of initiatives in human resource management. Those initiatives included a range of family-friendly policies as well as cultural- and gender-sensitive incentives.

The company introduced several programs that linked pay to performance. It initiated performance appraisals to determine annual pay increments and promotion opportunities. Employees were given bonuses for length of service. Annual bonuses were paid to employees based on overall company performance and were larger for longer-term employees. Bonuses were attached to specific indications, such as chicken mortality rates in barns of the grow-out farms. Other bonuses were specifically linked to daily attendance, and Sun Valley paid a special award annually to those with perfect attendance.

The company also promoted a culture of community and family through training on company values. Supervisors were most often women, who were promoted from within the ranks of production workers, which worked well in Thailand's culture. These supervisors could arrange short or even extended leaves of absence without pay to allow an employee to handle family emergencies, such as a sick child or family member; and short-term leave without pay was allowed during the harvest season. These policies enabled employees to take time off for medical and family emergencies but encouraged them to return.

Although maternity leave with pay is required by Thai law, interviewees indicated that other companies and employers discourage workers from using it. Medical care for pregnant workers was covered under the Thai Social

Security Act, but Sun Valley provided some supplementary assistance, such as payment toward hospitalization fees. In addition, Sun Valley reassigned pregnant women to work that was not physically taxing and did not normally require them to work overtime.

Sun Valley also provided financial assistance for the schooling of employees' children, along with some scholarships for students with particularly good grades. The company also implemented an educational program to improve literacy and made provisions to allow employees to attend classes several hours per week outside of normal work hours and receive pay. The program served to build ties to the company.

Free bus service was provided to and from work; other companies provided buses but charged for their use. Women in particular viewed this as a friendly policy. Many lived far from the plant and were concerned about their safety traveling alone, particularly at night. Sexual harassment was prohibited in company policies that were widely disseminated, and in interviews women indicated that there were far fewer problems than they had experienced in other companies.

## **BENEFITS AND IMPACTS**

The benefits from the program accrue to both the company and the employees.

### **Company costs and benefits**

Data are not available on the additional costs of these improved human resource programs, but the main categories of costs included wage-related costs, such as bonuses and costs for education programs, transport, and health and safety improvements. The benefits of the programs in terms of increased productivity clearly exceeded the cost outlay.

During and following the period of implementation of these policies, the company continuously met or exceeded its financial performance goals. In 2000 Sun Valley embarked on an ambitious expansion program to increase production capacity by 30 percent. In 2001 the company received Thailand's National Health and Safety Award.

### **Employee benefits**

Employees cited an improved work environment at the company. Sun Valley's policies provided significant economic benefit at the individual and household levels by

reducing the cost of unemployment and the costs of employment search for women who needed to take leave. The education program had both direct and indirect benefits: women expressed considerable benefit from the education program, both as an example to their children and in terms of personal accomplishment. The safety programs and improved transport increased safety and likely reduced the risk of violence for women, benefits that are not easily quantified but are important for well-being.

## LESSONS LEARNED AND ISSUES FOR WIDER APPLICABILITY

Several of the lessons learned by Sun Valley can be applied more widely.

*The private sector can independently contribute to improved working conditions.* The management of Sun Valley was seeking means to address problems affecting the profitability of the company and identified several policies to solve problems of absenteeism and turnover. These strategies might now work in all industries. In fact, in studies of the costs of applying codes of conduct, researchers have indicated that for some companies, especially small companies, compliance costs are onerous (Collinson 2001a, 2001b). The most significant costs tend to be health and safety costs, due to equipment, and the costs of auditing and management systems. Ironically, improving working conditions without certification may be the best option for some companies in which these practices can increase productivity, or in which companies can benefit from the CSR publicity without certification.

*Improved work conditions can benefit the corporate bottom line.* Improved work conditions can benefit corporations in several ways. The Sun Valley examples illustrate that productivity increases can be substantial. Declines in health expenditures, and a reduction in turnover and absenteeism, are more easily measurable than good worker morale and a positive workplace environment, but all of these factors increase worker productivity. Improved working conditions at Sun Valley increased business sustainability through raising the company's profile within the country. More qualified workers are likely to be drawn to a company with a good reputation, and the national and local business environment should be improved.

*There are challenges in relying on voluntary labor standards.* Labor market regulation is a blend of specific rules negotiated by parties (either individually or collectively) to an employment relationship and general legislative imperatives that establish baseline entitlements for workers. Voluntary

company codes of conduct or employment practices do not rely on an employment contract, legislation, collective agreement, or common law. When the corporation is responsible for the production of norms governing the workplace, there is no minimum standard, no guarantee of consistency, and no monitoring or compliance mechanisms. The current proliferation of company codes of conduct has been criticized for these deficiencies. Where national employment legislation and collective action organizations are weak, however, multinational and transnational corporations may be instrumental in setting standards. These companies, as the Cargill example shows, can establish the economic, financial, and social value of these standards. In addition, in a competitive environment as labor markets tighten, such standards may create additional social benefits as other companies adopt labor standards in order to compete.

## NOTES

### Overview

The Overview was written by Kristy Cook (Consultant) and reviewed by Nata Duvvury and Catherine Ragasa (Consultants); Eve Crowley, Libor Stloukal, and Paola Termine (FAO); Maria Hartl (IFAD); Sriani Ameratunga, Peter Hurst, Mary Kwar, Susan Maybud, Martin Oelz, and George Politakis (ILO); Ratna M. Sudarshan (Institute of Social Studies Trust); Steve Wiggins (ODI); and Elena Bardasi and Rekha Mehra (World Bank).

1. A summary of these studies is presented in World Bank (2001), appendix 4.
2. See World Bank (2007), articles by D. Elson, G. Standing, and S. Horton, among others.
3. Both of these movements are well documented by non-governmental and international organizations, including NGOs, research organizations, the United Nations, and trade unions.
4. IFAD, "Experience Sharing from the Rural Development Project for Taourirt-Taforalt in Morocco: Coping with Constraints to Reach Women," [www.ifad.org](http://www.ifad.org).
5. In India it is legally permissible for children over the age of 14 to work. However, large numbers of children under this age work full time.
6. Guy Blaise Nkamleu, "Children at Risk in the Agricultural Sector in Sub-Saharan Africa: Determinants of Child Labor Participation in the Cocoa Farming of Côte d'Ivoire," paper presented at Sixth Annual Global Development Network Conference, Dakar, Senegal, [www.gdnet.org](http://www.gdnet.org).
7. Cecilia Luttrell and Caroline Moser, "Gender and Social Protection," draft paper for Department for International Development, [www.eldis.org/go/topics/resource-guides/](http://www.eldis.org/go/topics/resource-guides/)

gender/key-issues/gender-and-social-protection&id=22475&type=Document.

8. Specialists at the World Bank define *social protection* as consisting of public interventions “to assist individuals, households and communities in better managing income risks” (Holzmann and Jorgensen 1999). The ILO, on the other hand, sees social protection as defined by basic rights: “Entitlement to benefits that society provides to individuals and households—through public and collective measures—to protect against low or declining living standards arising out of a number of basic risks and deeds” (von Ginneken 2000 as quoted in Barrientos and Barrientos 2002).

### Thematic Note 1

This Thematic Note was written by Anushree Sinha (National Council for Applied Research [NCAER]), and Kristy Cook (Consultants), with inputs from Catherine Ragasa (Consultant), and reviewed by Nata Duvvury (Consultant); Maria Hartl (IFAD); Eve Crowley, Libor Stloukal, and Paola Termine (FAO); Sriani Ameratunga, Peter Hurst, Mary Kawar, Susan Maybud, Martin Oelz, and George Politakis (ILO); Ratna M. Sudarshan (Institute of Social Studies Trust); Steve Wiggins (ODI); and Elena Bardasi and Rekha Mehra (World Bank).

1. ILO popularized the notion of the informal sector in the early 1970s and has a long history of contributing to the conceptual and policy debates about the informal economy. Various expert groups, such as the Delhi Group on Informal Sector Statistics, have sought to distinguish between the informal sector and informal employment. The concept of informal employment refers specifically to the activity undertaken by a person as the unit of observation. The term informal employment is used by the ILO Task Force (2002) to mean employment that has no secure contracts, worker benefits, or social protection. The major component of such employment is (a) self-employment in the informal sector and (b) paid employment in informal occupations. The latter could also be in the formal sector, and certain evidence can be found of such employment. Informal workers employed in the formal sector do not get similar wages/benefits as formal workers.

2. See also [www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/condtrav/pdf/agri\\_wind.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/condtrav/pdf/agri_wind.pdf) and [www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/condtrav/workcond/agriwork/agricult.htm](http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/condtrav/workcond/agriwork/agricult.htm).

### Thematic Note 2

This Thematic Note was written by Kristy Cook (Consultant) and reviewed by Nata Duvvury and Catherine Ragasa (Consultants); Maria Hartl (IFAD); Eve Crowley, Libor Stloukal, and Paola Termine (FAO); Sriani Ameratunga, Peter Hurst, Mary Kawar, Susan Maybud, Martin Oelz, and

George Politakis (ILO); Ratna M. Sudarshan (Institute of Social Studies Trust); Steve Wiggins (ODI); and Elena Bardasi and Rekha Mehra (World Bank).

1. This section is drawn largely from FAO’s “Gender and Law: Women’s Rights in Agriculture” (FAO 2006).

2. Government of Chile, “Report on the Implementation of the Beijing Platform of Action Presented by the Government of Chile to the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women. Response to the Questionnaire,” April, [www.un.org](http://www.un.org).

### Thematic Note 3

This Thematic Note was written by Kristy Cook (Consultant), with inputs from Catherine Ragasa (Consultant) and Hild Rygnestad (World Bank), and reviewed by Nata Duvvury (Consultant); Maria Hartl (IFAD); Eve Crowley, Libor Stloukal, and Paola Termine (FAO); Sriani Ameratunga, Peter Hurst, Mary Kawar, Susan Maybud, Martin Oelz, and George Politakis (ILO); Ratna M. Sudarshan (Institute of Social Studies Trust); Steve Wiggins (ODI); and Elena Bardasi and Rekha Mehra (World Bank).

1. This discussion draws heavily on research by recent authors on nontraditional agricultural exports (see Barrientos, Kabeer, and Hossain 2004; Dolan and Sorby 2003; Tallontire 1999).

2. In England a group of NGOs organized by Christian AID has worked with supermarket chains to ensure that the African women who pick and pack fruits and vegetables are being fairly treated.

3. Ethical Trading Initiative, “Final Report of the ETI Multi-Stakeholder Seminar on Colombia Flower Industry,” [www.ethicaltrade.org](http://www.ethicaltrade.org).

### Innovative Activity Profile 1

This Innovative Activity Profile was written by Kristy Cook (Consultant) and reviewed by Catherine Ragasa (Consultant); Maria Hartl (IFAD); and Eija Pehu (World Bank). This Profile draws heavily from Lawler and Atmiyanandana (2000).

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### Innovative Activity Profile I

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