



United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW)

Empowerment of Women Throughout the Life Cycle as a Transformative Strategy for Poverty Eradication

**Report of the Expert Group Meeting
26 – 29 November 2001
New Delhi, India**

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I. PREFACE

1. While poverty has always been a major concern in the work of the United Nations, the challenge of its eradication remains at the top of both international and national agendas. Through global United Nations conferences and summits, a set of interconnected and mutually reinforcing goals and targets has been agreed to by governments in order to combat poverty.
2. In Beijing, during the Fourth World Conference on Women, the international community expressly recognized that women and men experience poverty differently, and agreed that if these differences are not taken into account, the causes of poverty could not be understood or dealt with by public actions. The Platform for Action adopted in Beijing included the issue of women and poverty as one of its 12 critical areas of concern, and identified strategic objectives for addressing poverty among women. It emphasized that the “empowerment of women is a critical factor in the eradication of poverty” and recommended that poverty eradication strategies address the multidimensional nature of poverty, including such factors as autonomy, dignity and participation in decision-making.
3. During the last decade there have been several changes in the way poverty is addressed, including in poverty eradication policies. These changes are reflected in the shift from a physiological model of deprivation, focused on the failure to meet basic material and physiological needs, to a social model of deprivation focused on such elements as lack of autonomy and dignity, and powerlessness. In 1997, the UNDP reinforced this shift by introducing in its Human Development Report¹ a concept of human poverty based on the conceptual framework provided by Amartya Sen.² Sen conceptualized poverty in terms of the absence of certain basic capabilities to function. He suggests that an understanding of poverty should include both what we can and cannot do (capabilities), the commodity requirements of these capabilities which differ interpersonally and over time, and what we are or are not doing (functionings). According to this perspective, poverty represents the absence of some basic capabilities to function. Functionings, in turn, represent the doing and beings of a person. In comparison with income poverty, human poverty refers to the denial of opportunities and choices for living a basic or "tolerable" human life.³
4. Focusing on the concept of human poverty exposed the causes of poverty, not only its symptoms. In that respect, the concept of human poverty was instrumental in clarifying the relationship between gender inequalities and poverty. Women are more

¹Human Development Report 1997, UNDP, New York; Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1997.

² See: A. Sen. “Poverty and Famines: An essay on entitlement and deprivation”, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1981, A. Sen. "Capability and well-being". in M. Nussbaum and A. Sen (Eds.) The Quality of Life. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993.

³ Human Development Report 1997, UNDP, New York; Oxford ; Oxford University Press, 1997, p.15.

vulnerable to poverty because of gender inequalities in the distribution of income, access to productive inputs such as credit, command over property or control over earned income, as well as gender biases in labour markets and the social exclusion that women experience in a variety of economic and political institutions. In addition, women do not always have full control or command over their basic asset: their own labour.

5. The concept of human poverty includes not only the condition of economic insufficiency, but also social and political exclusion. It takes into account more than the basic needs for material well-being, and views poverty as multidimensional, acknowledging its gender dimension. It also provides a link to a rights-based approach to poverty alleviation through an emphasis on good governance and empowerment of people.
6. The concept of human poverty called for the disaggregation of data by sex and age, thus allowing for an analysis of the relative poverty or well-being of individual members of a household. Such an approach focuses on gender differences in education, training, health services and life expectancy, and socially constructed constraints on the choices of women. It allows for the examination of how gender inequalities perpetuate and reproduce poverty of individuals, families, and communities from one generation to the next.⁴
7. The commitments to eradicate poverty were given added weight when the General Assembly, in its resolution 48/183, proclaimed 1996 as the International Year for the Eradication of Poverty. In 1997, the General Assembly, by its resolution 50/107, launched the First UN Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (UNDEP).
8. In addition, the Economic and Social Council dealt with the coordination of United Nations activities for poverty eradication at the coordination segment of its substantive session in 1996, with a focus, *inter alia*, on coordination of United Nations efforts to “ensure that all activities for poverty eradication take fully into account the gender perspective”. In 1997, the General Assembly, in its resolution 52/193, reaffirmed that all Governments and the United Nations system should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective, and the use of gender analysis as a tool for the integration of a gender dimension, into the planning and implementation of policies, strategies and programmes on poverty eradication.
9. The issue of women and poverty has been specifically addressed by the Commission on the Status of Women. In 1993, the Commission considered the issue of “Women in extreme poverty: integration of women’s concerns in national development planning” as the priority theme in the area of development. To assist the work of the Commission, the Division for the Advancement of Women conducted a seminar (1992) to examine the process by which poverty is generated and reproduced from a gender perspective. The seminar analyzed the issue of poverty in the broad societal

⁴ N. Cagatay. “Gender and Poverty”, UNDP, Working Paper Series, Working Paper N. 5, May 1998.

context, and explained how and why women and men experience poverty differently and unequally, and become impoverished through different processes. The findings and conclusions of the seminar provided an important input to the preparation of the 1995 World Conference on Women in Beijing.

10. The gender dimension of poverty was further comprehensively examined in the 1994 World Survey on the Role of Women in Development. This survey, in accordance with Commission on the Status of Women resolution 36/8, was one of the principal documents for the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing.
11. At its fortieth session, in 1996, the Commission on the Status of Women considered the critical area of concern of women and poverty within the context of reviewing the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. The deliberations resulted in the adoption of resolution 40/9, which emphasized that the empowerment and autonomy of women along with the improvement of women's social, economic and political status were essential for the eradication of poverty.
12. The issue of women in poverty became an important dimension of National Action Plans (NAPs) for the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action that governments developed in the years following the Beijing Conference. More than half of the 118 NAPs received by April 2000 by the Division for the Advancement of Women reported on the efforts of governments to develop gender sensitive policies for poverty eradication. In the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, in 2000, it was further reaffirmed that "the success of anti-poverty policies and programmes depend on the extent to which these policies and programmes empower people living in poverty in general and women in particular."
13. As the situation of women in poverty acquired new urgency with the accelerating pace and impact of globalization and liberalization, the Economic and Social Council, considered at the high-level segment of its substantive session in 1999 the theme "The role of employment and work in poverty eradication: the empowerment and advancement of women". In a Ministerial Communiqué, the Council recognized the differences between women and men in access to labour markets and opportunities to redress poverty, and highlighted the need for gender specific policies in these areas⁵. In its follow-up resolution 2000/26, the Economic and Social Council reiterated the call for relevant organizations within the United Nations system and the international community to take consistent, coherent, coordinated and joint actions in support of national efforts to eradicate poverty, with particular attention to employment creation, work and the empowerment and advancement of women.
14. The impact of globalization on the world of work from a gender perspective was the major theme of the 1999 World Survey on the Role of Women in Development. The Survey also examined whether and how the processes of globalization contribute to empowerment of women and poverty eradication.

⁵ Ministerial Communiqué of the high-level segment of 1999, A/54/3, Chapter III.

15. The issue of women's empowerment and poverty eradication was addressed during the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace in the Twenty-first Century". In the session's outcome document (A/RES/S-23/3), governments were called upon to strive to reduce the disproportionate presence of women living in poverty by implementing national poverty eradication programmes with a focus on a gender perspective and the empowerment of women, including short- and long-term goals.
16. This appeal was reinforced in the United Nations Millennium Declaration (A/RES/55/2), where Governments resolved "to halve, by the year 2015, the proportion of the world's people whose income is less than a dollar a day" and "to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger and disease and to stimulate development that is truly sustainable."
17. In 2001 the UN Interagency Meeting on Women and Gender Equality, together with the OECD/DAC/Working Party on Gender Equality, organized a workshop on governance, poverty reduction and gender equality. In the Joint Communiqué of the meeting, the participants agreed that good governance, gender equality and women's empowerment were necessary conditions for the reduction of poverty and inextricably linked to human rights and social justice.
18. At its forty-fifth session in March 2001, the Commission on the Status of Women proposed a new multi-year programme of work identifying the priority themes for the period 2002-2006. Accordingly, in 2002, the Commission, at its forty-sixth session, will consider the theme: "Eradicating poverty, including through the empowerment of women throughout their life cycle in a globalizing world." In order to assist the Commission in its work, the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) convened an expert group meeting on the theme of "Empowerment of women throughout the life cycle as a transformative strategy for poverty eradication", which was hosted by the Government of India in New Delhi, from 26-29 November 2001.
19. The participants of the meeting examined the empowerment of women throughout their life cycle as a transformative strategy for poverty eradication. The main emphasis of the discussion was on policies and programmes for women that promote their empowerment within the context of globalization.
20. The findings and conclusions of the meeting will provide input to the preparation of the Secretary-General's Report on "Eradicating poverty, including through the empowerment of women throughout their life cycle in a globalizing world" to be submitted to the session of the Commission on the Status of Women in March 2002.
21. The recommendations of the meeting are directed toward governments, the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, the private sector and various actors of civil society. They aim to refine and expand an agenda

for “actions to be taken” at both the international and national levels to eradicate poverty as outlined in the Beijing Platform for Action and in the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly.

II. ORGANIZATION OF WORK

A. Attendance

22. The Expert Group Meeting on "Empowerment of women throughout the life cycle as a transformative strategy for poverty eradication", held in New Delhi, India, from 26 to 29 November 2001, was organized by the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) and hosted by the Government of India.
23. The meeting met in plenary, and in working groups. In an opening plenary meeting, background presentations created a conceptual framework for the discussions. Working group discussions, focusing on specific issues, followed the plenary. The meeting concluded with the adoption of a final report that contained the main conclusions and recommendations of the meeting.
24. The meeting was attended by 9 experts representing all geo-political regions and thirty eight observers from Governments, intergovernmental organizations, the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations (see annex I for the full list of participants).

B. Documentation

25. The documentation of the meeting comprised of a background paper prepared by a consultant commissioned by DAW; 8 papers prepared by experts and three observers' papers (see annex II). In view of their relevance to the issues under discussion, a number of United Nations documents and other reference papers were made available.

C. Adoption of the agenda and programme of work

26. At its opening session on 26 November 2001, the participants adopted the agenda of the meeting and a programme of work as follows (see annex III) :

Opening of the meeting and opening statements;
Election of officers;
Adoption of programme of work;
Presentation of papers by the consultant, and by experts and observers on the identified topics of the meeting;
General discussion;
Working group discussion;

Presentation of reports from working groups;
Adoption of the report of the meeting;
Closing of the Expert Group Meeting.

D. Election of officers

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

| | |
|-------------|------------------------------|
| Chairperson | Ms. Aodiiti Mehta (India) |
| Vice-chair | Ms. Jeanine Anderson (Peru) |
| Rapporteur | Ms. Nina Strandberg (Sweden) |

E. Opening statements

28. The Expert Group Meeting was opened by Ms. Dorota Gierycz, Chief, Gender Analysis Section, Division for the Advancement of Women who delivered a message sent by Ms. Angela E.V. King, Assistant Secretary-General and Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women. In her message, Ms. King stated that although the 20th century had seen notable progress in advancing human development in some areas, the scope and depth of human deprivation remained significant. She pointed out that, since 1987, there had been an increase in the number of people living in extreme poverty in the world, now totaling 1.22 billion. Furthermore, at the global level, income inequality had also grown, with the poorest 20 per cent of the world's population sharing only 1.1 per cent of the total global income, as compared to 1.4 per cent in 1991.
29. In her statement, Ms. King pointed out that poverty was a complex and multidimensional phenomenon resulting from structural imbalances in all realms of life - the state, the society, the economy, the culture and the environment - and that women were disproportionately represented among the poor. She highlighted that women had greater difficulty in breaking free of poverty given the larger share of family and domestic responsibilities and the existing inequalities in accessing education, training, as well as opportunities in the labour market and decision-making. According to Ms. King, eradicating poverty and achieving sustainable development could not be separated from achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women. In her view, globalization offered many opportunities for transforming the gender values of society towards the promotion of gender equality. Thus, the task was to ensure and sustain the benefits of globalization to women, whilst at the same time curtailing its negative impact and limitations.
30. Ms. King's message highlighted the importance of the Expert Group Meeting in contributing to the critical global strategy for poverty eradication from a gender perspective. This was particularly timely as the international community was preparing for the International Conference on Financing for Development as well as the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002. In her statement, Ms. King also expressed her gratitude to the Government of India for hosting the Expert Group

Meeting in New Delhi, and for its efforts in the battle to eradicate poverty in the country.

31. In her opening statement, Ms. Najma Heptullah, Deputy Chair, Parliament of India, welcomed the convening of the Expert Group Meeting as one of the important initiatives undertaken by the United Nations during its first Decade for the Eradication of Poverty. She expressed her hope that the meeting would constitute an important moment for sharing best practices being undertaken around the world for eradicating poverty among women and their empowerment.
32. In her opening statement, Ms. Brenda Gael McSweeney, the United Nations Resident Coordinator and United Nations Development Programme Resident Representative, stressed the important role of the United Nations in the eradication of poverty worldwide. She also commended the Government of India for being one of the strong supporters of the United Nations and a committed advocate for gender equality and empowerment of women.
33. Speaking on behalf of the Government of India, Mr. R.V.Vaidyanatha Ayyar, Secretary, Department of Women and Child Development, stated that it was an honour for the Government of India to host the Expert Group Meeting. The meeting was particularly timely as the year 2001 was proclaimed by the Government of India as the Year of the Empowerment of Women. Mr. Ayyar called the attention to the remarkable progress experienced by Indian women throughout the years both in the political and the economic arenas. He emphasized that the Constitutional Amendments expanded the opportunities for women to participate in local decision-making bodies. He emphasized that the investment made by the Government of India in education had led to a remarkable growth in the economic power of the country. In 1999-2000, women accounted for 39.8 per cent of students in higher education as compared with just 10 per cent in 1950-51. However, as Mr. Ayyar concluded, despite certain progress in many areas, much remained to be done, especially in the area of poverty eradication among women. He expressed the hope that globalization could play a positive role in that respect.
34. Justice Sujata Manohar, of the National Human Rights Commission, India, highlighted how human rights, which are enforceable through courts of law, played an important role in promoting women's economic empowerment in India. She stated that the Indian Constitution had conferred on the people fundamental rights, including the right to equality before the law, the right to non-discrimination on the ground of sex and the right to a life with dignity. However, practices based on customary law continued to discriminate against women. She emphasized the importance of legal literacy and awareness raising campaigns among both women and men. She emphasized that any strategy for poverty alleviation should address the issue of traditional stereotypes about the role of women and men and promote education.

F. Field Trip

35. After the meeting the group of participants took part in a field trip to Chhattarpur district in Bundelkhand region of the Madhya Pradesh in order to familiarize themselves with SWASHAKTI Project. This project is aimed at formation of 'self-help' groups among poor women. Other objectives of the project are to organize education and training among women, provide expert consultation for women who want to start their own businesses, including the provision of micro-credit. The participants were accompanied by project manager Mr. A. K. Nanda and district project managers Mr. K. Ghosh and Mr. M. K. Khan

G. Working groups

36. The Expert Group Meeting established two working groups to consider the following topics:
- “Globalization and poverty among women” (working group I) and
 - “A transformative concept of empowerment strategy to eradicate poverty” (working group II).

The discussion in working group I was chaired by Ms. S. Saadallah whilst Ms. K. Gopal served as rapporteur.

The discussion in working group II was chaired by Ms. S. Razavi, whilst Ms. S. Esim served as rapporteur.

III. SUMMARY OF THE GENERAL DISCUSSION

A. Introduction

1. Globalization has become a catchall term for many different economic, social, political and cultural processes. These processes are reflected in increasing trade, labour and financial flows, technological innovations, as well as the increasing spread of cultural practices, and the harmonization of legal and judicial norms and political and economic systems. In this report, neo-liberal globalization will be used in its broadest sense to mean greater openness of economies to international trade and capital mobility.
2. While over the past twenty years national economies have ‘opened up’ significantly, it is important to underline that globalization is by no means a new phenomenon. Processes of international economic integration from the 1880s until World War One probably surpassed many of the contemporary indices of globalization. Still, there are many novel features in current processes of globalization, including technological changes, particularly in communications, transport and information processing and the unprecedented flows of capital across some borders.
3. During the last decade, many countries have opened their markets to international competition at a pace that is faster than that experienced in increased growth and reductions in poverty levels at the national level. Reducing barriers to trade has been promoted under the assumptions that trade will lead to increased productivity, growth and competition, and reduced poverty levels. However, economic restructuring has often led to social polarization.
4. More importantly, there is no convincing evidence that openness systematically reduces poverty or improves the quality of life for the vast majority of women and men in developing countries. “In practice, the links between openness and economic growth tend to be weak, and contingent on the presence of complementary policies and institutions. The fundamental determinants of economic growth are the accumulation of physical and human capital and technological development.”⁶
5. The term ‘globalization’ masks the fact that the flows in world trade, production and investment have remained highly concentrated, largely within the rich OECD countries and the larger economies within the developing world. Most developing countries, however, have not been integrated into the so-called ‘global’ economy. Hence, processes of international integration for some countries and regions are happening hand-in-hand with the marginalization of others. In addition, the inequality, both within and between countries, has been rising.

⁶ D. Rodrick “The New Global Economy and Developing Countries: Making Openness Work”. Policy Essay N. 24, Washington DC: Overseas Development Council, 1999 , p. 9.

6. The effects of globalization for women and men, gender relations, poverty reduction, and development are very contradictory and partially dependent on resource endowments, infrastructure, labour market policies, skills and educational levels, socio-cultural norms, and women's and men's positions in the processes of production and reproduction, and the position of the country in question within the global order.
7. The participants also emphasized that existing data sources (despite some gaps and limitations) suggest that women's enjoyment of specific social and economic rights during the recent period of neo-liberal globalization is not encouraging. The evidence reviewed in some recent UN reports⁷ suggests that although there was some progress in that area in some countries, many other countries have regressed rather than progressed in the realization of economic and social rights.
8. There are several ways in which the forces of globalization affect poverty reduction in general, and poverty among women in particular. It was agreed during the meeting that in the context of open capital markets the choices in macroeconomic policymaking have been narrowed; deflationary and fiscally conservative policies have become the norm throughout the world (e.g. high interest rates, tight monetary policies, and fiscal restraint) often without sufficient consideration of national realities. This has imposed a number of constraints on governments seeking to reduce poverty, improve human welfare and enhance gender justice and women's empowerment.
9. Globalization advocates premise their arguments for increasing external liberalization on the beneficial outcomes, in terms of economic growth, employment and human welfare, expected to flow from greater openness. However, a comparison of regional growth rates for the period 1960-1980, when developing countries were pursuing import substitution industrialization policies, with those for the 1980-2000 period, shows a decline in GDP per capita growth rates.⁸ At the same time inequality, both within and between countries, has been rising.
10. Nevertheless, economic growth is not in itself sufficient to achieve alleviation of poverty and social and economic rights for women. What matters if the benefits of growth are to be widely shared is in part the quality of growth. This includes a more equal distribution of income, more and better jobs, rising wages, an improved quality of life, reduction of gender inequalities and women's empowerment.
11. The analysis of the recent experiences of many countries in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Eastern Europe, and Latin America indicated that there was no necessary relationship between economic liberalization and increased economic growth,

⁷ see: The 1999 World Survey on the Role of Women in Development, UN, 1999; "Progress of the World's Women 2000". New York: UNIFEM, 2000.

⁸ Weisbort, Mark, Dean Baker, Robert Naiman, and Gila Neta. 2000. *Growth May Be Good for the Poor – But are IMF and World Bank Policies Good for Growth: A Closer Look at World Bank's Most Recent Defense of Its Policies, Draft CEPR Briefing Paper*. Washington, D.C.: Centre for Economic and Policy Research.

development, and reduced poverty. As the South-East Asian financial crises have revealed, openness can often exert pressures that can result in deepening poverty and the widening of income and wealth disparities within countries.

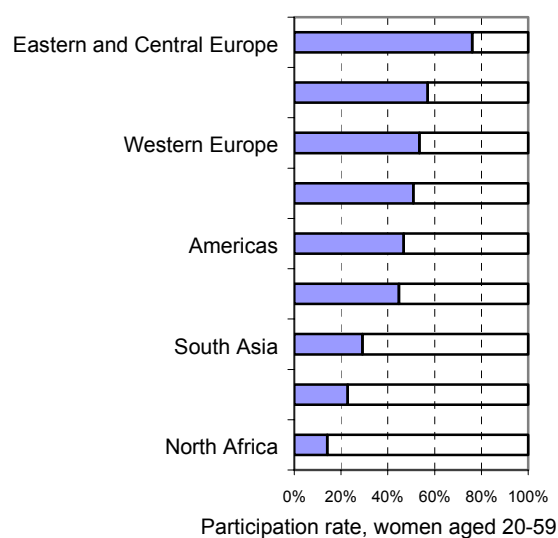
12. The current period of neo-liberal globalization has also coincided with a wave of democratization that has swept through much of Eastern and Central Europe, Latin America, Africa and Asia. The political processes associated with democratization and participation, including the flourishing of women's groups and movements at national, regional and global levels have given greater visibility and voice to women's demands for political representation and improved economic and social conditions and human rights protection.
13. These political processes have included, very importantly, new social movements that operate at the local, national, regional and global levels. Some of these social movements are engaged in an endeavor to construct a truly plural world order based on humanist, democratic and gender-egalitarian values that resist the dominant neo-liberal regime. Such movements, however, operate under considerable constraints.
14. Globalization raises issues of global governance, the regulation of international trade and migratory movement, peace and conflict resolution and other questions that impinge on the capacity of the world system to promote universal human rights and human development. Existing institutions that channel debates and negotiations around these questions are located very far from the position occupied by poor women. Yet poor women's empowerment implies the right to information and understanding of these larger questions, and it implies that poor women have their fair share of influence over the emerging new international order. This will require a major effort to involve poor women in dialogues, to facilitate their access to communications media both as consumers and producers of information, to gear the contents of adult education programmes to their citizenship role, and to eliminate discriminatory practices that today leave major policy decisions in the hands of the elite.

B. Economic liberalization and poverty eradication

15. The participants of the Expert Group Meeting examined some of the ways in which economic processes associated with globalization have impacted on the livelihoods of diverse social groups, especially different groups of women (differentiated by social and economic class, 'race', age and life cycle), in different spatial contexts.
16. Women's access to more and better jobs has been widely recognized as important in facilitating a process of poverty eradication and empowerment. Employment enhances financial independence and self-esteem of women, while providing an opportunity for them to interact with co-workers outside their kinship and residential network. These processes often result in shifts in the position of women within the household and beyond.

17. Women are certainly more likely to be working outside the home today than ever before. Between the 1950s and the end of the 1990s, the proportion of women aged 20–59 in the labour force increased from around one-third to one-half. The current participation rates by region range from 14 per cent in North Africa to 76 per cent in East and Central Europe (see figure 1). In some countries, women’s participation has increased to a great extent than men’s, at least statistically, than men’s. In half the developing countries for which data were available, over the period 1975–95 the female participation rate rose while the male rate fell. The global labour force has become more female—rising from 36 per cent in 1960 to 40 per cent by 1997.⁹

Figure 1—Women’s labour force participation, 1980s and 1990s¹⁰



Note: Uses the latest census available in 1999.

18. The participants also underlined an important counter-trend taking place in the ‘transition’ economies of East and Central Europe, where women’s formal employment has fallen since the on-set of economic reforms. The rate of female labour force participation was lower in 1997 than in 1985 in all transition countries. The drop in female employment was as drastic as 40 per cent in Hungary,¹¹ however, this figure may hide the increasing informalisation of female labour, not only in Hungary but also elsewhere in the region.
19. The participants pointed out that although the increase in participation (in all regions except Eastern and Central Europe) was to some extent, a result of better recording of seasonal, unpaid family and casual wage labour, it also reflected a number of real

⁹ "Visible Hands: Taking Responsibility For Social Development," Geneva: UNRISD, 2000, p.133.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ "Progress of the World's Women 2000". New York: UNIFEM, 2000, p.73.

changes. First, more women now have to work to ensure family survival in the face of declining real wages and the increased monetary cost of subsistence resulting from cutbacks in both public services and subsidies for staple foods. Second, the number of women-headed households in which women are required to meet the monetary cost of household survival from their own labour has increased. Third, the demand for women workers in particular sectors of the economy experiencing long-term growth has grown. Many industries employing a high proportion of women have expanded rapidly in response to globalization. Much of this is low-skilled manufacturing—notably in garments, footwear and electronic products—and ‘non-traditional’ agricultural products such as cut flowers, seasonal fruits and vegetables. Changing social norms, increasing levels of education among women and declines in fertility, are other important factors behind the increase in women’s labour force participation.

20. The participants noted that throughout the world, full time wage employment has given way to flexible and casual forms of employment through outworking, contract and part time labor, and home-working, sometimes through subcontracting arrangements with transnational corporations (TNCs). Many of these labour arrangements are unprotected by standard labour legislation.
21. In most industrialized countries, women make up 70 to 80 per cent of part-time employees. In many developing countries informal employment accounts for a large share of output and employment. In these circumstances women have tended to be the preferred labor force because they can be hired for lower pay and under less desirable working conditions than men. Women therefore constitute a significant proportion of the labor force employed in low-paying irregular jobs. The households relying on informal forms of employment often generate very low levels of income which serve limited subsistence needs and keep most of them below the poverty line.
22. Women also make up the majority of home-workers. Women’s home-based economic activities form an important component in poverty eradication and empowerment. However, home-based and contractual workers are most vulnerable to shifts in production due to economic restructuring. In some regions such as Central and Eastern Europe, women’s informal employment has rapidly expanded in the context of increasing poverty and unemployment. To successfully eradicate poverty, governments in the region need to recognize and address the large portion of informal work in the region that is not illegal or part of the ‘underground economy’.

The impact of trade liberalization on female employment

23. The effects of trade liberalization on women in developing countries will become increasingly apparent as the WTO agreements are implemented and their impacts are documented and analyzed. Possible costs can include those related to the possibility of higher prices for food, health care and education, and for imports such as medicines because of the agreements on agriculture, services and intellectual property rights. In addition, for some countries the surge in imports, resulting from the

elimination of tariffs, can result in negative effects on the local consumer industries producing goods such as textiles, clothing, and leather, beverages and cement, most of which tend to employ women. As a result, women in these countries may experience increases in unemployment and poverty.

24. The analysis of the impacts of trade liberalization on employment creation should take into account a number of issues, including uneven development both between and within countries, and the specific and differentiated effects on women and men.
25. The participants underlined that the impacts of trade liberalization on employment operate through two simultaneous channels: the creation of jobs through export expansion, and the destruction of jobs through competition from imports. It is the *net* effect on women's employment that should be of interest, as well as the type and quality of jobs that are created and lost.
26. The net impact of trade liberalization may not be as positive as the gross employment figures for the export-oriented sectors suggest. The second important factor is the slow-down in more recent years in the capacity of the export-oriented sector to create employment even in the more dynamic Asian and Latin American developing countries. The third important factor to take into account is the apparent de-feminization of employment in some sub-sectors of export-oriented manufacturing, as export production becomes more skill- and capital-intensive. During the discussion on this issue, particular attention was paid to developments in Asian labour markets, since the impacts of globalization on female employment have been particularly marked in this region.
27. The participants agreed that globalization, and trade liberalization in particular, have contributed to a significant shift in the structure of global manufacturing, from the North to the South. The share of developing countries in world export of manufactures steadily increased from about 11 per cent in 1980 to about 25 per cent in 1999, while the share of industrialized countries over the same period steadily declined from about 83 percent to 72 per cent.¹²
28. However, the extent to which North-South trade has led to employment expansion, including in manufacturing, appears to be geographically uneven and modest. While it is true that some countries show very impressive employment expansion over this period, at the same time other economies have shown negative rates of growth in employment in the 1990s, and for the vast majority of developing countries manufacturing employment has stagnated and/or declined over this period.
29. For example, in the newly industrializing countries of Asia (and others like Mexico, Morocco and Mauritius) where manufacturing production has been successfully oriented towards exports, the share of women in these industries has increased significantly. Another striking piece of evidence for the feminization of the labour

¹² For more information see a background paper, "Globalization, employment and women's empowerment" (EGM/POV/2001/BP.1). Prepared by S. Razavi.

force engaged in export-oriented manufacturing production is the very high share of women working in export processing zones (EPZ).

30. However, the growth of export-oriented production processes (and employment therein) can take place simultaneously with the destruction of jobs in other parts of the manufacturing sector because of import penetration following trade liberalization. Unfortunately, there is little empirical evidence documenting the magnitude of jobs destroyed through trade liberalization for different regions of the South, even though there are important country studies providing a clear picture of this phenomenon.¹³
31. One of the main features of countries that have embarked on a labour-intensive export strategy, through the so-called 'low road to industrialization', is the availability of an abundant supply of 'cheap' and 'docile' female labour. However, low wages and low value-added in exports can keep export prices low and weaken the terms of trade, resulting in a form of impoverishing growth.
32. The participants confirmed that gender inequalities and gender biases that are keeping wages low for women could reinforce structural inequalities in global trade between the South and the North. The challenge for industrial policy is to forge a transition from the so-called 'low road', based on cheap labour, to the 'high road', based on increasing worker productivity through, *inter alia*, retraining and skills acquisition for women. The employment trends in newly industrialized economies in East Asia, such as Hong Kong, Singapore and South Korea, that have successfully restructured and up-graded their labour-intensive exports by shifting towards skill-intensive products, are highly informative in this respect.¹⁴
33. The participants agreed with the conclusions of the 1999 UN World Survey on the Role of Women in Development, that since the late 1980s 'in many middle-income countries the demand for women's labour in manufacturing has been weakening, as export production became more skill- and capital-intensive'¹⁵ As examples of this trend, the report cites Singapore, Taiwan, South Korea and the *maquiladoras* in Mexico. With regard to South Korea specifically, the report notes that 'the composition of the workforce in the electronics industry has changed in favour of

¹³ For an excellent analysis of recent industrial policy shifts in South Africa and their impact on employment see: Hart, Gillian. 2001. *Reworking Apartheid Legacies: Global Competition, Gender, and Social Wages in South Africa, 1980-2000*. Geneva: UNRISD mimeo. For the impact of trade policy reforms on industrial capacity and employment in Bangladesh see Rashid, Ali Mohammed. 2000. *Impact of Trade Policy Reforms on Industrial Capacity and Employment in Bangladesh*. Dhaka: Structural Adjustment Participatory Review Initiative (SAPRI).

¹⁴ In these countries with full employment, the tightening of the labour market triggered a rise in wages and other labour costs, and thereby encouraged greater structural change and shifts away from labour-intensive manufacturing. The decline in manufacturing employment in turn encouraged them to relocate low-skill labour-intensive production to the rest of Southeast Asia and China from the late 1980s. Such relocation was encouraged by two other developments from the mid-1980s: first currency appreciations, and second, retaliatory actions from countries that were the targets of the highly successful export drive from this region..

¹⁵ The 1999 World Survey on the Role of Women in Development, UN, 1999, p.9.

male workers, as production in this sector shifted to more sophisticated communication and computer products’.

34. In order to keep women employed, governments and the private sector should invest in the enhancement of women workers’ skills. In this way women workers will gain enhanced capabilities that can be applied in other jobs. In this process trade unions are important actors with whom to engage. In a period when many trade unions have been losing power and membership they are challenged to re-invent themselves. Within this process they are increasingly engaging with women in both formal and informal employment.
35. However, the participants indicated that while the facts of the de-feminization of employment are more or less conclusive, the causes and mechanisms leading to it clearly require far more empirical and analytical scrutiny in order to reach any definitive conclusions about it.
36. The participants also discussed the quality of female employment. There has been a decline in the proportion of jobs that have security of employment, rights against unfair dismissal, pension rights, health insurance rights and maternity rights. Women in many economic sectors rarely enjoy the wide spectrum of social and economic rights specified in national and international legislation, such as the right to favourable conditions of work, the right to equal pay for equal work, the right to social protection or the right to form and join trade unions. It is important to note that increasingly , however, many male workers are in the same situation.
37. Monitoring and evaluating the broader conditions of employment is equally (if not more) crucial, especially from the point of view of women workers. The significance of this area stems from women’s centrality to the ‘care economy’, i.e. their socially-ascribed responsibilities for child care and elderly care, and how those prior obligations shape the kinds of work they are able to take up during different phases of their life cycle. Women’s groups have repeatedly emphasized the need to recognize that women stand at the crossroads between ‘productive’ activities and the care of human beings (the care economy). Subsidized childcare and elderly care facilities, public health care programmes, public transport and piped water/electricity help women meet their dual responsibilities and facilitate their participation in capability building activities. As the literature on the gender impacts of structural adjustment has convincingly shown, when state resources are not channeled to such services, women must work more to compensate for the shortfall. In theory, women’s work in the care economy is central to economic activity and should therefore carry economic rights or entitlements. But attracting resources when there are many competing claims on budgets has been a major challenge for women’s movements worldwide.
38. Thus, while young unmarried and childless women have been able to benefit from labour-intensive industrial strategies (albeit under working conditions that are far from ideal), in countries where those strategies have been successful, these labour market opportunities have been far less open to older women with dependants. They

have found it far more difficult to enter these industries in the absence of adequate social provision of childcare and other services.

39. The impacts of trade liberalization on the agricultural sector and livelihoods in many developing countries also raise concern. Given the volatility of international commodity markets, the shift from food production to production of export crops has exposed the lives of many small and marginal farmers, which in many regional contexts includes significant numbers of women farmers, to heightened risk while at the same time threatening their food security. Given that intra-household processes of food distribution are gender biased in some regions, women and girl children are acutely exposed to increasing nutritional insecurity.
40. Enhancing women's access to, and ownership of, agricultural land has not been given adequate attention in national processes of policy-making and policy implementation. This important gap in policy is now combined with the increasing risks of landlessness of entire households and communities as some countries revise their land legislation in order to attract new investment into the agricultural sector. In some countries, legislative ceilings on land holdings have been removed, thereby increasing the ease of ownership of agricultural land for commercial and speculative purposes, while exposing smaller and marginal farmers, some women amongst them, to increasing risks of landlessness and loss of livelihood.
41. Within the context of the multilateral trading system and trade liberalization, governments have committed to "mainstreaming trade into national plans for economic development and strategies for poverty reduction" (WTO, 2001). However, many participants argue that the trade liberalization must take into account the differential institutional, infrastructure, and human resource capacities of member states in order to increase growth and expand employment opportunities. In addition, gender considerations must be mainstreamed into trade policies.
42. The participants in the expert group agreed that trade liberalization might result in benefits for poor women in terms of employment gains, but they are not guaranteed, in particular over the long term. The current multilateral trade negotiations provide an entry point to influence the negotiations in ways that can better address the employment needs of poor countries and poor women.

Financial liberalization

43. Another important but controversial aspect of globalization has been financial liberalization. Persistent financial crises over the past two decades have shown that premature liberalization in the context of insufficient financial regulation can lead to economic and social crises. The drastically tight monetary policies and fiscal austerity measures that were implemented in response to financial crises have led to massive job losses and surges in poverty.

44. Financial crises have exacerbated gender inequalities as women have often borne the brunt of managing household adjustment to these crises. According to regional studies from Asia, the most immediately felt impact of the crisis was in the area of social reproduction. Medium-term impacts included the intensification of women's labor force participation in low-paying production and service work due to pressures of family survival in a context of limited opportunities.
45. There is a groundswell of opinion urging the regulation of short-term capital flows, for both economic and social reasons. However, international action to regulate short-term capital flows and reduce their volatility is blocked by powerful financial interest groups. In the absence of global regulation, most policymakers agree that domestic monetary policies and banking regulations ought to focus on strengthening prudential regulation and the control of destabilizing short-term capital movements.

Globalization and social policy

46. There has been a global shift in the consensus over the role of the state in welfare provision, which carries many serious and adverse implications for women. Selectivity in social policy has thus gone hand-in-hand with a trend towards 'multi-tierism' in modes of provision of social protection in several important areas of social policy such as pensions, health care and education. While selectivity means narrowing the targets for support, multi-tierism means reducing the state component and partially privatizing social protection. There is thus increasing reliance on private provision and community support, or indeed an increased need for these sources to fill the gaps left open by diminishing public provision.
47. In fact, the public funding and delivery of a wide range of goods and education, health and welfare services including day care, care for the aged, care for the retired and disabled, is vital to women who under existing social arrangements are ultimately the ones to balance their time and energies between income-earning activities and the care of human beings. The public funding and delivery of social services have been the cornerstone for gender equality in advanced welfare states.
48. The global shift in the consensus over the role of the state in welfare provision has in many contexts entailed the down-sizing of public services and the re-allocation of service delivery to commercial interests, charitable groups, NGOs and families. This devolution of responsibility to 'civil society' for managing welfare and development raises serious questions, especially as far as women are concerned. While there clearly are some positive aspects to the involvement of women's NGOs, it depends upon an unpaid or poorly paid and unregulated workforce of female 'extension workers'. Ultimately what this means is that claims for more 'efficient' social spending, through a 'partnership' of state and civil society, relies on women's unpaid work, whether in their capacity as mothers, grandmothers and wives or as NGO and community workers. Furthermore, it is not clear whether both the coverage and the quality of delivered services can adequately meet the needs.

49. In addition, macro-economic policy approaches continue to rely solely or principally on full employment to achieve socially desirable outcomes. Such approaches fail to recognize unpaid forms of work that are just as much at the heart of provisioning human needs as paid work. However, with the on-going processes of privatization and commodification of social policy and care that is underway, the 'male breadwinner' model that was pervasive in the post-World War II era is being superseded not by a gender-egalitarian reform of state-based entitlements which accords equal rights and entitlements to men and women for different kinds of work, but by a drastic reduction of state-based entitlements and their replacement by a market-based, individualised system of social services for those few who can afford them, and elusive safety nets, poverty and overwork for the great many who cannot.
50. In the wake of the Asian financial crisis there has been willingness on the part of governments to create social policy including social protection to adjust to the causalization of the labor market. This opening can be utilized to engage with governments in creation of more progressive social policies around poverty eradication. These social policies are not necessarily gender sensitive. Women's organizations and trade unions have an important role to play in helping to develop, design, implement and monitor new gender responsive social policy models.
51. Social security is on the decline in aggregate terms in most parts of the developing world and women bear a disproportionate burden of this contraction. In addition to the reduced social security services, issues such as food security have also been marginalized.

Privatization of pensions, healthcare and education

52. The participants emphasized that, the best way for reducing poverty among the entire aged population is to provide a universalistic citizenship or residency-based basic pension, which can then be supplemented by earnings or contribution-related pensions. One of the major drawbacks of the private system is its in-built gender bias. Due to gender discriminatory forces within the labour market and women's care responsibilities, women tend to earn lower wages and work fewer years than men. Thus, in private systems where benefits are calculated strictly based on contributions in the formal sector, women tend to be at a disadvantage. The system of individualized contributions removes the cross-subsidy that women are able to receive under the public system. This is in fact indicative of a much broader problem: the private system is antithetical to redistribution and equity. Those advocating privatization of social security schemes simply skirt these issues. Social values like redistribution, equity and solidarity have no place in a private, fully-funded individual-account pension system.
53. The current trend towards privatization of health care and education is also disturbing. Marketization tends to drive out cross-subsidy, generating an institutional split between provision through exchange and redistribution via

government. Historical evidence shows that highly inclusive systems of health care have been built from patchworks of public, mutual, charitable, employment-based and private systems. In general, systems that are not highly socially segmented, and not dominated by private care, are easier to universalize. Conversely, systems dominated by private fee-for-service provision are extremely hard to universalize. The impact of user fees is rarely gender neutral. In many cases, especially in developing countries, the willingness to pay for education or health care is sex-based with preference for boys and men. In addition, girls together with women carry the burden of unpaid and caring work within the household, and therefore cannot attend school or are the first to drop out of school.

54. Education is an important facilitating factor for women's empowerment and for eradicating poverty among women as it expands women's capabilities. During the period 1980-1994 the gap between girls' enrolments and boys' enrolment at primary level narrowed in developing countries. But there are some important anomalies that stand out. In the case of sub-Saharan Africa the closing of the gender gap in some countries is attributed to a decline in the enrolment of boys and only a marginal increase in the participation of girls.
55. According to UNESCO data, girls' net enrolment in secondary school declined between 1985 and 1997 in 10 out of 33 countries in sub-Saharan Africa; 7 out of 11 countries in Central and Western Asia; 2 out of 21 countries in Asia and the Pacific; 6 out of 26 in Latin America and the Caribbean; 6 out of 9 in Eastern Europe; and 1 out of 23 countries in Western Europe and other developed countries.
56. Despite the link between education and income, studies from diverse regional contexts indicate that equal years of education do not translate into equality of job opportunity for men and women. Men everywhere tend to get better jobs than women with similar levels of education. A complex set of forces explain the persistence of gendered labour markets, from the more obvious factors such as continuing gender gaps in the fields of science and technology, to the more intractable differences in men's and women's relations/access to employment, the centrality of the 'care economy' in how women relate to labour markets, and gender discriminatory forces in how male and female labour are valued and remunerated regardless of human capital investments.
57. It is well known that health emergencies, when too severe and frequent, plunge households into irremediable poverty because of the high demand they make on women's time and financial resources. This close link between health and poverty emphasizes the need for effective, accessible and appropriate health services, preferentially available to the poor, free or genuinely attuned to their real ability to pay.
58. The right to bodily safety and physical privacy of women should be seen as an inalienable and fundamental right. Large numbers of women in both rural areas and urban slums lack access to minimum levels of sanitary facilities rendering them vulnerable to physical attack and giving rise to a whole body of demeaning socially

ordained behavior, such as the elevation of modesty and shyness as desirable feminine attributes. It is imperative that any state with a genuine agenda for empowerment of women ensure that this shortfall in basic physical infrastructure pertaining to women be addressed and allocated for.

59. It was pointed out that existing government supplemental feeding programmes were premised on the requirements of nutritional supplementats, providing micronutrient support and support for specific deficiencies e.g. anemia (iron etc). This ignores the fact that women below the poverty line do not attain basic nutritional calorific norms. In fact, such programmes ignore the absolute calorific gap that exists in the dietary basket of most women and girls. Any genuinely empowering social and economic policy for women must ensure that the basic, minimum, bodily demands for women's nutritional health are secured.
60. Health policy should also be predicated on a life cycle approach. Increasingly, health programmes tend to define women's health primarily in terms of reproductive health and address issues such as tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS in an isolated way.
61. Governments should guarantee the provision of the health programmes through the entire life cycle of women, specifically those concerning reproductive health and reproductive rights. These programmes should be designed and implemented in partnership with civil society and promote intersectoral action on health.
62. In most countries, a demographic shift points to an increasing number of elderly women. This demographic phenomenon presents a threat of poverty to a large number of older women, especially within the process of privatization of basic social services and cuts in state social benefits. In addition, in countries with high incidence of HIV/AIDS, the share of older women in the population has increased due to the loss of younger adult females. Changed family structures create new demands on elderly women, who are becoming main caretakers for young children as well as HIV/AIDS infected relatives. In rural areas, older women are often also assuming greater responsibilities in rural production systems due to the rural-to-urban migration that seems to favour out-migration of both young men and women.

The strategy of microcredit and microfinance

63. Microcredit and microfinance projects have been identified as key strategies for addressing women's poverty by providing women with the opportunity to have their own businesses, increase their productivity and earnings and, achieve greater empowerment. Such projects also help women escape their indebtedness to moneylenders, middlemen and traders and thus strengthen their bargaining and economic position.
64. Microcredit programmes throughout the developing world, especially in South Asia and Africa, have played a significant role in the promotion of women's economic rights, self-employment and income generation, especially in poor households. For

example, in India, three of the four national programmes for women's empowerment focus mainly on microcredit schemes, and microcredit is the central component of the country's largest poverty alleviation programme, where 40 per cent of the resources are targeted to women.¹⁶

65. However, there is growing concern among women's organizations, researchers and practitioners regarding the manner in which microcredit and microfinance programmes are being promoted. There is little empirical evidence to support a linear relationship between microcredit, poverty alleviation and gender equality and empowerment of women. There are also few studies that explore the extent to which microfinance programmes have facilitated non-economic dimensions of women's empowerment and reduced their exploitation and subordination¹⁷.
66. Microcredit services do not often address women's need for other financial services such as insurance, savings and technical assistance. It has also been recognized that financial services have not resulted in business growth for microenterprises. A recent USAID review of 32 research and evaluation reports suggests that few enterprises experience sustained growth, while a majority grow a little and then level off.¹⁸ Another cross-country study emphasized that credit did not trigger growth in terms of increasing technical sophistication, output or employment.¹⁹ While some employment growth is observed among family members of borrowers, the employment impact outside the family has been small²⁰. Within the same microfinance programmes, women's businesses, on average, grew slower than men's businesses. In most cases, men outperformed women in expanding their businesses and generating employment.
67. Microfinance services cannot address a number of constraints to business growth likely to face microentrepreneurs. These constraints might include the following: developing business networks, input supply, including access to raw materials, supplies and equipment, technical/production issues, legal and regulatory compliance, affordable and accessible transportation, access to business facilities and infrastructure, human resource development, and management problems. These constraints affect men's and women's businesses in different ways, since men-owned and women-owned businesses usually do not operate in the same sectors or locations, or have equal access to, control over, and use of the resources and marketing outlets.

¹⁶ Kalyani Menon-Sen, "Gender, Governance and the "Feminization of poverty". The Indian Experience", April 2001. UNDP Office, India.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ J. Sebstad and G.Chen, "Overview of Studies on the impact of Microenterprise Credit: Assessing Impact of Microenterprise Services (AIMS)" Management Systems International, Washington, D.C. USAID, 1996.

¹⁹ D. Hulme and P. Mosley, "Finance against Poverty: Effective Institutions for Lending to Small Farmers and Micro-enterprises in Developing Countries" v.1 and 2, London Routledge, 1996.

²⁰ J. Dawson and A.Jeans, "Looking Beyond Credit: Business Development Services and the Promotion of Innovation among Small Producers." Intermediate Technology Publications, London, 1997.

68. Microcredit and microfinance schemes require a gender-sensitive programming and management approach, and should avoid reinforcement of traditional women's tasks and roles that tend to keep women subordinate within families and communities.

C. Empowerment of women as a transformative strategy for poverty eradication

Conceptual framework of empowerment and poverty

69. In recent years there has been increasing interest in 'empowerment' as a developmental issue not only among social movements and women's groups, but also multilateral agencies. The empowerment of women, in particular, has been proposed as a strategy for addressing poverty. UN conferences and summits and related documents have also stressed the link between poverty and women's disempowerment.
70. The relationship between poverty and disempowerment is not linear and the subordination of women is based on unequal gender relations. Empowerment has intrinsic value and is an end in itself, in addition to any positive value it may have in terms of poverty eradication or enhanced well-being of others. Women's empowerment is assumed to be attainable through different points of departure, including political mobilization, consciousness raising and education. In addition, changes, where and when necessary, in laws, civil codes, systems of property rights, and the social and legal institutions that marginalize women, are assumed to be essential for the achievement of women's empowerment. Women's empowerment is thought to be both a process and a goal.
71. There are many different ways of understanding empowerment. However, participants identified some core criteria of relevance to empowerment. The empowerment of women can be defined as processes by which women take control and ownership of their lives through an expansion of their choices. Empowerment is thus the process of acquiring the ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied.²¹
72. Empowerment is a process of change that can only be driven by women themselves. Although empowerment can not be given to somebody by someone else, the processes of empowerment can be facilitated by others through, *inter alia*, education, capacity building, political mobilization, changes in systems of property rights and the social and legal institutions that marginalize women.

²¹ See N.Kabeer, "Resources, Agency, Achievements: Reflections on the Measurement of Women's Empowerment", in *Discussing Women's Empowerment - Theory and Practice*, SIDA Studies, 2001, no.3, p.19.

73. Empowerment involves changes on several levels that are mutually reinforcing: individual level, group/community level and society and its institutions. Empowerment entails that women acquire a critical awareness of themselves as women with gendered structures of power (gender awareness), self esteem, self-confidence, and agency or a sense of agency.
74. Agency is the ability to define one's goals and act upon them, and the sense of agency is the internal aspect of feeling capable of acting upon one's goals, and as such constitutes the potential for action.²² Agency can be exercised by both individuals and collectives. On the societal level the sense of agency is relevant in that public discourse and national laws acknowledge that women are agents and as such able to participate in decision-making and in determining their own needs
75. Empowerment involves the transformation of power relations by which women move from being objects within relationships of subordination to becoming subjects controlling their own lives. It also involves addressing those power structures that subordinate women on the societal level; otherwise individual women cannot take full control over their lives. For example, while a new law that grants equal inheritance rights is the result of the empowerment of the women who brought about the law and not women in general, it encourages the empowerment of the latter (if they are aware of the law).
76. Empowerment occurs in different ways over the entire span of life, and varies at different stages in the life cycle. There are particular opportunities and vulnerabilities that are associated with different stages. Many stage-specific vulnerabilities cluster around women's reproductive years, including their capacity to choose, the implications of different reproductive technologies, and phenomena such as female feticide. Adolescence and young womanhood, in many societies, are stages in the cycle where women may be severely disempowered within family relationships, in their economic lives, in their relationships with service agencies, and under the law.
77. The presence of poverty is linked to a lack of access to, and control over, productive resources, physical goods and income which results in individual and/or group deprivation, vulnerability and powerlessness. It has various manifestations, including hunger and malnutrition, ill-health, and limited or no access to education, health care, safe housing and paid work environments. Poverty also includes experiences of economic, political and social discrimination.
78. It is crucial to identify specific constraints and needs of women through the life cycle. For example, the selective allocation of resources for education and health that, in some contexts, favours boys over girls is an impediment to gender equality in economic and social sectors, as well as for overall poverty eradication. Education and health investment at the early phase of women's lives can result in high dividends

²² See N.Kabeer, "Resources, Agency, Achievements: Reflections on the Measurement of Women's Empowerment", in *Discussing Women's Empowerment - Theory and Practice*, SIDA Studies, 2001, no.3, p.21..

of empowerment which can contribute to breaking the cycle of inter-generational transfer of poverty. Adolescent girls, in particular, are often the first to drop out of school and miss the education and training that could enable them to have better lives.

79. The incidence of both poverty and vulnerability among women over the life cycle is also influenced by class, race, ethnicity, location and religious practices. Strategies for reducing vulnerability and enhancing empowerment should be attentive to such differences.
80. The responsibility for facilitating empowerment processes is shared by development agents, such as the State, NGOs, and women's groups and movements. These development agents can remove the social and structural barriers to women's empowerment, such as the absence of jobs, lack of medical facilities and value systems that devalue women, through appropriate economic strategies (that create more and better jobs), through public investments in infrastructure (that make health and other services accessible to women), as well as by changing laws and societal norms (that facilitate women's ability to define their own goals and strategies). The roles of the family, the community and of other social networks are also crucial for creating an enabling environment for women's empowerment, but it is through women's own agency, awareness of gender power relations and increased self-esteem and self-confidence that these enabling structural conditions can be turned into meaningful empowerment.
81. For empowerment to be a permanent process, with transformative implications for society, governments must be receptive to the participation of women and the poor at all levels of decision-making. The increasing competence and participation of poor women must be reflected in, and supported by, democratic institutions that are capable of responding with policies and programmes that are driven by poor women themselves, with their needs and preferences expressed through normal mechanisms of citizen participation. In many countries, these mechanisms are not sufficiently developed and not truly available to the poor, and to poor women in particular. Full empowerment for women implies that the structures and procedures of government be understandable, accessible and accountable to poor women.
82. The transformative content of empowerment changes poor women from being objects within relationships of subordination and domination, to subjects controlling their lives, e.g. with regard to economic transactions, labour and resources. An empowerment approach entails that women are treated as agents of change, that is, women themselves must identify the problems to be solved, how to solve them, and act accordingly. Empowerment usually occurs around needs of real life identified by poor women themselves.
83. Empowerment draws on and builds on positive aspects of a variety of knowledge systems, including indigenous knowledge systems. A large majority of the world's peoples understand themselves not only as material beings but also as spiritual beings, and are as much concerned with social and moral well-being as with material

progress. Hence, empowerment programmes aimed at a process of transformation throughout the life cycle of women should draw on resources of both reason and faith in the process of individual and societal transformation.

84. The impact of empowerment can be seen in a progression, consisting of changed individuals, changed groups/communities, new organizations of the poor, poor women friendly institutions in the support system and new social movements (e.g. The Self-Employed Women's Association, SEWA and the CHIPKO Movement in India).
85. In many cultural settings, social mobilization is a process that comprises the interconnected phases of consciousness raising and the building of their own organizations by the poor, and where poor women become 'subjects' rather than 'objects' of development.
86. Applying an empowerment approach to poverty reduction would require that women play a central role in defining what needs to be done and how it should be done. It also necessitates looking beyond the economic aspects of women's poverty to their holistic well-being.
87. The empowerment approach to poverty eradication takes on particular significance by focusing on the household as a site of both tension and cooperation,²³ and addressing the unequal division of resources and responsibilities between men and women within a household.
88. In order to ensure that empowerment processes are not limited to individual levels, it is important to combine the empowerment approach with a gender mainstreaming approach. This implies that the design of poverty eradication strategies should start with a gender analysis of power structures and relations in a particular context. A gender perspective should be mainstreamed throughout all stages of the development process by analysing the consequences for women and girls, and for men and boys, respectively.
89. Working towards women's empowerment as a strategy for poverty eradication requires also the involvement of men. Initiatives must contribute to the transformation of traditional attitudes and roles and unequal divisions of family responsibilities between women and men.

Measurement of poverty and empowerment

90. Unless both empowerment and poverty are measured it is difficult to define the correlation between women's empowerment and poverty reduction or to determine if the methods employed actually succeed in empowering women.

²³ L. Beneria and S. Bisnath, "Poverty and Gender: An Analysis for Action," in Frank J. Lechner and John Boli Eds. *The Globalization Reader*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1999.

91. Both empowerment and poverty represent rather complex and multidimensional phenomenon that cannot be captured by single indicators. In addition, the tendency to interpret poverty exclusively in terms of income or consumption remains very strong, and the global debate on poverty still tends to focus on an interpretation of poverty in money-metric terms. The latest data from the World Bank are based on the money-metric indicator of \$1 dollar a day. These figures do not reflect the number of women in poverty because, in the absence of sex-disaggregated income poverty measures (given that income poverty is measured per household unit without any regard for intra-household processes of distribution), it is not possible to monitor how women have fared, compared to men.
92. One of the responses to the difficulties of measuring female poverty using standard household surveys has been the disaggregation of households using the sex of the head of household, and to equate female poverty with female headship. But this is a problematic approach because first, it ignores female poverty in male-headed households (which stems from gender-based intra-household inequalities in income and resource allocations); and second, it treats female-headed households as a homogeneous category. Empirical studies show that there is considerable diversity in the incidence of poverty among female-headed households, depending on the trajectories leading to female headship (e.g. widowhood versus migration of husband who sends remittances), and also depending on the context (e.g. north India versus some parts of South-East Asia).
93. Also without gender-sensitive income-poverty indicators there is no way of estimating the extent of feminization of poverty - a situation that has led to the use of global "guesstimates" such as much repeated claim that 70 per cent of the world's poor are women.
94. Given the shortcomings of conventional income poverty measures, alternative indicators have been proposed to measure well-being and destitution. These social indicators have included such measures as life expectancy, maternal mortality, educational levels, nutritional levels, access to safe drinking water, and so on. These social indicators have been used to construct composite indicators of human poverty, such as the Human Poverty Index (HPI)²⁴.
95. However, even simple indicators like gross school enrolment ratios (for different levels of education), are not available at all in many countries and regions, and are provided only on an irregular basis in many others. According to the Human Development Report 2000, the data for HPI are available only for 103 countries; wage data disaggregated by sex are available from the International Labour Organization for only 46 countries²⁵. All the figures and global estimates mask

²⁴ The HPI was introduced alongside the notion of human poverty in the 1997 Human Development Report. The HPI is composed of adult illiteracy rate, the percentage of the population not expected to reach age forty, and "overall economic provisioning" - that is a composite of three indicators: the percentage of people without access to health services, to safe water and the percentage of children under five years of age who are underweight.

²⁵ Human Development Report, 2000, New York, Oxford University Press, 2000, p.141.

important regional and subregional variations in poverty reduction, as well as variations between the situation of women and men.

96. Even less has been done in the area of empowerment. The gender empowerment measure (GEM) introduced by the Human Development Report examines the economic, political and professional participation of women and men. However, it does not capture many aspects of empowerment, particularly within the household, in community life or in rural areas. It focuses only on three variables: income-earning power, share in professional and managerial jobs, and share of parliamentary seats.²⁶
97. In sum, the lack of timely, reliable and sex-disaggregated data for many parts of the world continues to pose a problem in assessing the situation of women and men in poverty, and, consequently, the impact of any particular poverty eradication policy or programme on women or men. A mix of quantitative and qualitative indicators, conventional and participatory gender-sensitive surveys at the local, national and international levels are required to better understand and monitor poverty.
98. The participants of the meeting agreed that although the empowerment of women is a widely used concept, very few have been made to measure progress in empowerment, and to determine the correlation between women's empowerment and poverty eradication. The lack of adequate methods makes it difficult to determine whether the implementation of projects/programmes actually succeeds in empowering women.

Governance and women's participation

99. Governance, the process of decision-making and of their implementation, has important implication for poverty and empowerment at global, national and local governance levels. At the global level, good governance practices for women's empowerment and poverty eradication would imply more equitable transnational capital and labor flows.
100. At the national and local levels, gender-responsive budget initiatives can be an important tool for strengthening economic and financial governance and for promoting accountability and equality. National budgets reflect how governments mobilize and allocate public resources, and how they aim to meet the social and economic needs of their people. Gender-responsive budgeting assesses the impact of fiscal policies on men and boys, as compared to women and girls, within and across any given socio-economic category.
101. One key objective of gender-responsive budget initiatives is to ensure that fiscal policy takes account of the contributions made by the care, or reproductive economy, to the nation's economic output. The care economy consists of unpaid household and community activities that sustain human life, providing a labor force for both, the public and private sector, and nurturing of the young, old, and sick. The services and

²⁶ Human Development Report, 1995, New York, Oxford University Press, 1995.

products resulting from the care economy are almost exclusively provided by women and are unpaid.

102. The unpaid economy is one of the three components of a nation's total economy. The others are the public service sector (paid), and the private sector (paid). The creation of national wealth is dependent on the output of all three sectors. Households are not just consumers, but also producers of goods and services. The intersections and interactions of these three sectors, whether paid or unpaid, are a key focus of gender-sensitive macroeconomic analysis, and have important implications for budgetary policy at local and national levels.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

The expert group meeting adopted the following recommendations.

A. Economic liberalization and poverty eradication

103. Governments, international organizations, including the UN system and development agencies, research institutions, civil society, including the private sector, trade unions and non-governmental organizations, as appropriate, should:

- a. Undertake analysis of the impact of economic liberalization on women living in poverty based on region-specific data and information disaggregated by sex and age.
- b. Review macroeconomic policies and strategies for financing development to incorporate the objectives of gender equality and empowerment of women.
- c. Identify ways and means to increase the participation of women in the norm setting and decision-making processes regarding macroeconomic issues, including the areas of trade, finance and investment.
- d. Acknowledge that women have emerged as major bread-winners in many countries and support them in these roles by ensuring that financial and trade liberalization and economic policies do not undermine women's choices to engage in gainful employment under conditions and on terms that enhance their capabilities, self-respect and dignity.
- e. Monitor the quality of employment, as well as wage levels, gender gaps in wages, health and safety standards at work, skill creation, retraining and social insurance in order to promote the well-being of women.
- f. Conduct sectoral analyses within the context of trade liberalization, including in goods, services, intellectual property rights, the environment, competition, investments in order to identify any possible effects on the livelihoods and prospects of empowerment for poor women.

- g. Integrate market assessment and outreach as an integral part of livelihood interventions for effective income generation and poverty eradication among women.
- h. Provide assistance to women's groups, which are often marginalized within larger social movements engaged in the processes of economic liberalization, to facilitate the analysis, formulation, implementation and monitoring of economic liberalization policies and programmes, with a view to ensuring that such policies are gender-sensitive and have greater potential to reduce poverty among women engaged in both formal and informal employment.
- i. Inform women's groups and individual women about the internal functioning of all markets (including labour markets) as well as the international trade regime through organizing economic literacy training in relevant areas.
- j. Improve poor women's access to productive resources such as land, credit, technology and marketing techniques to facilitate their entry into viable self-employment opportunities that can provide a decent standard of living for themselves and their dependents.
- k. Promote partnership between the private sector and women entrepreneurs in order to enhance their ability to market their products and improve their economic opportunities.
- l. Identify and address the gendered dimensions in existing and new trade agreements to facilitate the eradication of poverty while promoting both economic growth and social development goals.
- m. Work with relevant UN agencies and regional and national institutions to assist the members of the WTO to clarify those aspects of the new trade agreements that may marginalize poor women as workers and negatively affect their livelihood strategies. For example, Article I: 3 (ii) c of the GATS, may be harmful to the livelihood strategies of women and their families living in poverty because it impacts on the provision and distribution of health services to poor women, and may result in the increase in prices for specific services.
- n. Encourage, through appropriate economic and social policies, the balanced distribution of the gains from trade liberalization including through taxes, employment and re-training programmes.
- o. Encourage developed countries to share the burden of poverty eradication in the developing world, including through the provision of international public goods.

- p. Ensure that the design and implementation of taxation policies do not disproportionately affect women, especially women in poverty, by, *inter alia*, increasing the participation of women in these processes.
- q. Ensure the mainstreaming of a gender perspective into decisions and agreements emanating from the forthcoming International Conference on Financing for Development (in Mexico, March 2002) regarding the mobilization of financial resources for development, private and public, domestic and international.
- r. Regulate short-term capital flows to protect the livelihood strategies of poor women and men taking into account the adverse social and economic effects of financial liberalization.
- s. Intensify efforts to reflect women's unpaid work in households in national statistics and in poverty eradication policy formulation, implementation and monitoring, and ensure that the design and implementation of strategies for financing development recognize unpaid work.

B. Social policy within the context of globalization

104. Governments, international organizations, including the UN system and development agencies, research institutions, civil society, including the private sector, trade unions and non-governmental organizations, as appropriate, should:

- a. Reinforce the role of the national and local government as actors in production and delivery of adequate and affordable social services for women and women in poverty, especially in such areas as health, education, child and elderly care and access to water and sanitation.

105. Governments, international organizations, including the UN system and development agencies, research institutions, civil society, including the private sector, trade unions and non-governmental organizations, as appropriate, should:

Education and training

- a. Extend and expand educational programmes to include girls and women of all ages who have been excluded from education during their childhood and adolescence, recognizing that adult literacy, non-formal education, awareness building and skills training are some of the ways to ensure empowerment of poor women to participate in the labour market.
- b. Develop educational and training policies and programmes to enhance the capabilities of girls and women through formal and non-formal education, and ensure that these policies and programmes aim at breaking the gender-stereotyped provision of knowledge and skills and promote images of women and girls in positions of power, value, prestige and public presence.

- c. Identify and strengthen training and re-training, as well as vocational education in non-traditional areas to expand women's employment opportunities with empowering implications, and promote vocational training in sectors with growth potential, especially for young women.

106. Governments, international organizations, including the UN system and development agencies, research institutions, civil society, including the private sector, trade unions and non-governmental organizations, as appropriate, should:

Health

- a. Recognize the close link between health and poverty, and ensure that effective, accessible and appropriate health services are available to women in poverty.
- b. Adopt a holistic life cycle approach to the design and implementation of health policies and programmes and ensure that issues, such as tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS are not addressed in an isolated way.
- c. Design and implement health programmes, specifically those concerning reproductive health and reproductive rights, in partnership with civil society.
- d. Guarantee the provisioning of free and universal basic health and nutritional services, including health and nutrition education, in partnership with NGOs and other civil society organizations throughout the entire life cycle of women.
- e. Ensure that any genuinely empowering social and economic policy for women contains the basic, minimum, bodily demands for women's nutritional well-being, and meet any absolute calorific gap amongst adolescent girls and women through direct state provisioning of supplemental feeding, and especially through initiating core feeding programmes.
- f. Consider the right to bodily safety and physical privacy of women as an inalienable and fundamental right of special importance to poor women and promote adequate sanitary facilities and basic physical infrastructure for women and allocate adequate resources to that end.

107. Governments, international organizations, including the UN system and development agencies, research institutions, civil society, including the private sector, trade unions and non-governmental organizations, as appropriate, should:

Older women

- a. Design and implement policies and programmes for active ageing that ensure economic independence and social security, equality and participation of older women, especially older women in poverty.

108. Governments, international organizations, including the UN system and development agencies, research institutions, civil society, including the private sector, trade unions and non-governmental organizations, as appropriate, should:

Social security

- a. Shift from residual and crisis related safety nets to the development of permanent and sustainable social security systems through the different stages of the life cycle of women, especially in developing countries.
- b. Increase the role of the state in the design, implementation and monitoring of more progressive social policies and gender-sensitive social policy models concerning poverty eradication, including social protection.
- c. Strengthen the proactive role of the government and its collaboration with civil society, including women's NGOs, working women's forums, in providing appropriate social security systems that reduce risks throughout the life cycle of poor women, including the provision of unemployment insurance when wage labour and public works programmes are insufficient.
- d. Review the macroeconomic policy approach to full employment as the sole basis for state-based entitlements and extend entitlements to those who are engaged in informal or part-time work as well as for the providers of unpaid caring work.

109. Governments, international organizations, including the UN system and development agencies, research institutions, civil society, including the private sector, trade unions and non-governmental organizations, as appropriate, should:

Caring services

- a. Promote, including through education and mass media, the notion of equal sharing of family responsibilities between women and men and provide extensive, affordable and quality social services such as day care facilities, pre-school day care facilities, static and mobile crèches etc. to allow both women and men,

especially in poverty, to utilize their employment opportunities and build their capacities.

C. Microcredit and microfinance

110. Governments, international organizations, including the UN system and development agencies, research institutions, civil society, including the private sector, trade unions and non-governmental organizations, as appropriate, should:

- a. Review all types of microcredit and microfinance programmes to determine whether these programmes enhance women's capabilities, status, bargaining power and promote their empowerment, and ensure that these programmes do not reinforce women's traditional roles within households and communities.
- b. Develop microcredit and microfinance programmes that effectively reach the poorest and most vulnerable of the poor women.
- c. Go beyond microcredit and microfinance policies and programmes to develop various comprehensive strategies to better address the needs of diverse groups of women in poverty, and ensure that these strategies assist women in the building of their own assets (savings, land) and strengthen social insurance, especially during economic shocks and adversities.

D. Empowerment of women as a transformative strategy for poverty eradication

111. Governments, international organizations, including the UN system and development agencies, research institutions, civil society, including the private sector, trade unions and non-governmental organizations, as appropriate, should:

- a. Review existing poverty eradication policy frameworks and strategies from a gender perspective and incorporate an empowerment approach.
- b. Evaluate poverty eradication policies and programmes in terms of their impact on the economic, social and political empowerment of women throughout their life cycle.
- c. Ensure that poverty eradication policies and programmes combine an empowerment approach with gender mainstreaming initiatives and are explicit about the meaning of empowerment in the particular context.
- d. Implement a bottom-up approach to poverty eradication policies and strategies to ensure women's ownership of poverty eradication initiatives and their involvement at all stages of decision-making by enhancing women's capacities

- through, *inter alia*, economic and political literacy training, mass media and new information and communication technologies.
- e. Identify and address, through designing and implementing policies and programmes, the factors inhibiting women's empowerment such as violence, lack of resources, lack of access to information, traditional norms and attitudes negative to gender equality, and discriminatory laws and practices.
 - f. Design and implement awareness raising campaigns regarding gender equality and women's empowerment at the national, local and household levels targeting all sections of the population.
 - g. Make existing institutions and mechanisms more accessible to poor and marginalized women through e.g. adjusting meeting hours and venues.
 - h. Explore the potential of women's informal associations, enhance their capacity to strengthen women's subjective sense of empowerment and the objective access they have to a diversity of resources and decision-making.
 - i. Design and implement new models for organizing women around livelihood strategies, in particular in the countries where women are more restricted culturally.
 - j. Promote the context-specific and culturally sensitive agendas for women's empowerment.
 - k. Intensify dialogue among all actors, including government, development agencies and civil society, to develop and implement concrete and successful methods and approaches for changing attitudes and norms detrimental to women's empowerment and gender equality, and design methods for facilitating the empowerment of women.

E. Measurement of poverty and empowerment of women

112. Governments, international organizations, including the UN system and development agencies, research institutions, civil society, including the private sector, trade unions and non-governmental organizations, as appropriate, should:

- a. Collect, compile and disseminate timely and reliable data disaggregated by sex and age to assess and monitor poverty among women and men.
- b. Create national and international databases on essential sex disaggregated indicators to evaluate and monitor poverty among women, including income poverty and human poverty, to facilitate the formulation of more successful gender-sensitive poverty eradication strategies.

- c. Encourage and support the work to develop quantitative and qualitative indicators to measure poverty among women and men throughout their life cycles, and to monitor the impact of poverty eradication policies and programmes on both women and men.
- d. Develop methods and indicators to measure progress in terms of empowerment of women that are both qualitative and quantitative, both context and culturally specific and universal, and cover both process and impact, and determine the correlation between women's empowerment and poverty eradication.

F. Governance and women's participation

113. Governments, international organizations, including the UN system and development agencies, research institutions, civil society, including the private sector, trade unions and non-governmental organizations, as appropriate, should:

- a. Develop or strengthen the mechanisms facilitating women's full and equal involvement in decision-making processes at all levels and in all areas, that affect their life chances, choices and opportunities throughout their life cycle.
- b. Engage women and women's groups in global, national and local governance processes and mechanisms through building new alliances and partnerships, especially with men, trade unions, alternative trade groups, etc. and facilitate this process by providing necessary resources, assistance and information.
- c. Ensure women's efficient engagement in social and economic decision making through organizing economic literacy training, providing access to mass media and new information and communication technologies.
- d. Undertake, if necessary, affirmative actions to ensure equal participation of women in decision-making processes at all levels and areas.
- e. Identify and implement measures to increase the participation of women in the conceptualization, design, implementation and evaluation of poverty eradication programmes and policies.
- f. Strengthen national capacities of governments, in particular those promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women, to address effectively women's empowerment and poverty eradication concerns in policy analysis and dialogue at local, national and global levels.
- g. Mobilize and allocate public resources to meet the social and economic needs of both women and men, especially those in poverty, and ensure that the design and implementation of all budgetary processes promote women's economic opportunities and equal access to productive resources and address the basic needs of women, especially those living in poverty.

- h. Ensure that gender budget initiatives take account of the contributions made by the care, or reproductive economy, to the nation's economic output.
- i. Strengthen economic and financial governance and promote accountability and equality through the implementation of gender-responsive budget initiatives at the national and local levels.
- j. Conduct gender analysis of sectoral funds allocations, tax policies, labour and industrial policies, as well as other tools of fiscal and macroeconomic policy, in collaboration with researchers and women's NGOs.
- k. Establish appropriate mechanisms to monitor gender sensitive allocations and policies and to ensure their implementation, including in the Ministries of Finance, Budget Management Offices and other financial structures.
- l. Organize regular and comprehensive impact assessments of empowerment policies and programmes, in particular for poverty eradication.
- m. Empower women by allocating and mobilizing domestic resources to support microfinance programmes that provide poor women with the requisite credit, knowledge and tools to enhance their economic capacities, and to promote the establishment of reliable, convenient savings, insurance and remittance facilities that serve the financial needs of women, especially from poor households.

ANNEX I

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ANNEX II

LIST OF DOCUMENTATION

A. PAPERS BY EXPERTS

- EGM/POV/2001/EP.1 *Women's informal employment in Central and Eastern Europe*
Prepared by Simel Esim (Turkey)
- EGM/POV/2001/EP.2 *Poverty in a globalizing world at different stages of women's life cycle*
Prepared by Bina Agarwal (India)
- EGM/POV/2001/EP.3 *Globalisation, poverty and women's empowerment*
Prepared by Savitri Bisnath (Trinidad and Tobago)
- EGM/POV/2001/EP.4 *Poverty, globalization and being gender-sensitive: focusing on reproductive health*
Prepared by Kusum Gopal (India)
- EGM/POV/2001/EP.5 *Empowerment of women in the context of Muslim societies as a transformative strategy for poverty eradication in a globalizing world*
Prepared by Sherin Saadallah (Egypt)
- EGM/POV/2001/EP.6 *Conceptualizing empowerment of women as a transformative strategy for poverty eradication*
Prepared by Nina Strandberg (Sweden)
- EGM/POV/2001/EP.7 *Transforming tradition as a vehicle for women's empowerment: critical dimension for poverty eradication*
Prepared by Jacqueline Adhiambo-Oduol (Kenya)
- EGM/POV/2001/EP.8 *The core methodology of social mobilisation in women's empowerment as a transformative strategy for poverty eradication*
Prepared by Susil Sirivardana (Sri Lanka)
- EGM/POV/2001/EP.9 *Poverty, empowerment and gendered life cycles: Latin American perspectives*
Prepared by Jeanine Anderson Ross (Peru)

B. PAPERS BY OBSERVERS

- EGM/POV/2001/OP.1 *Gender constraints for rural poverty alleviation*
Prepared by Revathi Balakrishnan
- EGM/POV/2001/OP.2 *Gender, poverty, globalization – the UNDP India*
experience
Prepared by Kalyani Menon-Sen
- EGM/POV/2001/OP.3 *Empowering women as a strategy for the*
eradication of poverty: An Indian perspective
Prepared by P.G. Dharchakrabarti

C. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- EGM/POV/2001/BP.1 *Globalization, employment and women's*
empowerment
Prepared by Shahra Razavi

ANNEX III

PROGRAMME OF WORK

Monday, 26 November 2001

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| 8.30 am - 9.30 am | Registration |
| 9.30 am - 10.30 am | Official opening of the meeting: Message from : <i>Ms. Angela E.V. King, Assistant Secretary-General, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, United Nations</i> <i>Mrs. Najma Heptulla, Deputy Chairman, Parliament of India</i> <i>Ms. Brenda Gael McSweeney, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative</i> <i>Dr. R.V. Vaidyanatha Ayyar, Secretary, Department of WCD, MHRD</i> |
| 10.30 am - 11.00 am | Coffee break |
| 11.00 am - 11.15 pm | Election of officers Adoption of programme of work |
| 11.15 pm - 1.00 pm | Presentation by Justice Sujata Manohar Presentations by UN entities: <i>Ms. K. Menon-Sen</i> , UNDP (7-10 minutes) <i>Ms. R. Balakrishnan</i> , FAO (7-10 minutes) Presentation of background paper by the consultant: <i>Ms. S. Razavi</i> , UNRISD (20-30 minutes) General discussion |
| 1.00 pm - 2.30 pm | Lunch |
| 2.30 pm - 4.00 pm | Presentations on topic 1: "Globalization and poverty among women" (each presentation 7-10 minutes) <i>Ms. B. Agarwal</i> <i>Ms. S. Esim</i> <i>Ms. K. Gopal</i> <i>Ms. S. Bisnath</i> |

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| | General discussion |
| 4.00 pm - 4.30 pm | Coffee break |
| 4.30 pm - 6.00 pm | Working groups Working group I on topic: “Labour market changes and female employment” Working group II on topic: “Social policy and gender” |
| 7.30 pm | Dinner hosted by Dr. R.V. Vaidyanatha Ayyar, Secretary, Ministry of Human Resources Development |

Tuesday, 27 November 2001

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| 9.00 am - 11.00 am | Discussion of policy recommendations Working group I: “Labour market changes and female employment”. Working group II: “Social policy and gender” |
| 11.00 am - 11.30 am | Coffee break |
| 11.30 am - 1.00 am | Presentation of reports from working groups I and II on topic 1 “Globalization and poverty among women” General discussion |
| 1.00 pm - 2.30 pm | Lunch |
| 2.30 pm - 4.00 pm | Presentations on topic 2: “A transformative concept of empowerment strategy to eradicate poverty” (each presentation 7-10 minutes). Mr. P.G. Dhar Chakraborti Ms. N. Strandberg Ms. J. Anderson Mr. S. Sirivardana Ms. S. Saadallah |
| | General discussion |
| 4.00 pm - 4.30 pm | Coffee break |
| 4.30 pm - 6.00 pm | Working groups Working group I on topic: “Main principles and key elements of a transformative concept of empowerment” |

Working group II on topic: “How globalization can enhance empowerment of women”

7.00 pm - 8.00 pm Presentation by observers. (5 minutes each)

Wednesday, 28 November 2001

9.00 am - 10.30 am Discussion of policy recommendations
Working group I : “Main principles and key elements of transformative concept of empowerment”
Working group II : “How globalization can enhance empowerment of women”

10.30 am - 11.00 am Coffee break

11.30 am - 1.00 pm Presentation of reports from working groups I and II on topic 2 “A transformative concept of empowerment strategy to eradicate poverty”

General discussion

1.00 pm - 2.30 pm Lunch

2.30 pm - 4.00 pm Drafting groups on topic 1 and topic 2

4.00 pm - 4.30 pm Coffee break

4.30 pm - 6.30 pm Drafting groups on topic 1 and topic 2

Consolidation of the report

8.00 pm Dinner hosted by H.E. Mrs. Sumitra Mahajan, Minister of State for Women and Child Development

Thursday, 29 November 2001

9.00 am - 10.00 am Introduction of the draft report

10.00 am - 11.00 am Launch of Swayamsidha - a programme for Empowerment of Women

11.00 am - 11.30 am Coffee break

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|--------------------|--|
| 11.30 am - 1.00 pm | Consolidation of draft report |
| 1.30 pm - 2.30 pm | Press Conference |
| 1.00 pm - 2.30 pm | Lunch |
| 2.30 pm - 4.00 pm | Final discussion of the report |
| 4.00 pm - 4.30 pm | Coffee break |
| 4.30 pm - 6.00 pm | Presentation of the report Adoption of the report Closing statements Closing of the meeting |