

# GENDER ON THE MOVE

WORKING ON THE MIGRATION-DEVELOPMENT  
NEXUS FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE





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## WORKING ON THE **MIGRATION-DEVELOPMENT** NEXUS FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

Training Manual  
UN Women Training Centre  
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, 2013

**UN Women** is the United Nations organization dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women. A global champion for women and girls, UN Women was established to accelerate progress on meeting their needs worldwide.

UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality, and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes, and services needed to implement these standards. It stands behind women's equal participation in all aspects of life, focusing on six priority areas: increasing women's leadership and participation; ending violence against women; engaging women in all aspects of peace and security processes; enhancing women's economic empowerment; making gender equality central to national development planning and budgeting; and increasing coordination and accountability across the UN system for gender equality.

Gender on the Move: Working on the Migration-Development Nexus from a Gender Perspective

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This manual was validated through a series of pilot workshops in Santo Domingo with representatives of the United Nations system (UN Women, UNDP, and IOM), the government of the Dominican Republic (Ministry of Women and Ministry of the Economy), NGOs and civil society in December 2010, and with graduate students in Colombia in 2011. However, the manual, like all training processes, is conceived of as a dynamic and adaptable tool. In order to continue learning and improving the tool presented herein, you are welcome to submit comments and suggestions through the Gender Training community of practice of UN Women, in the forum dedicated to this topic.



“In effect, we migrant women are women who in one way or another are changing the world. We do not come to solve anything, or to do miracles; we come to change the world based on the goals we propose for ourselves, based on what we want to carry out, and based on what one day we will be able to say we have achieved.”

– Beatriz Vahos, Association of Active Domestic Service (SEDOAC), Spain



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# PROLOGUE

**I**n recent years there has been growing interest in understanding how migration affects the development of migrants' countries of origin. Various multilateral development organizations and NGOs have been considering ways to increase the impact of remittances on economic development. It follows, then, that the aspect of the migration-development nexus which has drawn the most attention has been the phenomenon of global remittances.

In 2004, UN-INSTRAW,<sup>1</sup> now part of UN Women, launched a research program that set out to understand the model<sup>1</sup> of "remittances for development." The program's objective was to investigate, on one hand, how gender affects and determines the links between migration and development, and on the other hand, how migration and remittances affect gender relations. Studies carried out in different parts of the world have shown that the majority of policies and programs that aim to strengthen the migration-development nexus are gender-blind or show very little understanding of gender concerns; this underscores the need to understand the specific experiences of women in migratory processes in order to avoid male migrants' experiences being taken as the norm when designing policies. The case studies carried out between 2004 and 2010 indicate that gender relations affect decision-making regarding which family member will migrate, how much money is sent, how remittances will be used, and possibilities for savings and investment, among other aspects.

Despite the general consensus around the importance of incorporating a gender perspective to increase the efficacy of development policies and programs, a gender perspective is largely absent from the debates in the emerging field of migration and development. This absence results in the implementation of policies and programs that are ineffective and do little to strengthen the migration-development nexus. Usually, such policies and programs do not include reducing gender inequalities among their objectives, and on occasion they may further entrench existing inequalities.

The training manual *Gender on the Move: Working on the Migration-Development Nexus from a Gender Perspective* aims to build the gender analysis capacity of an array of actors working on topics related to migration and development. It also offers tools to help design programs and policies that strengthen the positive effects of migration in terms of development, both in origin and destination countries.

Migration and remittances have great potential to contribute toward development, but also present new challenges. Our intention is to help those working in the field of migration and development to bring about a model of development that is centered on people, human rights, and on the principle of gender equity.

**UN WOMEN Santo Domingo**

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<sup>1</sup>As of July 2010, UN-INSTRAW (the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women) became part of the new agency UN WOMEN (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women).

# Facilitator's Guide





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This manual is designed to be used in two ways: as a self-didactic learning guide, and as support material to carry out in-person training workshops on migration and development with government workers, NGO technical personnel, or other organizations who work on issues related to migration, development and/or gender equality.

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## HOW IS THE MANUAL STRUCTURED?

The manual is made up of **four learning guides**:

- 1** Introduction to Gender, Migration, and Development
- 2** Impact of Remittances on Local Economies in Origin Countries from a Gender Perspective (focus on origin countries)
- 3** Global Care Chains
- 4** Migration Policies and Migrant Women's Rights (focus on destination, origin, and transit countries)

Each guide has two parts: a reading section with reflection questions, followed by a section with various exercises designed to reinforce the knowledge acquired and to achieve the learning objectives laid out at the beginning of each guide. Most of the material derives directly from the conceptual framework *Crossing Borders II: Migration and Development from a Gender Perspective*, where additional bibliographic references and information can be found.<sup>2</sup>

**Guide 1** provides an introduction to the concepts of gender and human development as they relate to migration and development. It also proposes new axes of analysis to help readers and workshop participants re-orient future interventions on the migration-development nexus. **This guide must be used in any training or self-didactic learning process on gender and migration**, since it aims to build participants' analytical capacity on these topics. Guide 1 is recommended as a foundation before delving into the specific topics covered in guides 2, 3 and 4.

**Guide 2** explores the topic of remittances from a gender perspective and proposes alternatives

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<sup>2</sup> See Pérez Orozco, Amaia, Denise Paiewonsky and Mar García Domínguez. 2008. *Crossing Borders II: Migration and Development from a Gender Perspective*. UN INSTRAW (now part of UN WOMEN): Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.



for promoting gender-sensitive local development in areas of high emigration and remittance receipt. The facilitator can choose a sub-topic and exercise to introduce the phenomenon of remittances or, if it is of interest to the group, may choose to design an entire training based on this guide, always in combination with the concepts and at least one exercise from guide 1.

**Guide 3** introduces the debate surrounding global care chains. An entire workshop can be designed on this topic in combination with the sub-topic of domestic workers' rights from guide 4. As always, it is important to use guide 1 as a starting point to provide the theoretical foundation regarding feminization of migration, etc.

Finally, **guide 4** discusses migration policies and migrant women's rights, putting emphasis on two types of rights that are especially important for migrant women: labor rights of domestic workers and the right to sexual and reproductive health. In order to fully address this topic, the activities from this guide should be combined with pertinent activities from other guides of this manual.

Each **activity** includes an instruction sheet for the facilitator with objectives, materials/preparation, time, facilitation tips, and key lessons. The latter are the conclusions to which participants should arrive, and that should help keep the facilitator on track throughout the activity. The work sheets following each activity are designed to be photocopied and handed to the participants.

At the end of each guide there is a list of **references** which includes both the materials used in the development of the manual as well as additional resources for further reference. At the end of the manual there is a **glossary** of terms used throughout the publication as well as a **table of intervention ideas** that can be used as a tool for participants to brainstorm ideas on how to apply what they have learned to their area of work.

The manual comes with a **CD** that contains: the electronic version of this publication; the publications of the Gender, Migration, and Development research and training program of UN Women; and supporting materials for certain activities (videos, multimedia files, etc.).

## HOW CAN I USE THIS MANUAL?

**Self-didactic learning.** Individual learners should read each guide slowly, pausing to reflect on how what s/he is reading relates to her/his area of work. This reflection can be guided by the questions under the heading "Stop & Reflect" in each section, as well as through the videos and case studies used in the activities section.

**In-person training workshops.** The design of individual training workshops will depend on who is participating, what their learning objectives are, and the level at which the knowledge will be





applied, among other factors. While the facilitator is free to design the training as s/he pleases, the following guidelines should always be taken into account:

- ❑ **Guide 1 should be used as an introduction to every workshop in order to establish a common theoretical foundation.**
- ❑ **Depending on the interests of the training participants, workshops can be designed to work only with guides 2, 3 or 4, but always in combination with guide 1.**
- ❑ **It is useful to prepare a PowerPoint presentation including the main points from each reading section, and to alternate between presenting the material and facilitating interactive activities.**
- ❑ **Choose some questions from the “Stop & Reflect” sections in order to open up debate following your theoretical presentations.**
- ❑ **A complete training workshop is estimated to last 2-4 days. If you have enough time to carry out a complete workshop, consider assigning readings to the participants prior to each session, in order to save time on the presentation of concepts and be able to dedicate more time to activities and discussion.**

### Suggested Workshop Agendas

Package	Duration	Topics	Activities
Complete	4 days	Gender Remittances Care Chains Rights	1.1, 1.4, 1.6 2.3, 2.4, 2.5 3.3, 3.4 4.1 0 4.3
Short	2 days	Gender Choose according to participants' interest	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.6
Specialized (Gender and Remittances)	1-2 days	Gender Remittances	1.1, 1.4 2.1, 2.3, 2.5
Specialized (Gender, migration, and care)	1-2 days	Gender Care Chains Rights	1.2, 1.6 3.2, 3.4 4.3



## WHO SHOULD FACILITATE THE WORKSHOP?

The person in charge of facilitating the workshop should have prior experience facilitating trainings and a solid command of the gender perspective, especially as it applies to processes of migration and development.

## WHO SHOULD YOU INVITE TO THE WORKSHOP?

The intended audience of this manual includes professionals with experience or knowledge related to the design and implementation of migration and development programs and policies. The training may also be useful for people whose work is related to the topics of remittances, care work, gender, and human rights. The target population for trainings using this manual includes various institutions and organizations, such as:

- 1** Agencies pertaining to the United Nations system (e.g. UNDP, UNHCR, UNFPA, ILO, IOM)
- 2** Technical personnel from NGOs and civil society organizations (e.g. migrant associations, women's organizations, etc.)
- 3** Donor organizations who are interested in the topic (e.g. the Joint Migration and Development Initiative of the European Commission and various UN agencies, GTZ, SIDA)
- 4** Representatives of official organisms or public institutions (e.g. Ministries or Secretariats of Women's Affairs, the Interior, Foreign Relations, Economy, Labor, etc.)

Depending on the objective of the workshop, the facilitator may decide whether to invite participants from only one type or field of work or to invite a more diverse group. There are advantages and disadvantages to each arrangement. For example, if the training includes colleagues from the same organization, it could provide a space to discuss certain topics in greater depth and to do some strategic planning for the medium term. On the other hand, if the objective is to generate dialogue between different stakeholders, it may make sense to diversify the participants by type of organization.



## HOW SHOULD THE WORKSHOP BEGIN?

It is important to establish a positive and participatory tone from the very beginning of the workshop, while also encouraging participants to get to know one another and establishing some minimum norms and expectations. For example, the facilitator could begin by following these steps:

- 1** Introduce yourself as facilitator and the theme of the workshop.
- 2** Ask the participants to introduce themselves and to say their name, institution or organization and position, interest in the topic/how it is related to their work, and expectations for the workshop.
- 3** Write their expectations on flip chart paper and go over them at the end of the introductions, distinguishing between those that will be met in the workshop and those that are beyond the reach of the chosen objectives.
- 4** If you think it will be useful, collectively come up with some basic norms to facilitate mutual respect and dialogue among participants.
- 5** Present the objectives and workshop agenda, as well as any logistical information about breaks, bathroom location, parking, etc.

## HOW TO PRESENT THE THEORETICAL COMPONENT?

The facilitator should consider preparing a presentation based on the contents of the reading section of each guide that s/he has chosen to present. A good presentation will include only the most important points, without overwhelming participants with text-heavy slides, and will alternate informative slides with examples of good practices that appear throughout the text or discussion questions taken from the “Stop & Reflect” section in order to stimulate debate. If possible, the theoretical presentations should not last more than one hour per topic, before doing an interactive activity from the second section of the guide.

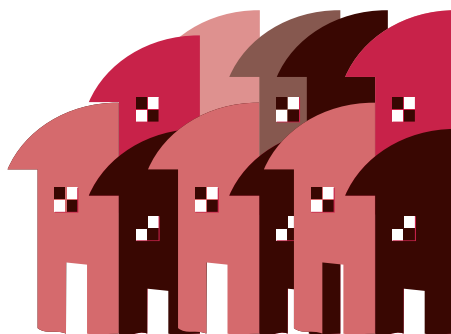


## HOW TO CHOOSE THE ACTIVITIES?

Some activities are designed to be rather simple, debate-openers, while others require certain background information or prior knowledge (the facilitation tips at the beginning of the activities describe what kind of activity it is). In general, the order in which the activities appear goes **from simple to more complex**. It is important to follow a similar progression when selecting and deciding upon the order of activities, in order to build upon the knowledge acquired without overwhelming participants.

In line with principles of adult education, the guides include a variety of activities such as case studies, videos, radio clips, debates, etc. that task the participants with reading, watching, discussing, listening, debating, etc. There are individual activities, as well as activities designed for participants to work in pairs, small groups, or all together in a plenary session. In this way, participants can build their own learning process through activities that appeal to different capacities and skills. In order to preserve this model, it is best to choose a **good mix of activities** that require dialogue, analysis, individual reading and/or use of multimedia materials.

Finally, the activities you choose should follow a **logical order** that will depend on the workshop objectives. If the objective is the raise awareness, the facilitator might choose activities that seek to develop participants' analytical capacity (case studies, videos or radio clips). Alternatively, if the objective is for participants to apply what they have learned to their area of work, it would make sense to design a longer workshop (2-4 days) with activities that range from awareness raising to more complex activities that task them with designing their own intervention.



# **INTRODUCTION TO GENDER, MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

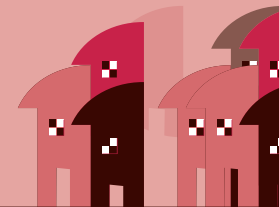
## GOAL OF THIS GUIDE



Demonstrate the relationship between gender and the migration-development nexus; propose new axes of analysis regarding this nexus; and present strategic topics that aim to reorient future migration-development interventions to include a gender perspective.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 1** Recognize the basic tenets, strengths, and weaknesses of the “remittances for development” model.
- 2** Explore the relationship between the gender perspective and the migration process, and understand the basis for the application of gender analysis.
- 3** Be able to apply the gender perspective in the context of participants’ work on issues of migration and development.
- 4** Become familiar with the concepts of human development; the spatial dimension of development; and migrants’ agency in development initiatives.
- 5** Understand the phenomenon of feminization of migration.



## 1.1 WHAT IS OUR POINT OF DEPARTURE?

### THE DOMINANT MODEL OF “REMITTANCES FOR DEVELOPMENT”

Ever since the World Bank began to keep track and publish data on global remittance flows, there has been a growing interest in the potential of remittances to reduce poverty and solve development problems. Various actors have begun to explore this potential: multilateral development banks, aid organizations, United Nations agencies, governments of origin and destination countries, NGOs and civil society organizations, banks and microfinance institutions, etc. Each one of these actors emphasizes different aspects of the relationship between migration and development, but all of them seem to focus in large part on diverse aspects of remittances: how to lower transfer costs, how to promote savings and the “banking of the unbanked,” how to create projects that stimulate collective remittance investments, etc. The majority of these initiatives is designed based on a dominant model that has come to be called “remittances for development” (Pérez Orozco et al 2008).

#### WHAT IS THE “REMITTANCES FOR DEVELOPMENT” MODEL?

This model or paradigm consists of the following characteristics:

- ❑ It is centered around the effects of migration on **origin countries**, much more than destination countries.
- ❑ It considers **remittances** the most important component of the migration-development nexus.
- ❑ The primary tool it uses to increase the positive effects of remittances for development is the promotion of an **“inclusive financial democracy”** through:
  - ❑ The channeling of remittances through **formal transfer systems**
  - ❑ The lowering of **transfer costs**
  - ❑ **“Banking the unbanked”**: Helping those who do not have bank accounts to open one, designing new financial services, and facilitating access to these services
  - ❑ Promoting an **entrepreneurial spirit** among remitters and remittance recipients so that they save and invest.
- ❑ It departs from an **economistic vision of development** that is centered on individual access to goods and services in the market.



## HOW DOES THIS MODEL WORK?

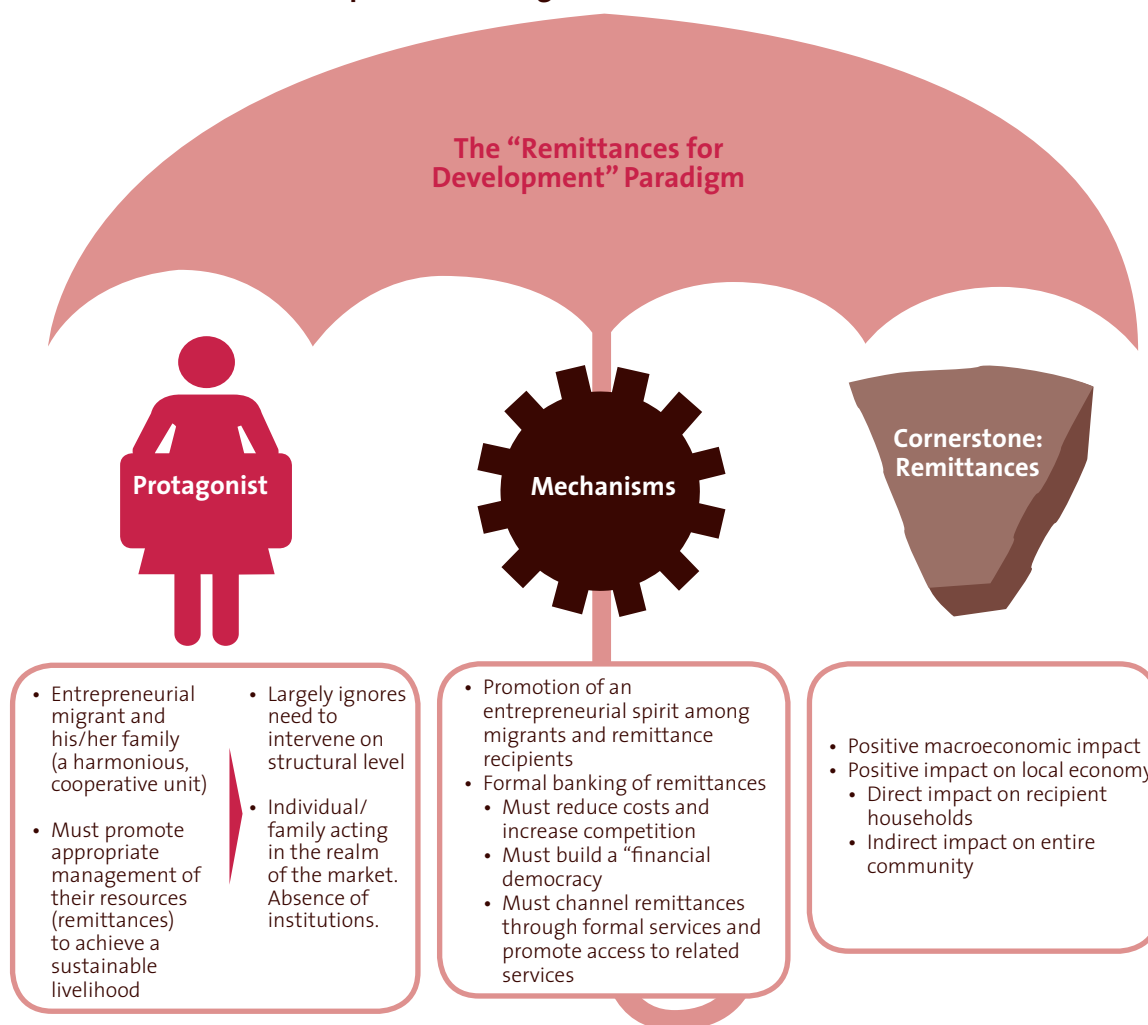
According to this model, remittance flows have great potential to contribute to the development of so-called developing countries. At a macro level, remittances contribute to stabilize the balance of payments in recipient countries, while also serving as an important financing source for poverty reduction. At a micro level, remittances go directly to poor households and stimulate the local economy by increasing the resources that are circulating in the community. Proponents of the dominant model suggest that if this increase in available resources were accompanied by the abovementioned changes in the banking system, a “financial democracy” would come about, in which everyone could theoretically participate. At the same time, this would improve access to financial services not only for migrants and remittance recipient households, but also for the entire community. Having access to credit would encourage people to undertake entrepreneurial activities which, within this model, represent the main pillar of local development. (For more information on this “virtuous circle,” see guide 2).

### WHAT DO YOU THINK?

*“According to this approach [remittances for development], the poor can become leaders of the development process because they already have the necessary resources to do so, including remittances. All they need to do is learn to use and manage them correctly” (Canales 2006: 175, our translation).*



**Graphic 1.**  
The “Remittances for Development” Paradigm



Source: Pérez Orozco et al (UN-INSTRAW, now part of UN Women) 2008

## ? Stop & Reflect

1. According to the remittances for development model, what do the following people/entities have to do in order for remittances to contribute to development?
  - Migrants and their families in origin countries
  - Banks
  - Public institutions
2. Do you think that this model works? What are its pros and cons? What elements and stakeholders are key for this model to work?



## 1.2 WHY IS A GENDER PERSPECTIVE NECESSARY? WHAT IS THE VALUE ADDED?

**T**his perspective is necessary because **gender affects all aspects of the migration experience** of both women and men. Gender affects reasons for migrating, the decision of who will migrate, the social networks migrants use to move, experiences of integration and labor insertion in the destination country, and relations with one's country of origin. Gender also influences the quantity and frequency of remittances that are sent, transfer mechanisms, and the general impact that remittances have on the origin country.

In many sectors of development, it has been shown that working from a gender perspective **increases the efficacy** of policies and programs. Adopting a gender perspective means that programs should take into account the specific needs of women and men, and should aim to shift unequal power relations to enable the full enjoyment of human rights for both sexes. Plenty of evidence and lessons learned have emerged from more established development sectors (e.g. health, education), showing that “if development is not engendered, it is endangered. And if poverty reduction strategies fail to empower women, they will fail to empower society” (UNDP 1997: 7). However, the primary reason why we must work from a gender perspective is not only to increase program efficacy, though this is certainly important; we have also come to understand that without gender equality, we cannot speak of there being development. In other words, gender equality should be a central objective to any model that aspires to bring about development.

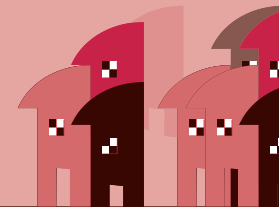
Despite there being a general consensus on the importance of including gender considerations, many organizations working on migration and development issues still do not recognize the relationship between gender and their field of work. This oversight has serious consequences. Ignoring gender relations not only leads to the design of policies and programs that are ineffective or respond poorly to men and women's lived reality; it also fails to work toward the third Millennium Development Goal, “Promote gender equality and empower women.”

This manual seeks to strengthen the capacity of those who are working on migration and development so that they come to a better understanding of how gender relates to their work and, above all, so that they can design policies and programs that are gender sensitive.



### Stop & Reflect

1. Do you know of any migration-development initiatives that do a good job of incorporating the gender perspective?



## 1.3 RE-DIRECTING THE FOCUS OF OUR WORK: FOUR AXES OF ANALYSIS

**M**igration is a complex process that cannot be understood without accepting that **migrants are social beings**, not only remittance senders. In other words, one cannot isolate remittances from the people who send and manage them. Seen in this light, the dominant model is extremely limited, since its only protagonist is the individual remitter operating in the realm of the market.

Remittances are not the only link between migration and development, but rather the most tangible economic result of a much broader phenomenon.

In order to broaden our field of vision and gain a better understanding of the complexity of the migration process and its impact on development, we propose the following **axes of analysis**:

1. Gender as a central analytical category.
2. The right to human development
3. The spatial dimension of development – from the transnational to the local
4. Migrants as protagonists of development

*Remittances are not the only link between migration and development, but rather the most tangible economic result of a much broader phenomenon.*

### 1.3.1 GENDER AS A CENTRAL ANALYTICAL CATEGORY

#### What exactly does 'gender' mean?

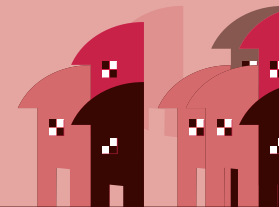
While sex refers to the biological characteristics that distinguish males from females, the term gender refers to the set of characteristics, values, beliefs, qualities and behaviors that societies assign to men and women. This is why gender is called a **social construction** – it is an idea built by the people, groups, and institutions that make up society. Gender differences are not neutral, since they are often constructed in opposition to one another (e.g. notions of men being strong and women weak), thereby creating **power relations** that result in inequalities between men and women. These relations can change over time and vary according to the sociocultural context. Gender also intersects with other identity and power dynamics such as social class, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, migratory status, etc. Gender relations, then, are constructed (and challenged) at **various levels**: micro (individual, household, community), meso (labor market, social networks), and macro (international division of labor).



Sex	Gender
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Biologically determined</li> <li>Refers to physical, chromosomal, and physiological characteristics</li> <li>In most cases, one is born male or female</li> <li>It cannot be changed (without external intervention)</li> <li>Same in all cultures; independent of social factors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is learned, not “natural”</li> <li>Socially assigned behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes</li> <li>What is considered appropriate for men and women can change over time and according to the sociocultural context</li> <li>Intersects with other social variables that also generate inequalities: social class, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, migratory status, disability, etc.</li> <li>Generates different identities, expectations, and opportunities</li> <li>Creates power relations and inequalities between genders</li> <li>Inequalities operate at multiple levels: micro (individual, family), meso (interpersonal), macro (institutional)</li> </ul>

**Table 1.**  
**Basic Gender Concepts and their Link with Migration**

Concept	Example from the migration process
<p><b>Gender roles:</b> Activities, tasks, and responsibilities assigned to men and women according to the social construction of gender in a given context. Roles do not necessarily correspond with the capacity, potential, or wishes of individual persons. These roles are performed in professional, domestic, and organizational spheres, in public space and private.</p>	<p>Jobs that are considered “masculine” are often assigned more importance and are therefore better paid than “feminine” jobs. A male migrant working in construction earns much more than a female migrant working as a domestic and/or caretaker.</p>
<p><b>Inequality:</b> Biological differences alone do not create inequality. Rather, inequality comes about when society assigns greater value to one gender over the other (normally the masculine over the feminine). This attitude creates a power imbalance between the genders and prevents both from enjoying the same opportunities for their personal development. Gender inequalities can also be aggravated by other inequalities based on social class, ethnicity, nationality, sexuality, etc.</p>	<p>Gender inequality in the country of origin can be a motivating factor behind women’s migration, including lack of employment opportunities for women, or lack of protection from gender-based violence.</p>
<p><b>Sexual division of labor:</b> The sex-gender system associates certain kinds of work with women and other kinds of work with men. In the traditional division of labor, men are assigned the primary responsibility for carrying out productive labor (paid work) while women are considered responsible for reproductive labor (unpaid or underpaid care work). Both men and women engage in community labor (volunteer</p>	<p>When a woman emigrates and leaves her children under the care of family members in her country of origin, the reproductive labor of caring for them often falls on the shoulders of her mother, sister, or oldest daughter rather than her husband.</p> <p>It is common for migrant associations in destination countries to be led by men, who</p>



Concept	Example from the migration process
work), although it is more common for men to be in leadership roles while women are in supportive roles.	determine which needs and projects are to be given priority, while women support their initiatives through administrative tasks, fundraising or event organization.
<b>New sexual division of labor:</b> Not only does the sexual division of labor organize households and national labor markets; it has also become internationalized. Thus, the global labor market has generated niches of labor insertion for women (i.e. factory assembly work in export processing zones, domestic work) which increasingly rely upon migrant women's labor.	Bilateral agreements negotiated between States regarding the recruitment of foreign labor generally uphold the sexual division of labor, recruiting men to work in certain sectors (e.g. construction) and women (sometimes of a certain ethnicity or place of origin) to work in entertainment, health, cleaning, or care of children, the elderly and/or persons with disabilities.
<b>Gender stereotype:</b> conventional, preconceived, exaggerated, or oversimplified idea, opinion, or image of a social group based on their sexual identity.	In some contexts, families prefer to send their “good daughter” abroad instead of their son, since they believe that daughters are more likely to remit a greater percentage of their income to support their birth family.
<b>Empowerment:</b> basic concept of women's rights and human development that refers to the process through which people individually and collectively become conscious of how power relations operate in their lives and gain the necessary confidence and strength to change inequalities and strengthen their economic, political, and social position.  Empowerment is described as a process in which individuals gain power, and in which power is understood not in terms of domination (“power over”), but rather as creative power (“power to”), shared power (“power with”), and personal power (“power from within”).	The migration experience can be empowering for women, as it affords them the opportunity to earn their own income, start a business and/or improve their standing within the household. At the same time, migration can also be disempowering, due to the double discrimination for being women and foreigners, isolated working conditions in sectors such as domestic work, stigma for having “abandoned” their children, etc.  Women who receive remittances from their migrant husbands are not necessarily empowered since many of them continue to control household decision-making, sometimes by proxy through other family members.
<b>Gender equity:</b> The formal declaration of gender equality is not enough to create a more just and equal society; no law declaring equal conditions can effectively create an equitable situation from one day to the next.  Instead, a focus on gender equity involves the elimination of economic, political, and educational obstacles as well as those related to access to services, such that all people (women and men) can enjoy the same opportunities and benefit from them equally. Efforts to promote equity often call for special measures (affirmative actions based on gender analysis) to increase opportunities which women have traditionally not enjoyed.	Lack of access to health care services for migrants in their host country may have more serious consequences for women than for men. Women tend to use the health system more for both biological and social reasons. To correct the social exclusion of migrants from health services, measures must be taken to promote equal conditions for all migrants to be able to access the health care system, while also taking special measures to increase migrant women's access to sexual and reproductive health services.



## Gender...

*SOME  
MISCONCEPTIONS  
TO WATCH OUT  
FOR*

...is not the same thing as sex! It is not simply another variable to take into account such as age or education level, but a hierarchical system that creates inequalities affecting all aspects of migration and development processes.

...does not refer only to women, but to power relations between women and men.

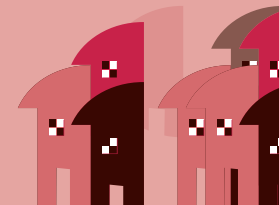
...is also a men's issue! Masculinities (ideas regarding "how a man should be") are socially constructed just like ideas regarding femininity, with their own advantages and disadvantages.

...intersects with other axes of social hierarchy – ethnic origin, migratory status, sexual orientation, etc. – to produce diverse groups of women and men. Just as there are migrants who are heterosexual fathers and mothers, there are also migrants of diverse sexual identities and civil statuses, whose migratory experiences differ according to these social markers.

...changes and produces different forms of identity throughout the migratory process.

## HOW DO WE DO GENDER ANALYSIS?

**Gender analysis** is the primary tool needed in order to adopt a **gender perspective**. It allows us to identify how gender influences people, families, institutions, and society at large. From there, we are able to observe what may be causing inequalities as well as potential obstacles to equitable development. Table 2 clarifies what adopting a gender perspective does and does not involve.



**Table 2.**  
**Adopting a Gender Perspective<sup>3</sup>**

DOES NOT INVOLVE...	DOES INVOLVE...
Focusing exclusively on women.	Focusing on inequalities and differences between and among men and women. If you do decide to work with women due to the discrimination they face, initiatives should be based on analysis of gender roles and relationships.
Treating women only as a 'vulnerable or minority group.'	Recognizing that both women and men are actors. Not identifying women as victims, but recognizing their agency and significant roles in their communities.
The same treatment of women and men in all situations regardless of context.	Design of interventions that take into account inequalities and differences between men and women. Structure resources so that programs recognize inequalities and attempt to rectify them.
Efforts to attain only or always equal participation (50/50 men and women) in projects or staff employed within organizations.	A move beyond counting the number of participants to look at the quality of their participation and the desired impacts of initiatives on each sex. Recognition that equal opportunities for women within organizations is only one aspect of gender equality.
Assumption that all women (or all men) will have the same interests.	Understanding the differences among different groups of women (and men) based on other criteria such as social class, ethnicity, religion, age, etc.
Assumption regarding who does what work and who has which responsibilities.	Understanding the specific situation and documenting actual conditions and priorities. Carrying out context-specific analysis and consultations.

**For more information on gender concepts and how to do gender analysis, consult the following manuals on gender and development:**

Comité québécois Femmes et Développement (CQFD) of Association québécoise des organismes de coopération internationaux (AQOCI), 2004, Training kit, Gender and Development, Québec  
[http://www.aqoci.qc.ca/IMG/pdf/guides\\_2004-03\\_trainingkitged\\_2\\_.pdf](http://www.aqoci.qc.ca/IMG/pdf/guides_2004-03_trainingkitged_2_.pdf)

CESEP, Gender Training Methods Compendium  
[http://www.cesep.be/INTERNATIONAL/compendium\\_final.pdf](http://www.cesep.be/INTERNATIONAL/compendium_final.pdf)

Royal Tropical Institute KIT Development Policy & Practice, Facilitators Guide for Gender Training  
<http://www.facilitatorsguide.dk/>

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, 2005, GENDER & TRAINING Mainstreaming gender equality and the planning, realization and evaluation of training programmes, Bern, Switzerland  
[http://www.sdc-gender-development.net/en/Home/Publications/SDC\\_Publications?applState=detail&itemID=4260](http://www.sdc-gender-development.net/en/Home/Publications/SDC_Publications?applState=detail&itemID=4260)

<sup>3</sup>Adapted from "Gender and Peacekeeping" course, DFID, 2006.

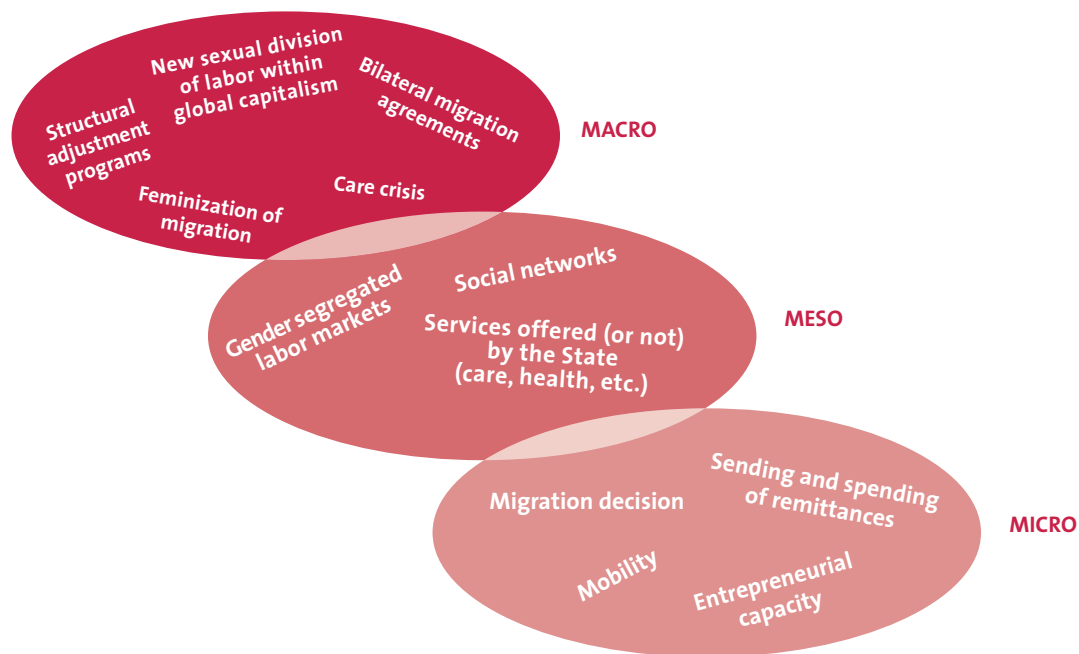


## GENDER ANALYSIS OF THE MIGRATION-DEVELOPMENT RELATIONSHIP

Many different variables come to play and to a large extent determine the links between migration and development, both in origin and destination, many of which are affected by gender relations. The most common unit of analysis used when conducting gender analysis is the household and intrafamily relationships within it; however, gender relations also operate within the community, labor markets, and international relations.

### Graphic 2

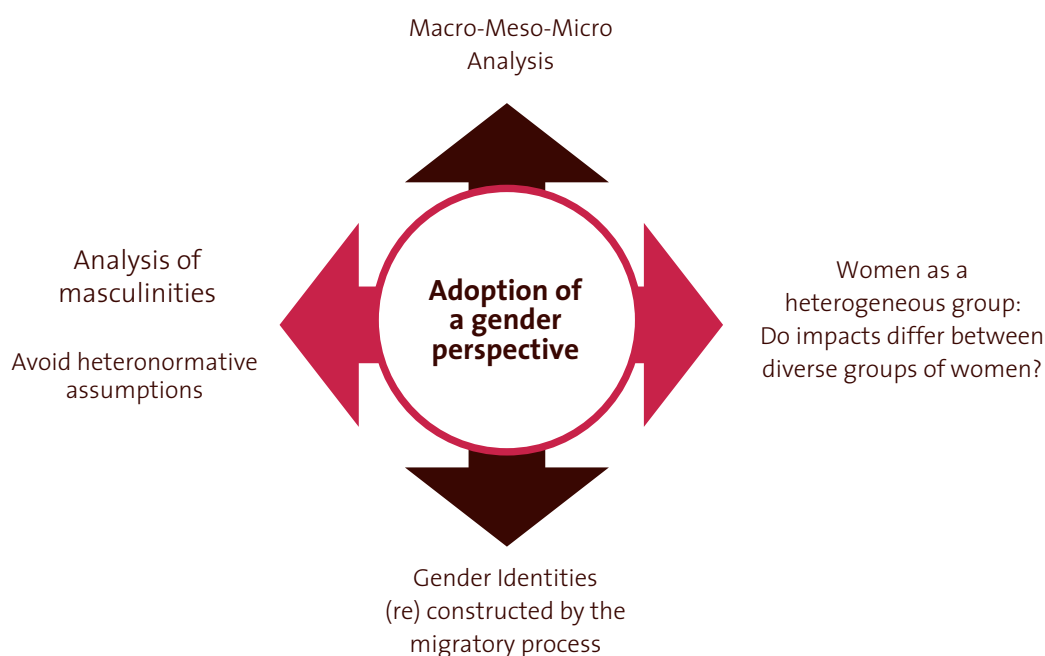
Phenomena related to Gender, Migration and Development at the Micro, Meso, and Macro Levels



**An alternative proposal:** Working from a gender perspective involves more than simply disaggregating data by sex, or considering sex as just another variable in the equation, similar to age or education level. If we understand that gender relations affect (and are affected by) each step in the migration cycle, then it is necessary to incorporate gender as a central analytical category. This analysis should be conducted not only at the household level, but also at the community, institutional, national, and transnational levels, taking into account the diversity of men and women and the ways in which gender identities are constructed and reconstructed throughout the migratory process. At the same time, it is important to consider the expectations, behaviors and identities of men – or what is collectively referred to as masculinities – as they relate to the migratory process.



**Graphic 3.**  
**Elements involved in the Adoption of a Gender Perspective**



Source: Pérez Orozco et al (UN-INSTRAW, now part of UN Women) 2008

## Stop & Reflect

1. Within the migrant population that you know or with which you work, what aspects of gender relations are evident? Have there been any changes in gender relations that can be attributed to migration?
2. What gender inequalities exist at the micro level (household, community) within the migrant population that you know or with which you work?
3. What differences and inequalities can be seen in the labor market for male and female migrants in the destination country (meso level)?
4. How are macro level factors (bilateral migration agreements, structural adjustment programs) affecting women and men?
5. Do you consider gender inequalities in the origin country a motivating factor behind women's migration? Why or why not? What kinds of inequalities are there?



### 1.3.2 THE RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT

A second axis of analysis of great importance to the emerging field of migration for development is the “right to development.” This right was recognized by governments around the world in 1986 as an inalienable human right. However, it is worth considering what kind of development we want, and by extension, what kind of development people have a right to. The model of development that has been most widely accepted at a global level, at least in theory, is human development.

**Human development**, according to its originator, renowned economist Amartya Sen, can be defined as follows:

*The expansion of real liberties enjoyed by individuals, which involves shifting attention from the **means** which allow for the expansion of liberties, such as economic growth, increases in personal income, technological advances or social modernization, to the **ends**, which are liberties (1999, our translation).*

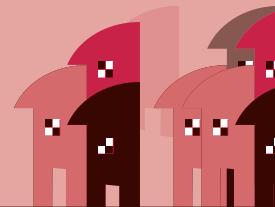
In this sense, development should be understood as the **comprehensive right to enjoy the full range of human rights**. But, how would such a model work in practice? According to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP):

*If human development is the expansion of opportunities so that people can choose what they would like to be or do in life, then the development process should consist of the elimination of deprivations, and in dismantling all restrictions on human liberties that limit people’s choices and that impede improvement in their standard of living (2006:3, our translation).*

The deprivations that must be eliminated include, among others: economic poverty, lack of public services (water, education, health), inefficiency of public institutions, and the lack of political and civil liberties, including women’s human rights.

*The denial of social and political rights – including women’s human rights – is an important driver of migration.*

While this model of development may be the most widely accepted, many difficulties have arisen in the application of its principles. In other words, there is a yawning gap between theory and practice. In practice, the dominant model being used to formulate programs and policies is not human development, but rather economic development. In fact, a progressive reductionism is evident in many “remittances for development” programs, which goes through various stages: Human development → Focus on well-being → Economic development → Economistic development.



## FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE: PROGRESSIVE REDUCTIONISM FROM HUMAN DEVELOPMENT TO ECONOMISTIC DEVELOPMENT

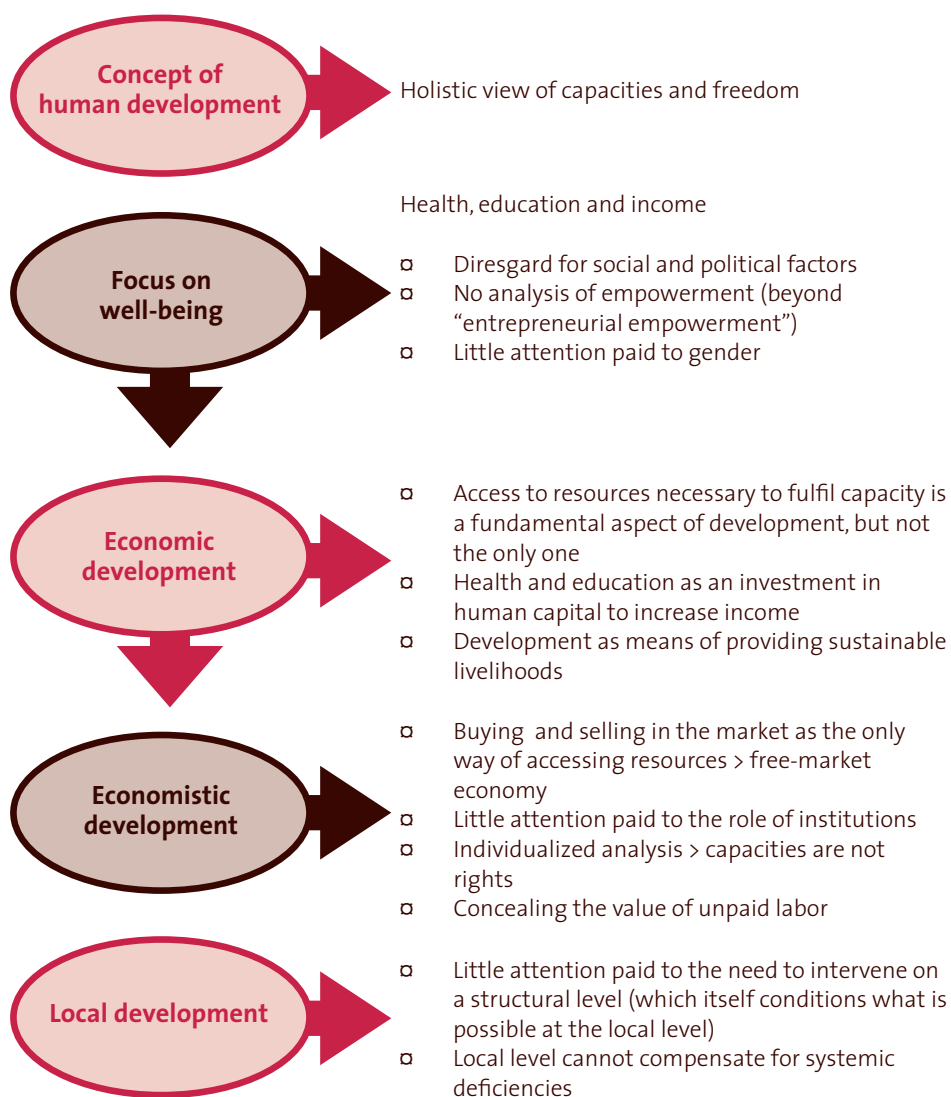
**From human development to a focus on well-being:** Instead of working toward the goal of expanding human capacities and liberties, interventions frequently work from a narrower focus on well-being centered on access to health, education, and above all, availability of income. This focus tends to prioritize modernization, and to conceive of women as the target of assistentialist programs (family gardens, maternal-child health services) that aim to guarantee family survival. The exclusive focus on well-being leaves aside other aspects such as the impact of migration on gender equality or how migration impacts the (dis)empowerment of people and communities of origin beyond entrepreneurial empowerment (that is, increasing their possibilities of being able to start a business).

**From well-being to economic development:** Instead of well-being, this model focuses on levels of income. Education and health are considered means for economic growth, which require an investment in human capital, more than as development goals in and of themselves. Levels of development are understood primarily as individualized access to income, and emphasis on sustainable livelihoods ultimately refers to sustained sources of income generation. A classic example of this model is microfinance, in which increased income in the hands of the borrower is thought to automatically translate into improved levels of development for the entire family.

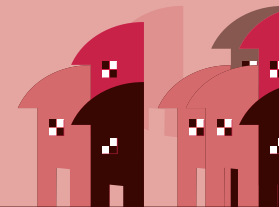
**From economic development to economistic development:** This approach considers individual access to goods and services in the marketplace to be the only way to provide the necessary resources for development. Development policies based upon this thinking seek to incorporate all people – including the poor and marginalized – into, for example, production for export. This model situates the development potential of migration in the hands of the entrepreneurial migrant who is expected to invest remittances in the creation of a business or financing public works in his or her country of origin. It emphasizes market mechanisms and tends to disregard the role of public institutions. Economistic development is wholly consistent with neoliberal globalization, which promotes policies such as financial deregulation and free trade.



**Graphic 4:**  
**Progressive Reductionism of the Vision of Development**



Source: Pérez Orozco et al (UN-INSTRAW, now part of UN Women) 2008



## ALIGNMENT OF THE DOMINANT MODEL OF “REMITTANCES FOR DEVELOPMENT” WITH THE ECONOMISTIC APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT

At the local level, it is most common to employ a well-being or economic development approach, ignoring the fact that the negation of social and political rights – including women’s human rights – is a key driver behind migration. At the macro level, economistic notions of development are often employed. The “remittances for development” model promotes this last approach, which is the most limited of all of these, through its emphasis on remittances as a tool to promote economic development, as if this were an end in itself. Specifically, the dominant model has the following characteristics:

1. Focus on the **individual**: it emphasizes the leadership of migrants as entrepreneurs operating within the marketplace as the primary link between migration and development.
2. Ignores **inequalities**, which are perpetuated and deepened between those with access to remittances and those without.
3. Emphasizes the use of **market mechanisms** and not the strengthening of public institutions as guarantors of the well-being of the population.
4. Perfectly coherent with **neoliberal policies**, especially regarding financial deregulation. In many places, such policies have led to the feminization of poverty, which is a key driver behind the feminization of migration.

*Human well-being exists when people are capable of doing more things, not only when they are capable of buying more goods or services.*

**An alternative proposal:** This critique of the dominant model does not intend to downplay the importance of economic development, but to expand the way it is understood. Economic development provides the resources necessary for human development and is therefore a key dimension of a broader process. In addition to the economic dimension, the process of human development should also include the dimensions of equity and social integration, harmony with the environment, and participatory democracy. This process is necessarily social and collective, as it seeks to guarantee capacities and liberties by turning them into rights that are both recognized and exercised by the citizenry.

Since all approaches to the migration-development nexus should depart from a holistic vision of development, this manual seeks to expand our vision to include the rights of migrants and their families in origin, transit, and destination.



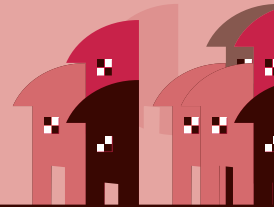
1. In your own words, how would you define the concept of human development?
2. Which vision of development is most prominent in your area of work (human development, well-being, economic development, or economic development)? Why? Can you identify aspects of more than one of these approaches in your area of work?

### 1.3.3 THE SPATIAL DIMENSION OF DEVELOPMENT: FROM TRANSNATIONAL TO LOCAL

A third axis which should inform any analysis of migration and development is what we call the spatial dimension of development. Where should we focus? On origin or destination countries? On cities or rural communities?

Despite recognizing that “what happens there affects us here” (and vice versa), most migration and development programs focus exclusively on **origin countries**. They also focus more on the **nation-state** than the system of global capitalism which drives the continuous demand for cheap, often imported labor. This imbalanced vision tends to ignore several important aspects of the migration-development nexus:

- ❑ **Destination countries are experiencing their own development challenges**, such as the crisis facing the welfare state, aging populations, and the social organization of care. Instead of questioning the sustainability of systems of production and social provision in so-called “developed” countries, many governments simply opt to import a migrant labor force, whether as an official government strategy or the *de facto* result of an absence of functional migration policies. While migrant labor can certainly help to alleviate some of the systemic deficiencies, such as the provision of care work, it cannot totally compensate for them or resolve the underlying issue. In sum, development is not only a challenge facing countries of the global South; analyzing the migration-development nexus from a transnational perspective helps us to detect development problems in the North as well.
- ❑ When examining push-pull factors affecting migration, the most relevant actor is no longer the nation-state, but rather the **international capitalist system**. Migration, or the free movement of people, plays an important role in the maintenance of the global system. In addition to labor, the current system of globalization requires the free movement of capital and goods in order to sustain the flexible accumulation of capital. Despite this demand, free trade agreements seek to facilitate free movement but not people, whose movement continues to be restricted by States. This creates an



unsustainable situation in which there is demand for migrant labor, but few or no legal mechanisms for workers to migrate legally to meet that demand.

Another trend among interventions promoting the “productive use of remittances” is that they tend to focus on **local development** as the preferred point of intervention. From a neoliberal perspective, local development is seen as a key element for localities to be able to participate and compete in global markets. The solution, according to the dominant model, is to promote economic development through remittances, incentivizing employment generation and especially the creation of micro and small businesses.

Here let us take as an example a pilot project of migration and development in Honduras. The donor agency, which had been promoting local economic development for years, began to notice the volume of remittances flowing into the department of Intibucá, sent by a significant segment of that locality’s population which had migrated to the United States. In order to harness the potential of this influx of resources, they decided to begin promoting migrants’ investment in business creation, as well as production of “nostalgic goods” for export such as locally-produced cheeses, for which there is high demand among the migrant population abroad. However, implementation challenges did abound. The majority of migrants were undocumented and considered low income; without legally being able to leave the U.S. in order to visit Honduras, and without a sufficient margin to be able to save, it would be quite difficult for any of the migrants to invest in their country of origin. Secondly, the free trade agreement currently in effect favors the U.S. more than Honduras, among other reasons because it includes strict requirements for the export of dairy products which are beyond the reach of local producers. Third, the global economic crisis led many migrant men who were working in construction in the U.S. to lose their jobs, reducing even further their ability to invest.

This example helps us to see the importance of considering factors at the national and international levels when promoting local development. If we narrow our vision to focus only on the local, we lose sight of at least two fundamental issues:

Many challenges facing local development derive from the **failure of structural adjustment** and commercial deregulation policies promoted by the very institutions that today are praising the potential of remittances to finance development.

**Intervention at the structural or macro level** is necessary in order to create the minimum conditions for human development at the local level.

**An alternative proposal:** Local development is an important area of intervention, but local processes do not exist in a vacuum. Practitioners should look for ways to take advantage of available opportunities in the community while also seeking to intervene at the political and



structural levels. For example, it is not sufficient to train local producers; we must also work to ensure that free trade agreements include favorable and equitable terms for all signatory countries, and take into account human mobility, as well as that of goods and capital. Instead of analyzing only local dynamics, the alternative proposal is to place those dynamics within the context of various levels and spaces, recognizing the connections between “what is happening there and what is happening here,” in order to identify the most strategic points of intervention. In this way, projects can work on basic needs identified at the local level (e.g. guaranteeing economic sustenance) while also forming alliances to work on strategic issues at a larger scale (e.g. promoting policies that are more favorable to human mobility).



1. From a gender perspective, what phenomena in destination countries are creating demand for immigration? What development challenges are destination countries facing?
2. In your work, if you only look at the origin country, what is left out?
3. In your work, if you only focus on the local level, what factors are not being taken into consideration?

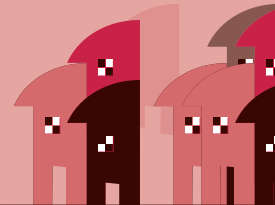
#### 1.3.4 MIGRANTS AS PROTAGONISTS OF DEVELOPMENT

A final axis to take into account is the way in which we conceive of migrants. Traditionally, the migrant has been characterized as an **individual agent**, implicitly masculine, who, responding to internal and external economic factors, makes the decision to “set out in search of greener pastures.” It is recognized that this “neoliberal subject” has agency – the capacity to decide over his/her own life – but this agency is only recognized in mercantile terms.

**Instrumentalization:**  
*“People migrate in order to sustain transnational families; the socio-economic systems of richer countries are highly dependent on their work and their contributions and, moreover, they are made responsible for the development of their communities of origin” (Pérez Orozco et al 2008: 28).*

This conception runs the risk of using or **instrumentalizing** migrants in interventions designed to foment development in origin countries. In other words, if we value migrants only in their role as remittance senders, they end up being used as “peons of global development” instead of becoming its protagonists and beneficiaries. Many interventions are not concerned with the living conditions

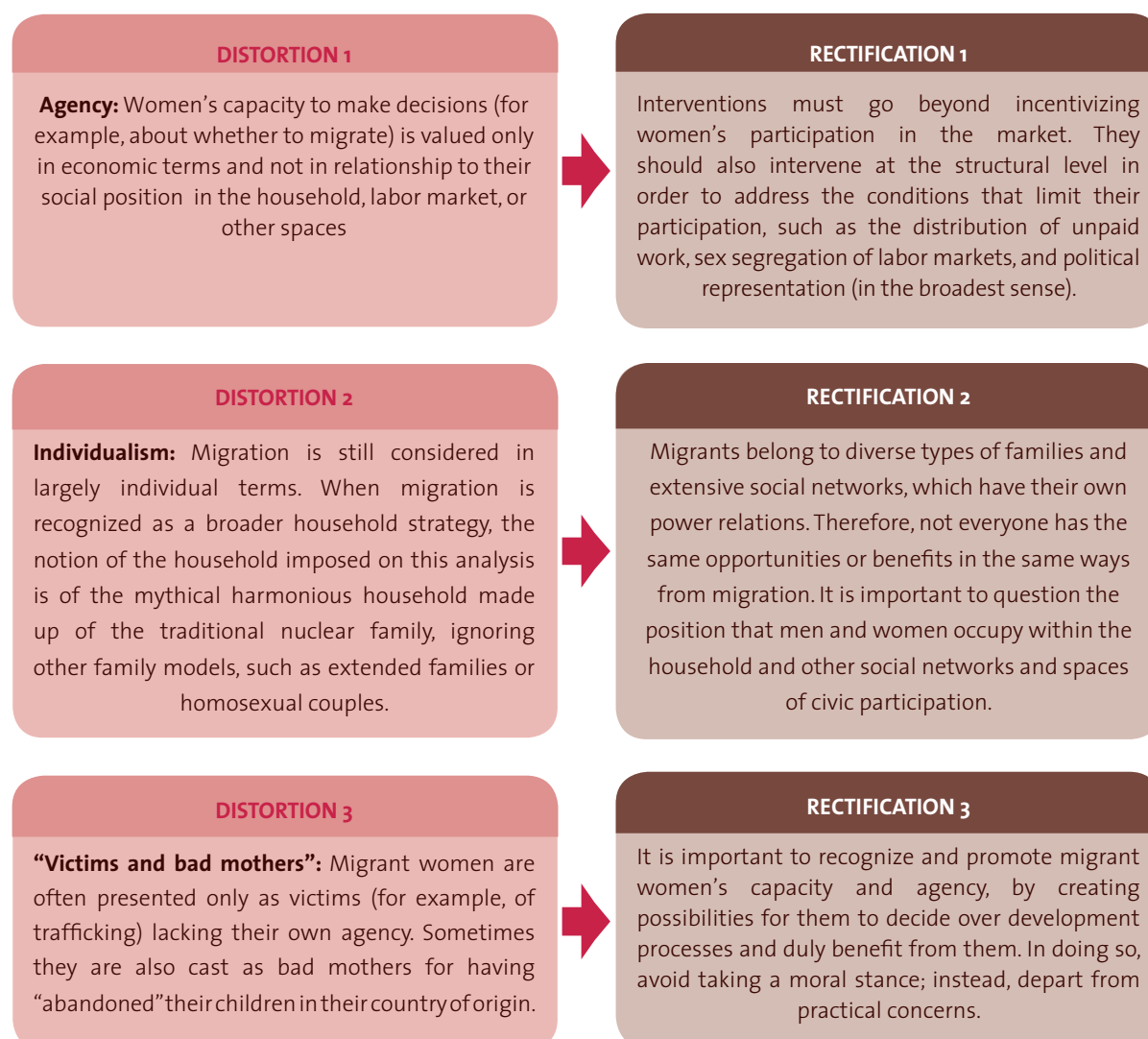




or well-being of migrants in destination countries, nor do they create effective mechanisms through which to consult or involve them in the undertaking in origin.

There may be an even greater risk of instrumentalization when **women are the protagonists of the migration project**. In large part, women have been invisible, or when they are recognized, they have been seen as dependents in the decision-making and plans of their migrant husbands. Today, women's agency in migration processes is beginning to be recognized, whether as migrants, remittance managers, or caretakers of the migrant's family. However, conceptions of migrant women continue to suffer from various stereotypes and distortions.

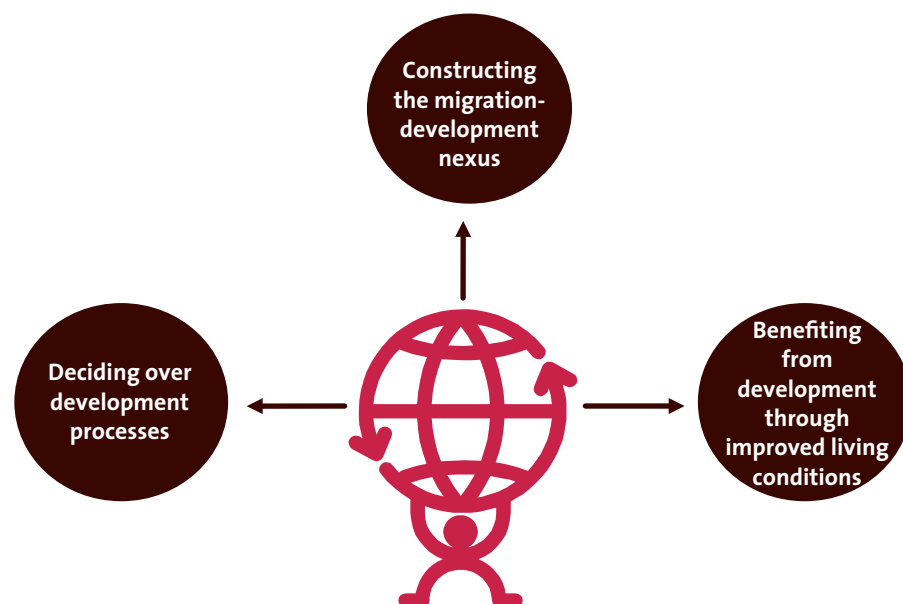
**Graphic 5.**  
**Erroneous Perceptions of Migrant Women and Rectifications**





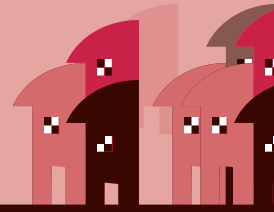
**An alternative proposal:** In order to convert the “victims” and “peons” into true protagonists of development, channels must be opened through which they can **decide** over development processes, including the content and objectives of the interventions themselves. Likewise, it is necessary to recognize them as **beneficiaries** of development, such that migrants’ living and working conditions are also issues of concern in the development process.

**Graphic 6:**  
**Model for Strengthening Migrants’ Agency as Protagonists of Development**



### Stop & Reflect

1. In your experience, what are some prejudiced perceptions or stereotypes about migrant women (“victims,” “bad mothers,” etc.)? What effects do these stereotypes have on the design of migration and development programs? (For example, available financing, identification of “problems” to address, etc.)
2. In practice, what are some obstacles to the full participation of the migration population in development projects?
3. Where migrant associations exist, what obstacles might there be to the full participation of migrant women in the definition of development priorities?
4. What measures can be taken to promote the active participation of migrants – women and men – in migration and development programs?



## 1.4 FEMINIZATION OF MIGRATION AND THE TRANSNATIONAL FAMILY

**W**omen have always migrated, sometimes independently and sometimes as family dependents or for family reunification. However, in recent years researchers have begun to recognize a tendency toward the feminization of migration. This means that today women make up one-half of the migrant population in the world following a slight numerical increase over recent decades, and that more and more women are migrating autonomously as primary providers for their transnational families.

**What does 'feminization' of migration mean?**

**Choose one or more of the following:**

- a. *A slight increase in the percentage of women migrating*
- b. *Today there are more migrant women than men in the world*
- c. *More and more women are migrating independently and/or as economic providers*
- d. *There is greater recognition of the relevance of women's migration and of gender within the migratory process*

Answer: a), c), d)



## WHAT IS CAUSING THE FEMINIZATION OF MIGRATION?

1

Migration occurs within the context of **globalization**, which has different effects on “developed” countries and “developing” countries (see graphic 7). In recent decades, many impoverished countries have suffered the effects of **neoliberal policies and structural adjustment programs**, such as increases in poverty, inequalities, marginalization, unemployment, and the informal economy. At the same time, these policies have led to major cuts in social spending and the privatization of public services such as health and education. The consequences in terms of gender inequalities have been well documented<sup>4</sup>: when men have trouble fulfilling their gender role as economic providers, there is greater pressure on women to find alternative strategies to support the family. At the same time, there is often an increase in female-headed households, leading to higher levels of women’s poverty or what has been called the “feminization of poverty.”

2

Richer countries have also been experiencing **structural changes** which in some ways have also led to the feminization of migration. Economic restructuring, including the de-territorialization of production, creation of export processing zones, and re-orientation of economies away from manufacturing and toward services, requires a flexible and cheap labor force. Within this new arrangement, gender is a key organizing principle of labor markets, leading to what has been called the new, **international sexual division of labor**. This consists of the reproduction and exploitation of inequalities – based on gender, social class, ethnic origin, etc. – by the global capitalist system. As a result, there has been an upsurge in the demand for migrant women’s labor, which is often channeled into poorly paid labor sectors with dismal working conditions, few legal protections, and even less social recognition.

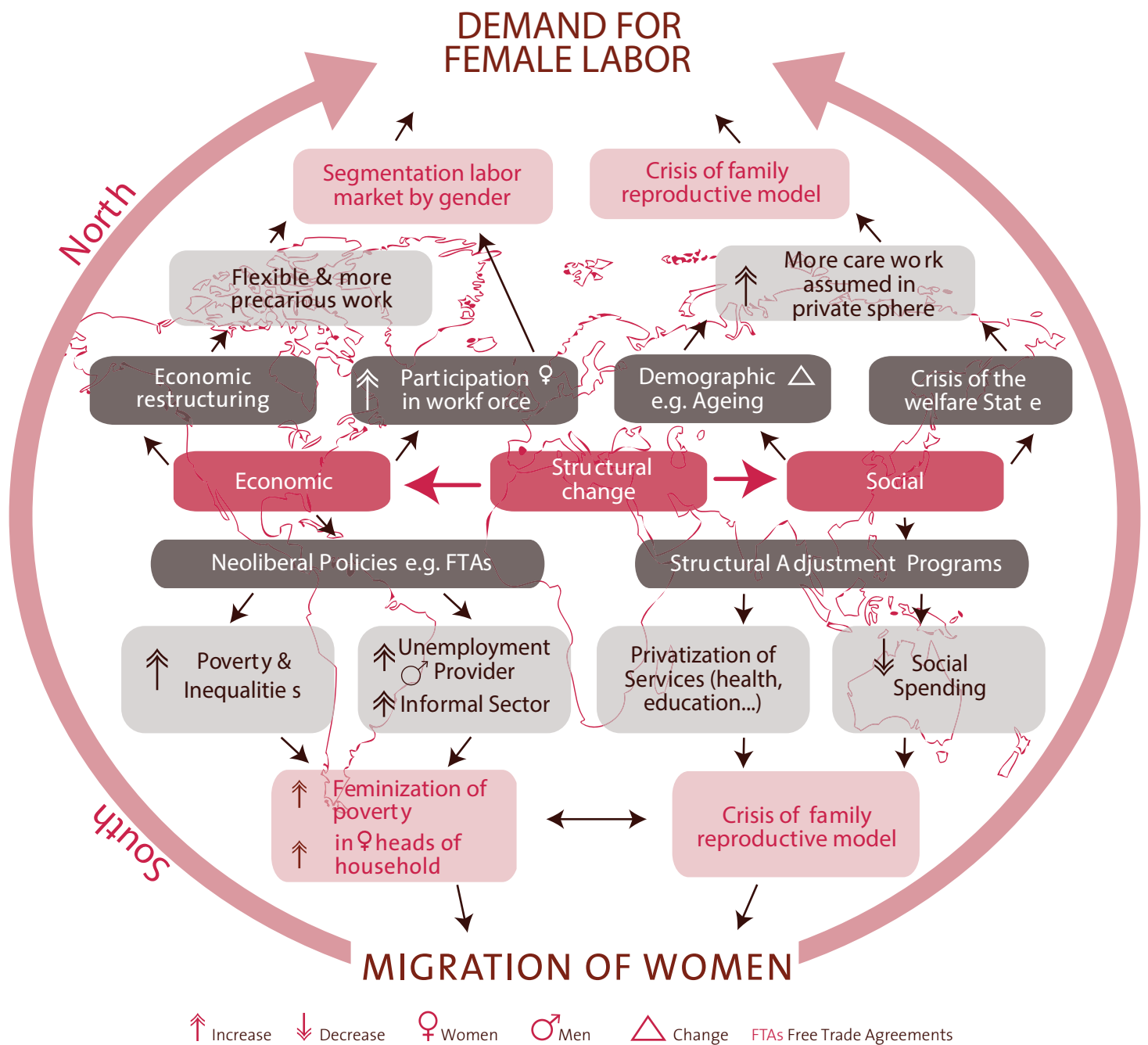
3

“Developed” countries are also experiencing their own crises, which have presented serious challenges to the **welfare state** and the **traditional family-based model of care**. The mass insertion of women into the paid labor force, together with the aging of the population, have brought about a crisis in the provision of care for children, the elderly, the sick and/or disabled. Most States have not adequately addressed this crisis, leaving households to continue assuming most of the responsibility. One of the most accessible options for middle-class and upper-class households has been to hire a domestic worker to provide care services, who often is a migrant herself who has left her own children under the care of another woman. This process in which reproductive labor is transferred from one woman to another forms what has come to be called a **global care chain**, a phenomenon explored in greater detail in guide 3 of this manual.

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, Baker, Isabella. 1999. “Dotar de género a la reforma de la política macroeconómica en la era de la reestructuración y el ajuste global”, in Cristina Carrasco, *Mujeres y Economía*. Barcelona, Icaria.

Graphic 7.

## Relationship between Globalization and the Feminization of Migration





4

The **regulatory frameworks** of destination countries tend to promote the migration of certain groups of women, whether directly or indirectly. There has been direct recruitment of nurses and cabaret dancers, for example. Indirect “recruitment” happens through non-regulation of certain sectors where there is growing demand, such as domestic work, which ends up becoming a default option for migrant women workers. Due to the crisis of the traditional model of family care, aging of the population and other factors, the demand in feminized labor sectors like care work continues to rise. However, since States often do not assume responsibility for the provision of care, they do not recognize the need to actively recruit migrant laborers for this sector. Hence, the demand for their labor keeps rising, while their possibilities of acquiring a regular migratory status and being able to enjoy all of their social and labor rights continue to fall.

5

In origin countries, **gender inequalities** and other factors such as discrimination based on sexual orientation may be important drivers of women’s migration. Sometimes, families choose to send a female family member abroad due to the idealized conception of women as more likely to sacrifice their own well-being for that of their family. Other women emigrate to escape domestic violence, unhappy marriages or pressure to marry, or to seek out opportunities for new relationships.

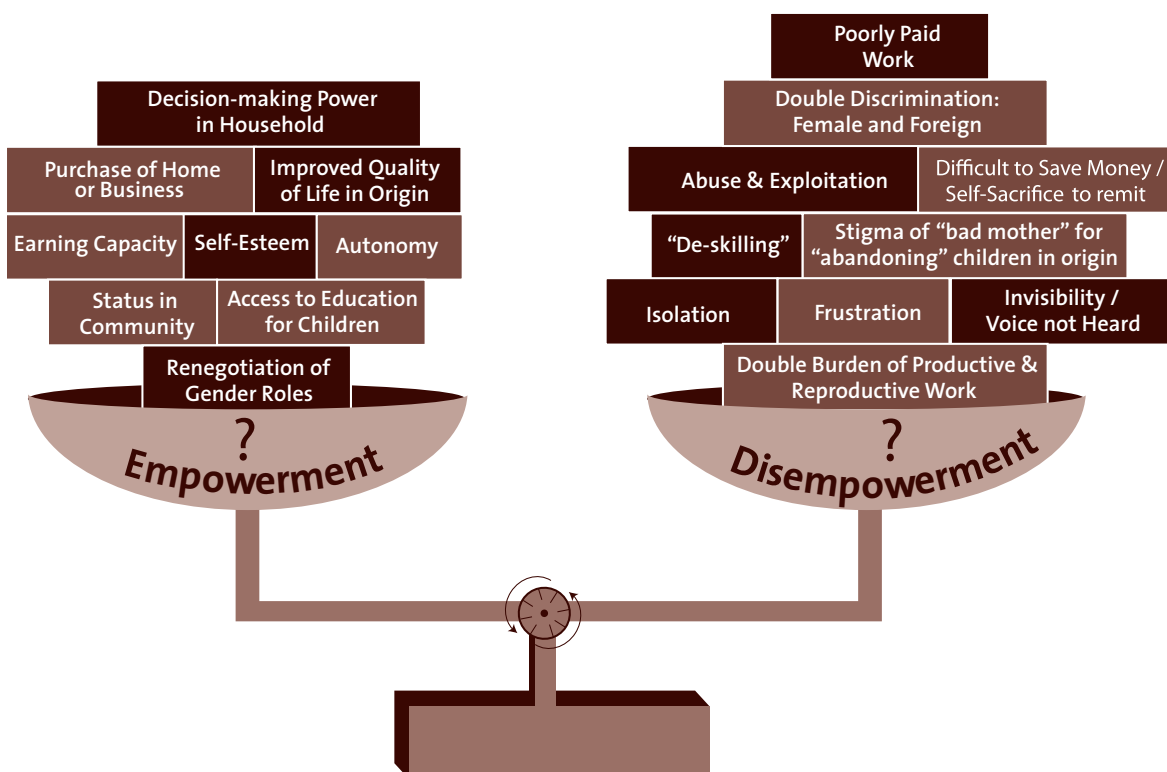
## MIXED IMPACT OF MIGRATION ON WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT

The effects of migration on women’s empowerment are mixed and sometimes contradictory. On the **positive side**, migration affords women the opportunity to become the primary economic providers for themselves and/or their families, increasing their self-esteem, autonomy, and standing within their families and communities. Through migration, some women are able to acquire property or start a business, which also strengthens their position within their families and communities. Others value the experience because it has allowed them to seek out new opportunities, and to learn new customs, values, and skills.

On the **negative side**, migration often occurs within contexts that are shot through with gender ideologies and inequalities. Migrant women often experience double discrimination for being women and foreigners, and as such, they are channeled into the worst-paying jobs. They often suffer isolation, exploitation, and sexual harassment. Years may go by before they are able to see the children and loved ones they have left behind in their country of origin, while at the same time they face stigma and a sense of guilt for having “abandoned” them.

Graphic 8:

### Empowerment in the Balance: Weighing the Impact of Women's Migration on Gender Equity

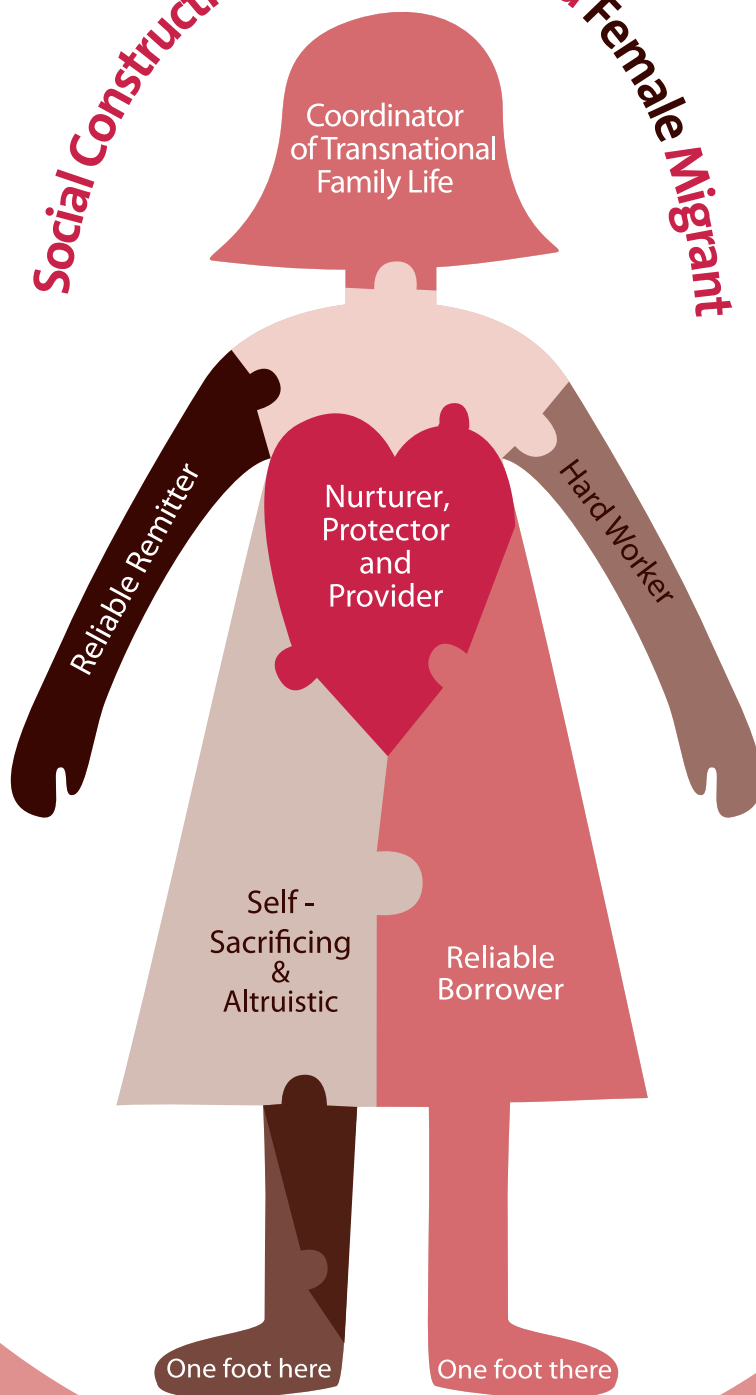


### THE TRANSNATIONAL FAMILY

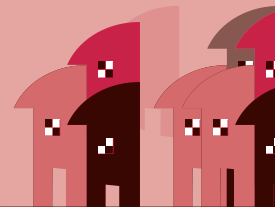
Instead of regrouping in the destination country, today many families choose to maintain family members in two (or more) countries, thus forming a **transnational family**. Usually this arrangement emerges out of a lack of other options, either because migration policies tend to promote temporary migration of individual migrants, or because a lack of legal migration options leaves others to migrate irregularly. In addition, the nature of the immigrant labor market, with employment options such as agriculture or domestic service, does not facilitate family cohabitation. At the same time, new **communications technologies** and transportation options facilitate more frequent contact and the ability to manage family matters despite the distance inherent to transnational family life.



# Social Construction of the Idealized Female Migrant







Some families have the option of regrouping in the destination country, but choose not to for different reasons: they make regular visits to their country of origin, they plan to migrate cyclically, they want to save more money, or they eventually plan to send a “replacement migrant” from the same household.

Although men also migrate as part of family migration projects, concerns about the transnational family tend to come up only in relation to migrant women. This is due to the **characterization of the migrant woman** as the person with primary responsibility for the children, among other gender stereotypes. The representation of migrant women as constantly sacrificing for the well-being of their families not only perpetuates gender stereotypes about women. It can also lead those designing development interventions to focus on women only in their reproductive role, which tends to increase their workload without improving their position or condition within their families or communities.

The transnational family model presents several difficulties which require attention: separation of families, provision of care, transnational parenting, and the tensions and conflicts that derive from power inequalities.



### Stop & Reflect

1. Have you noticed a tendency toward feminization of migration in the population with which you work? If so, what factors – in both origin and destination – might be causing women’s migration?
2. Mention some aspects of globalization that are leading to women’s migration in the migratory corridor with which you are most familiar.
3. In what ways is migration empowering the migrant women that you know? What factors might be limiting their empowerment?
4. Can you think of some advantages of the transnational family model? What might be some difficulties or disadvantages?



## 1.5 STRATEGIC TOPICS TO RE-ORIENT THINKING ON MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

This guide has sought to familiarize readers with the dominant model of “remittances for development” and some of its deficiencies in order to encourage analysis from other perspectives. The first, called a gender perspective, helps us to see and act upon the inequalities present at different levels, which structure the experiences and migration opportunities of both men and women. The second, which focuses on human development, reorients our notion of development toward an expansion of liberties and capacities, rather than simply encouraging participation in the marketplace. Third, paying attention to the spatial dimension of development allows us to analyze the connections between local, national, and international spaces, in order to intervene at both structural and local levels. Lastly, recognizing the agency of migrants allows us to think about ways of promoting their leadership within development processes not only as the “builders” of the migration-development nexus, but also as subjects with the right to decide over and benefit from development interventions themselves.

Given that any and all migration-development initiatives should depart from a holistic vision of development, this manual seeks to broaden the field of debate in order to include several strategic issues which aim to make our initiatives more equitable and therefore, more sustainable. The strategic issues include the following:

### Guide 2

**The Impact of Remittances on Local Economies in Origin Countries from a Gender Perspective (focus on origin countries).** This guide proposes an alternative vision of remittances based on the four axes of analysis mentioned above, so that interventions can strengthen not only the economic impact of remittances, but also the impact in terms of equity, expansion of rights, consolidation of democracy, and sustainability.

### Guide 3

**Global Care Chains.** This guide explores the topic of care work, conceived of as the invisible, but unsustainable base of the economic system. It proposes that the right to care (including the right to receive adequate care and to decide freely about providing care) be included in the development agendas of both origin and destination countries.

### Guide 4

**Migration Policies and Migrant Women’s Rights.** This guide explores issues related to the protection of migrant women’s rights in destination countries, with emphasis on two rights of particular interest to migrant women: labor rights for domestic workers and the right to sexual and reproductive health.



## ACTIVITIES

- 1.1**     **Connect the Concepts “Development – Gender Equity – Migration”**
- 1.2**     **Quiz on Women’s Migration**
- 1.3**     **Gender Concept Review**
- 1.4**     **Video: Feminization of Migration in Vicente Noble**
- 1.5**     **Case Study: Gender Analysis of a Life Story**
- 1.6**     **Empowerment in the Balance**



## 1.1 CONNECT THE CONCEPTS “DEVELOPMENT - GENDER EQUITY - MIGRATION”<sup>5</sup>



**OBJECTIVES:** Establish a conceptual link between gender equity, migration and development. Assess participants’ prior knowledge on these topics.



**MATERIALS:** Cards (can be cut-outs from posterboard) of three different colors, flip chart paper, markers (enough for each group), tape



**ESTIMATED TIME:** 25 minutes



### FACILITATION

1. Divide participants into three groups and hand out a set of cards of only one color to each group.
2. Ask the first group to reflect on the concept of “development” and to write the first words that come to mind on the cards (one idea per card). Prompt them by asking: “What do we mean by ‘development’? What minimum conditions must exist for there to be development? What elements must be present? What do you associate the concept of development with?” Clarify that they need not come up with a complete definition, only write one or two words that they associate with the concept on the cards.
3. Ask the second group to do the same with a set of cards of a different color, but with the concept of “gender equity.” Prompt them to define in their own words: “What does ‘gender equity’ mean? What do we need in order for there to be gender equity? What do you associate the concept of gender equity with?”
4. Ask the third group to do the same with their set of cards of a third color, except with the concept “migration.” Prompt them by asking: “How might we define migration? What are the primary reasons people migrate?” Again, clarify that it is not necessary to generate a comprehensive list or definition.
5. As the groups begin to finish, invite them to stick their cards on a sheet of flip chart paper under the title of the concept that they have defined. As participants are taping their cards, the facilitator should group together similar responses, underline important points and repeated words between the three separate concepts.

<sup>5</sup> Exercise adapted from Petrozziello, A. 2009. Emigrar y enviar...recibir e invertir ¿Con Equidad? Guía Práctica para incorporar la Perspectiva de Género en Proyectos de Desarrollo Económico en localidades altamente impactadas por la Migración y las Remesas en Honduras. Programa de Fomento a la Micro, Pequeña y Mediana Empresa (PROMYPE) de la GTZ/Honduras. Tegucigalpa, Honduras.



6. Close the activity with a plenary session, in which the facilitator reads some of the responses or common categories out loud. Ask participants to point out the connections they see between the concepts or repeated words.
7. There will be a strong relationship between all three concepts, including repeated words or ideas. Either write down these words on a separate sheet of flip chart paper, or draw arrows between them. Some of the conceptual links may be: that all three are processes, they aim to expand liberties, they all require resources, training/education, access, opportunities, information, holistic approach/integration, leadership/human capacity, etc.
8. Ask participants if they can think of any other similarity (for example, all three are slow processes that involve both women and men, they require the involvement of many actors, they occur at multiple levels – family, community, society, etc.).
9. At the end, ask if it is possible to promote migration for development without promoting gender equity. The idea is to arrive at the conclusion that yes, it is possible to work toward economic development without taking into account gender equity, but that this type of development is neither holistic nor sustainable. One measuring stick of the quality of development should be how well it works toward equity.



#### KEY LESSONS.....



Gender equity is a perspective or lens that helps us to see issues of inclusion and equality that may facilitate or block development.



Likewise, migration can also be a lens through which we can see more clearly where development and gender equity are lacking, insofar as migration is the result of the denial of rights. Additionally, the items on which the bulk of remittances are spent can point out which rights are being neglected in origin countries (education, health, decent work, etc.).



Promoting gender equity always leads us to a more comprehensive model of development, both in origin and destination. However, this is not true in the opposite direction: promoting development without considering gender will not necessarily lead to equity. Therefore, it is necessary to work from a gender perspective in order to ensure that our efforts contribute to development with equity.



Development	Gender Equity	Migration
Improvement in living conditions of the whole population	Women's empowerment	Movement of people/ change of residency in search of greater opportunities
Holistic process	Equal opportunities/ access to health, education, employment, political participation, free time	Push factors: poverty, unemployment, climate change, war, social inequality, gender inequality, lack of freedom of expression and respect for diversity, family or personal problems
Expansion of capacities and liberties	Redistribution of domestic and care work	
Expanding opportunities for education, health, access to resources	Equal participation in decision-making	
Inclusion, empowerment of the poor	Recognition of sexual diversity	Pull factors: job opportunities, family reunification, stability, security, access to rights and liberties, greater gender equity
Social change	Integration of women and men in development process	
Sustainability	Equal rights and responsibilities between men and women	
Human development "of, for, and with people"		
Better infrastructure and services		
Improved social		
Respect for human rights		
Strengthening institutions and the rule of law		



## 1.2 QUIZ ON WOMEN'S MIGRATION<sup>6</sup>



**OBJECTIVES:** Assess participants' ideas and knowledge on the topic of women's migration. If necessary, clarify any gender stereotypes participants may hold.



**MATERIALS/PREPARATION:** Photocopies of the quiz, pens, or slides with the quiz questions, and blank sheets of paper



**ESTIMATED TIME:** 25 minutes



### FACILITATION

1. This activity is recommended for the beginning of the workshop, in order to assess how familiar participants are with the topic at hand so that the facilitator can adjust subsequent activities accordingly.
2. Hand the quiz out to participants.
3. Ask them to respond to the questions by circling the best answer(s). Tell them that there may be more than one correct answer to each question.
4. In a brief plenary discussion, go over the answers by asking participants to raise their hands to indicate who responded A, B, etc. Ask for someone to give their response and justify why s/he chose that answer. Share the correct answer and ask if they agree or if they can think of another example.
5. **Variation 1:** Go over the responses in a plenary session as an introduction to the topic.
6. **Variation 2:** Collect the quizzes and, during a break, quickly create a slide or two showing the results of the quiz, i.e. X number or percentage responded YES or NO. Present the responses and correct answers following the break in order to get into the topic at hand again.
7. **Variation 3:** Instead of handing out the quiz, create slides with the quiz questions and answer them collectively. This variation is recommended if you are short on time or could like to do a faster version of the activity.

<sup>6</sup> Activity adapted from quiz by Elisabeth Robert of UN-INSTRAW (now part of UN Women).



## KEY LESSONS

- The feminization of migration does not only refer to the progressive numeric increase in the proportion of women within migratory flows, but also to the ways in which women are migrating and the roles they are performing (independent migrants or pioneers in the family migration project, primary economic providers).
- This feminization is happening within the framework of other globalization processes which are creating demand for migrant women's labor in destination countries, especially in the sector of domestic work and care work.
- Migration can bring about both positive and negative changes in gender roles and in the organization of the household. Women's migration does not necessarily cause or resolve problems, but instead reveals existing inequalities.





- 1. What does the term 'feminization of migration' refer to?**
  - A. Currently there are more women migrating than men.
  - B. More women are migrating autonomously, as economic providers.
  - C. In some migration corridors, the percentage of women migrating has increased.
  
- 2. What are the two most common jobs performed by migrant women in destination countries?**
  - A. Sex work
  - B. Domestic work
  - C. Employment in the hotel or tourism industry
  - D. Care of dependent persons (children, disabled, etc.)
  - E. Industrial or farm workers
  
- 3. Women's migration leads to family disintegration and an increase in adolescent delinquency in origin countries.**
  - A. False
  - B. True
  
- 4. Women's migration...**
  - A. Reinforces gender roles
  - B. Changes gender relations
  - C. Changes gender relations while also reinforcing gender roles
  
- 5. Women migrate due to...**
  - A. Economic necessity
  - B. Gender discrimination in the labor market
  - C. Gender-based violence
  - D. Search for other relationship options
  - E. Seeking out greater educational opportunities



## ANSWERS TO THE QUIZ ON WOMEN'S MIGRATION



ACTIVITY 1.2

1. B and C. The number of male and female migrants worldwide has increased, as has the proportion of women in migration flows (from 47% in 1960 to 49% today, with variations according to country and region<sup>7</sup>), but what has changed the most in the last 40 years is the fact that more and more women are migrating independently and/or as the leader of family migration projects, instead of family “dependents” traveling with their husbands or reuniting with their family abroad.
2. B and D. The neoliberal structural reforms imposed upon developing countries have resulted in an increase in poverty, pushing women as the ultimate guarantors of household well-being, to seek out alternative income sources and to participate in the paid labor force, whether locally or internationally. At the same time, developed countries are experiencing a crisis in the provision of care for their citizens as a consequence of a series of factors (changes in women's expectations, as they no longer want to be the only persons responsible for care work; aging of the population, which involves greater need and demand for care of elderly citizens; and massive incorporation of women into the paid labor force without re-distributing domestic labor between men and women or creating adequate public services to cover care needs). This care crisis is a key driver behind the demand for migrant women to work as domestic workers.
3. A. Migration involves a process of family reorganization that does not necessarily lead to the destruction or disintegration of the family. Many households figure out innovative ways to reorganize roles and responsibilities while sending family members to live in different geographic locations. We must question the tendency to blame migrant mothers for the impact (assumed or real) that their migration has upon their children and families. This blaming and stigmatizing comes from traditional gender ideologies which assign mothers the primary responsibility for childcare and family well-being. Where relationships end in separation or divorce, it is important to consider that many of these ended as a cause – not a consequence – of migration (women often migrate to escape unhappy relationships or violent partners).
4. C. The growing importance of women's role as economic providers through remittances tends to increase their negotiating and decision-making power within the household. However, this positive effect is not automatic and is often attenuated by other factors. In many cases, the social perceptions surrounding women's migration in origin areas are often ambivalent, oscillating between valuing their role as guarantors of family well-being which would not have been possible otherwise, and blaming them for “abandoning” their children and for the possible negative consequences that their absence may have on them. In some cases, migrant women have been hailed as “saviors” of the household, which feeds into the vision that migrant women themselves have regarding their migratory project, conceived of in terms of self-sacrifice and self-exploitation, which upholds the gender ideology according to which women are to put

<sup>7</sup> Source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2009). Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2008 Revision



their families' interests above their own. While women and men migrants tend to remit a similar quantity, that amount represents a greater proportion of women's salary, given the wage discrimination that they often suffer in destination countries. To be able to send remittances, migrant women often exert strict control over their spending (while many men reserve larger quantities of their earnings for personal expenses), and may choose to stay as live-in domestics in order to save a greater percentage of their salary. These strategies may help their families "get ahead," but often come at the detriment to their own personal projects such as advancing in their career, investing in their own training in order to enter other sectors beyond domestic service, or building relationships in order to improve integration in the host society. In sum, women's migration often comes at a high cost to their personal well-being.

5. A, B, C, D and E. Women are a diverse group of people with different motives for migrating. Economic need, which is cited as the most widespread motive for migration for both men and women, arises from many different factors. At a global level, there has been a tendency toward "the growing material impoverishment of women, worsening of their living conditions, and violation of their fundamental rights."<sup>8</sup> This trend has been called the "feminization of poverty." It refers to a cycle of poverty, in which poor women do not have access to the resources or services needed to change their condition. Among other factors, they face (B) gender discrimination in the labor market. In many countries, even when there has been a notable increase in women's education levels, this does not necessarily translate into greater job opportunities for women, and when they do exist, there is often a significant gap between women's earnings and men's. Women also migrate in order to (C) escape a violent relationship, or when the father of their children refuses to pay child support (often considered "economic violence"). Other women migrate in order to (D) expand the possibility of their finding a new partner after divorce or becoming widowed, or in order to openly live their sexual orientation. Finally, some migrate to (E) seek other educational opportunities that may not be available in their country of origin.

<sup>8</sup> Cobo, Rosa y Luisa Posada, "La Feminización de la Pobreza", El Periódico Feminista, 15 June 2006, Mujeres en Red. En: [http://www.mujeresenred.net/article.php3?id\\_article=620](http://www.mujeresenred.net/article.php3?id_article=620), visited 5 September 2011.



### 1.3 GENDER CONCEPT REVIEW



**OBJECTIVE:** Review gender concepts from section 1.3.1 and recognize how they relate to labor migration.



**MATERIALS/PREPARATION:** Photocopies of the work sheet and pens; or markers and cards.



**ESTIMATED TIME:** 25 minutes



#### FACILITATION

1. Hand out photocopies of the work sheet and ask participants to match the example in the right-hand column with the concept from the left-hand column that best describes it.
2. Explain that although this exercise is designed for each concept to have one example, there may be a relationship between an example and more than one concept. If they believe that the example can be matched with more than one term, they can do so and justify why they believe that is the case.
3. When they have finished completing the work sheet, facilitate a group discussion based on their answers. As you discuss each concept, ask the following questions:
  - a. Do you agree with the answer? Why or why not?
  - b. Explain why some examples illustrate more than one concept.
  - c. What other examples can you think of to illustrate this concept?
4. **Variation 1:** Write the concepts with marker on 9 posterboard cards and hand them to 9 pairs of participants, or distribute in groups. The facilitator or a volunteer reads the examples out loud and the person with the corresponding concept raises her/his card and explains why they believe that that example illustrates their concept. If the answer is incorrect, ask the others if they agree or not. Use the same facilitation questions (3a, b and c) to guide the discussion.
5. **Answers:** 1 C, 2 G, 3 A, 4 H, 5 E, 6 I, 7 B, 8 F, 9 D.



#### KEY LESSONS



Gender influences all aspects of the migration process, from the decision of who in the family should migrate to the employment options available in destination countries to migrant men and women.



Sometimes gender roles and inequalities remain the same following migration, and sometimes they change. In general, the results in terms of women's empowerment are mixed.



The concepts and examples in each column are mixed up / out of order. Match the example from the right-hand column with the concept from the left-hand column that best describes it. If you think that the example illustrates more than one concept, please be prepared to justify your reasoning.

### Concepts

1. Gender

2. Sex

3. Gender roles

4. Empowerment

5. Power relations

6. Inequality

7. Feminization of migration

8. Segmentation of the labor market

9. Sexual division of labor

### Examples

A. The woman should tend to the household while the man goes out to work.

B. More and more women are migrating autonomously and as economic providers.

C. Men are considered stronger while women are considered to be more docile.

D. In factories, the tasks of heavy lifting and transport are reserved for male workers, while assembly work is reserved for female workers.

E. Because he is a man, he is considered better suited for the position of president of the migrant association.

F. The sectors of highest labor insertion for migrant women are those related to domestic work, sex work, and/or care work while migrant men tend to work in construction or agriculture.

G. People are born with different biological characteristics that make them male and female.

H. In the best case scenario, migration helps women to improve their social and economic standing.

I. A family decides to send their son to school instead of their daughter, since they believe the son will be the future provider for the family.



## 1.4 VIDEO: FEMINIZATION OF MIGRATION IN VICENTE NOBLE



**OBJECTIVES:** Understand the phenomenon of feminization of migration. Recognize the relationship between gender and the migration process.



**MATERIALS/PREPARATION:** Photocopies of the reflection questions, computer, projector, speakers, video “Remittances in Vicente Noble”

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3eIQfTwtsqw>



**ESTIMATED TIME:** 45 minutes






### FACILITATION

1. Double check that you are able to show the video without any problems. Watch it at least twice before the training session in order to familiarize yourself with the topics that it covers (you can also consult the documentary script in the following pages).
2. Go over the reflection questions.
3. While preparing the video, hand out the work sheet with reflection questions so that participants can look them over.
4. Project the video (duration: 9 minutes).
5. Have participants work in pairs in order to answer the questions, applying what they have learned about feminization of migration and gender in the conceptual section of this guide.
6. Ask different pairs to share their answers in a plenary discussion.
7. **Variation 1:** On flip chart paper, write the levels MICRO, MESO and MACRO, and take note of the gender factors that participants mention under the appropriate level (see graphic #2 earlier in this guide for reference).
8. **Variation 2:** Pause the video periodically as you are watching it, to allow participants to reflect collectively on what they are seeing.





## KEY LESSONS .....

-  The gender perspective helps us to identify gender inequalities that operate on the micro, meso, and macro levels throughout the migratory trajectory, which can present significant obstacles to development.
-  It is indispensable for any and every development intervention to take into account the different needs of women and men from the start.
-  Since gender inequalities operate at different levels, interventions should consider accompanying work at the micro (household/community) level with broader actions at the meso and macro levels, in order to increase impact.



### DOCUMENTARY SCRIPT: “REMITTANCES IN VICENTE NOBLE”

NARRATOR: Years ago, when she was still very young, Doña Cachita arrived with her husband to this little town, Vicente Noble. They were drawn there by a promise of jobs and better conditions for raising their family. Back then, the town was something else entirely.

DOÑA CACHITA: ...this street here was the only one that was paved... all the rest were dirt roads... over there were pens that held donkeys... People used to get around a lot by donkey. When people went to the slaughterhouse, I'd even see women barefoot... people walked around barefoot.

NARRATOR: But since the early 1980s, Vicente Noble, this small town in the southwest of the Dominican Republic, has been undergoing profound change brought about by massive emigration of the town's women to Spain and other countries and the savings they send in the form of remittances

OLGA RAMÍREZ: ...the town has changed a lot, too...before there were a lot of houses made from mud or slabs of coconut trunks. Lately what you see are mansions.

NARRATOR: From almost every household on any one of these streets a woman has emigrated abroad.

DOÑA CACHITA: So many left, and their mothers and fathers rented out their houses, leased out whatever they had...

OLGA RAMÍREZ: She left first. She rented out the house and was away a year or two. When she got her papers straightened out, she brought him with her.

NARRATOR: The increase in women emigrating from the least developed countries is related to changes in the labor market both nationally and internationally.

MAR GARCÍA, UN-INSTRAW: This is due to the social changes that have occurred in Europe throughout the last decades, that is, on the one hand European women have been incorporated into the workforce. You could say they have stopped doing all the work in the home that they used to do for free. And this need still exists: houses need to be cleaned, children need to be taken care of.

NARRATOR: In fact, 85% of work permits issued by Spain to Dominican immigrants go to women, and 95% of these are concentrated in domestic service.

LIBBYS AGRAMONTE: Every since I left, I've worked in family homes.

NARRATOR: The agricultural crisis of the last decades has increased male unemployment, also reducing the men's role as economic provider in the household. As a result, women saw themselves in the position of having to look for income to maintain their households while still doing all the housework.

DOÑA CACHITA: ...here the women in town would sell beans in punchbowls, on their heads. They'd sell corn...candy sticks...coconut sweets.





NARRATOR: The opportunities offered women in the job market don't allow them to meet the needs of their households. To these precarious salaries, another burden is added: a high percentage of these women function as heads of household.

CELENI PAYANO: It's very hard; I've got four kids, and I've raised all four of them by myself...

NARRATOR: Hard pressed by their situation, more and more women from the poorest regions have come to see emigration as a strategy to ensure their families' survival and progress.

LEIDY ROMERO: She went for our future.

CELENI PAYANO: I went to Spain, I lasted three years, and I don't know anything about the place. I didn't ever go out there so I could save. The whole month's pay, I'd send it all. My mom kept it in the bank for me.

NARRATOR: In the middle of rural Vicente Noble, cement and metal rods soon became the most obvious sign of progress. The reward for these countless sacrifices must be put on display. And this demonstration serves as a stimulus for many other women – and men too – to go on the same adventure.

OLGA RAMÍREZ: The wife goes, then after that the kids go, too. And those kids have had a real change, because here they lived like...well, just imagine.

SATURNINO CESPEDES: She would send me 10,000 pesos. I kept saving it up, and when I had a certain amount, that's when we started this house...

NARRATOR: Today, almost all of the economic activity in Vicente Noble revolves around the considerable flow of remittances sent by those working abroad, the grand majority of them women.

VIANETA MERCEDES: ...emigration is what has raised up this town...there are months that millions of pesos, 20 million get sent...

NARRATOR: For these women travelers, family responsibility comes first. Helping to meet the basic needs of their loved ones remains the most important, and sometimes only, goal and possibility.

RAMONA MARTILLA: My sister has three children, and I'm the one who takes care of them. We use the money to buy food for them and for my mother, and besides that we've bought a little land.

MIGRANT WOMAN: ...for my kids, the first thing I did was buy them a computer because they started studying...and then I'd treat the kids to things, like a moped...and then after that I started to build my house.

NARRATOR: But despite the fact that their families' welfare is the main reason for the migrant women's efforts and sacrifices, it is precisely within the family that the negative side effects of this process are felt first.



OLGA RAMÍREZ: ...a lot of families have fallen apart, because the children are left when they're small, the grandmothers raise them, the mothers send them some amount of money...as they get a bit bigger, they want to be their own boss and ride around God knows where on their mopeds...

DOMINGA RAMÍREZ: ...there are many broken homes here, a lot of young people who've gone bad because their mother and father weren't there.

NARRATOR: To date, it all appears as though migration and remittance money have contributed little to achieving substantial change in women's condition.

MAR GARCÍA, UN-INSTRAW: These women have migrated and have become economic providers that sustain their households economically. In many cases that has allowed them to acquire a certain status. That is, once they become the main breadwinner, in many cases they also gain a wider margin to negotiate or to make decisions or attain other goals. Now then, whether there will be other changes, beyond the ones we are seeing right now, which are a bit limited, that's what's not so clearly happening yet.

LEONARDO SANTANA: I didn't want him to leave because he was studying at the university, he was close to finishing...

NARRATOR: Still, the dream of those who have left is to be able to return one day and live with dignity in their home community.

CELENI PAYANO: ...to come back and stay for good. Yes, because here I have my house, my kids, my business...and because I've always had this dream...you know, to work there, so I could live here.

MIGRANT WOMAN: I'd like to save some money up to come and set up a business, or something. My world is here.

NARRATOR: Remittances represent a significant part of the region's gross domestic product, and it is fair to expect that they should contribute to improving the quality of life of the women who generate them, as well as of the community as a whole.

CARMEN MORENO, UN-INSTRAW: I believe that remittances can play a very important role in the development of countries and in meeting the Millennium [Development] Goals, by that I mean reducing poverty, IF the gender perspective is taken into account. Men and women have different needs and they should be considered differently when policies are developed and when programs are created to support these policies. And in the case of remittances this is not happening. These women have additional responsibilities. They are the ones who are supporting their households and their roles don't change at all. They are still discriminated against both inside and outside the home.

NARRATOR: The fight for a better life brought Dona Cachita once before to Vicente Noble, and the same fight spurred her daughters, granddaughters and grandsons to travel to Spain. Today, international emigration generates billions of dollars in remittances for developing countries, and more than 50% of this money is produced by women. Therefore, it is only from a gender perspective that development policies can be viable and create true progress for women, their families, and society as a whole.



1. What are some of the reasons why women are migrating from Vicente Noble? What do these reasons have to do with gender?
2. What are some of the changes that are happening in Spain that are attracting migrant women? What do these changes have to do with gender?
3. Among the families that were interviewed, what positive changes have there been for women? For their children? What are the negative effects of migration that they mention?
4. What does Carmen Moreno suggest in order for remittances to have a greater impact on development? What type of intervention could contribute to gender equity in Vicente Noble?



## 1.5 CASE STUDY: GENDER ANALYSIS OF A LIFE STORY



**OBJECTIVES:** Recognize the relationship between gender and the migration process. Learn to apply gender analysis.



**MATERIALS/PREPARATION:** : Photocopies of the life stories and reflection questions, pens, flip chart paper and markers for each group.



**ESTIMATED TIME:** 45 minutes



### FACILITATION

1. Familiarize yourself with the life stories and reflection questions.
2. Divide the participants into pairs or small groups, and give a case study to each group (with copies for each participant), flip chart paper and markers.
3. Ask them to read the story, select a note taker, and respond to the questions together.
4. In plenary discussion, go over each question. Ask a group to share its response, and then ask other groups to add to what has been said if they have any other ideas to share.
5. **Variation 1:** If there is not enough time to hold a plenary discussion, hand flip chart paper and markers to each group for them to write their answers there. Have them tape their sheets to the wall for everyone to see. That way, participants can read the responses of other groups during a break and/or the facilitator can quickly put together a slide with the most important points in order to recapitulate them before beginning another session.



### KEY LESSONS



Employing a gender perspective helps to understand what is happening in the migration process, in order to intervene in a way that strengthens development.



The three levels on which gender operates are interrelated. Therefore, it is strategic to think of interventions on the meso and macro levels that can create the conditions for a micro-level intervention to have better results.

# Senegal

## **Kadia: “Migrants should wake up and remember their origins”**

Kadia joined her husband in 1970 in Belfort, northeastern France, an area deemed dangerous; she has yet to adapt to this new life. Previously, she spent 5 years alone with her children in Senegal, unable to migrate, since the migration policy between France and Senegal only allowed for the recruitment of male laborers to work in the automotive industry.

A time came when she asked her husband to stay with their three children in France so that she could return to Senegal with her youngest child, then two years old. She told him: “Stay with your children. They will not come with me because every time I go to Dakar you never send me enough money, and it is too little to live off of. So, I will not bring the children.” When her children went to Senegal for the holidays, she asked them to bring some administrative papers with them that enabled her to return to France after resting in her parents’ home.

A social worker praised Kadia’s courage and encouraged her to get involved in the defense of her community’s rights. She found work in the city of Tourcoing, in the north of France, but later left that job in order to start an association to help all migrants, regardless of their nationality. Three years ago, Kadia became ill and one of her sons asked her to move to Paris so that he could take care of her. She is proud that all of her children are employed and none has run into problems with the law.

Kadia travels to Senegal every year, but has never invested there. She has never considered permanently moving back to Senegal, but the current conditions in France, including the high cost of living and strict immigration policy, are pushing her in that direction. She belongs to a group of migrant women and some of their children who plan to invest in housing in Dakar that they will rent out in order to cover the monthly loan payments. “We have to let go of the custom of staying in our father or mother’s house. You have to have your own house where you can stay when you return. This is what we all want – to have our own house with our children.”

“In 1971-2 up until 1980, there were no women working here. Women began to work after 1992-1995. A woman then didn’t even have 100 francs to send to her mother. Men had everything. Now, we women born in Dakar have rejected this situation. We have shown them that we are educated, we have our degrees...Now, they send the social welfare payments for our children directly to us. We have to feed them, dress them, and furnish their rooms. Now women have their own bank accounts, and polygamy has been prohibited.”

Kadia’s husband never wanted her to work, but she has always braided people’s hair in her home. For women over 50 years of age, it is impossible to find work. Their children have grown up and they no longer receive the child subsidies once provided by the State, so they rely primarily on the solidarity of their children. Their husbands, who are often much older, receive pensions from the formal employment they have done over the years. When they retire, many return to their home village, where they often seek out a young wife. “They spend 6 months in Senegal and the wife in France has to figure out how to find enough money to eat. You are the one who pays the bills, and if you do not pay the rent, they will throw you out.”

This life story was published in March 2010 and pertains to the project “Gender and Remittances: Constructing Gender-Sensitive Development,” implemented by UN-INSTRAW and UNDP, with funding from Japan WID.

\*Source: Sarr, Fatou. 2010. Migration, Remittances and Gender-Responsive Local Development: The Case of Senegal. Santo Domingo.



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**In 2004, the migrant population was estimated to represent 3% of the Senegalese population, among which only 16% are women. Remittances reached 3% of national GDP (500 billion CFA francs, or US\$ 1.1 billion, according to the IMF). In a country that is overwhelmingly rural (59% of the population), and weakened by poverty and drought, the organizing and solidarity efforts of all emigrants and local people, together with the individual and collective remittances, are key factors in the development of the fragile communities of origin.\***

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# Dominican Republic



**Berky:** “We women are more intelligent, if you know what I mean!”

Berky lives with 10 family members in her house in the community of Las Placetas, near the city of Santiago in the Dominican Republic. Like other Dominicans, her family is quite extended. Berky has raised her 7 children, as well as one granddaughter (the child of her daughter who lives in the United States), and one daughter of a friend. There used to be a public service called a ‘homework room’ where the children could be cared for after school, but it was canceled following the latest round of budget cuts that the government has implemented to comply with the requirements of structural adjustment. Now Berky no longer has any programmatic support to help with the care of her grandchildren. “What are you gonna do?” Berky says.

In addition to domestic work such as washing and ironing, gathering coffee and cooking for pay, Berky also had two small businesses going for a few years: buying clothing in the city to re-sell in the community and making popcorn to sell to school children. Now, many people in Las Placetas have relatives abroad who send clothing, so Berky decided to close the business in order to dedicate her time to caring for children at home.

Her daughter, Margarita, left for the United States ten years ago. She works in a factory, and now she runs a beauty salon as well. Margarita has two daughters, one in the U.S. and another who lives with her mother in Las Placetas.

“I took care of Margarita’s first child. She sent her back with a cousin of hers. I took care of her and then, when the girl was two years old, Margarita came and took her with her again because she had managed to organize her life a little better. She didn’t want to give her to just anyone to watch, because she was always very affectionate with her children. So she thought, ‘I’ll bring her to Mami, so she can take care of her and I can work.’”

Berky agreed with this arrangement: “If she is going to pay \$100 a week for someone to watch her baby, that is how much she could send me in one month. It’s better this way!”

Margarita’s other daughter, who is now 14 years old, lives in Las Placetas with Berky. Her mother is making arrangements for her to travel to the U.S.

Margarita always sends remittances, usually through an agency to one of Berky’s other daughters who lives in Santiago. Berky doesn’t know exactly how much she sends, but she thinks it is about \$75 per month, and perhaps double at Christmas time. Berky’s daughter in Santiago receives the money, and shops for provisions to send to Berky. Her other daughters also contribute food, medicine, and school supplies for the children.

“When I had her other daughter here, she used to send more because she had fewer expenses there. For a time, both of her daughters were here. You know how much babies need – medicine, milk, pampers. Now, when her daughter is here, she sends money to buy her things.”

Berky dreams of setting up a small business again, perhaps a little store or some land to work. “We don’t have land because there isn’t any money to buy it. With land we would be able to plant vegetables like cilantro, peppers, eggplant, yucca, and then we could sell some. It’s a good business, but if you don’t have land, you can’t do anything!”

Berky would like there to be a program to provide credit for women to work in small businesses, and if remittances could serve as a guarantee to back up the loan, even better! “Sometimes we women are better about taking risks. But it is difficult for us, with children and a husband. If your husband works, you need to prepare his food at lunch time. Children must have their food as well, and sometimes some of them go to school in the morning and others in the afternoon, so lunch has to be ready for those who are coming and those who are going. It’s much more difficult for women than men here in the countryside. Men go about their business and that’s it. They return at lunch time, eat, and then leave.”

Berky says that women are the ones who organize everything, including administering the household budget, both in the U.S. and in the Dominican Republic. “Let’s say you have 100 pesos, and you need two or three things. You have to figure out how to divide up the money to get a little bit of this, and a little bit of that, and be able to cook what you would like with 100 pesos. But with men, they just get upset and don’t know what to do. We are more intelligent, if you know what I mean!”

This life story was published in March 2010 and pertains to the project “Gender and Remittances: Constructing Gender-Sensitive Development,” implemented by UN-INSTRAW and UNDP, with funding from Japan WID.

\*Source: Vargas, Tahira. 2010. Migración, remesas y desarrollo local sensible al género: El caso de República Dominicana. Santo Domingo.

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**An estimated 1.5 million Dominicans are living abroad. In 2008, they sent home around US\$3 billion in remittances. The town of Las Placetas receives the second largest amount of remittances per capita in the country. Migrants travel mainly to the United States. The region has many structural obstacles to development, such as a lack of public services, making international migration one of the few options to achieve upward social mobility.\***

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# Albania

**Dorina:** “It’s possible for women to make progress and do more with their own lives, but it will take time.”

Dorina is 38 years old. She has three daughters and a son, ranging from 7 to 19 years of age. They live together in the family’s home in Pojan in southeast Albania, which is the largest village in a commune of approximately 4,000 inhabitants, where it is estimated that one-third of families have at least one member, usually a man, who has emigrated to Greece. The village is located near the main road to Thessaloniki, where Dorina’s husband Urim went for the first time when the border opened in 1992 following the fall of the Communist regime. Urim has returned on multiple visits, especially for the birth of their children. Dorina explains her husband’s migration: “We did not receive any help. They did not give us any more land for our children...only one plot for two people and a single cow. Urim had no other option but to leave.”

Urim began sending remittances, instructing Dorina to invest them in cattle and to tend to them on the 8,000 m<sup>2</sup> plot of land they obtained through a government land distribution. But Dorina had to abandon this activity for health reasons. Moreover, the revenue from agriculture was not sufficient, so they decided to rent out the land in 2001. Dorina identifies several grave obstacles for agricultural development: lack of a market, lack of availability of attractive loan offerings or State assistance, and the macho mentality. “I am a woman and I have to tend to my children. I don’t have time to do everything on the land.”


Now, the only income sustaining the household comes from emigration. In Greece, Urim works at any job he can find: construction, agriculture, or manual labor. He has a residence permit for two years, but cannot apply for family reunification because he does not earn the minimum income required. Urim sends money, but the amount varies according to what he has been able to earn. His work is quite irregular, with summer being the high season when he is able to send greater amounts of remittances (500-1000 Euros). He carries the remittances home himself or sends them through a friend or brother with whom he lives in Greece, because bank transfers cost too much.

Urim gives Dorina total freedom to administer the remittances. She spends the money primarily on food, education, and health. She considers the task of having to administer the household finances additional work, and prefers to delegate this responsibility to Urim when he comes home for a few days in the summer and a month in the winter. Dorina feels pressured to be strict with her children in terms of economizing the family budget, since they are completely dependent on what her husband sends them. “Nowadays, status and money are what matters. Everything you do these days requires money.”

Dorina has been saving money, because she does not want to have to ask anyone for help in case her husband runs out of work. She hopes to use her savings on a good education for her children. However, what she wants the most is to no longer be dependent, which would mean leaving the country to earn her own money and help her family. Unfortunately, to date she has not managed to qualify to migrate legally.

This life story was published in March 2010 and pertains to the project “Gender and Remittances: Constructing Gender-Sensitive Development,” implemented by UN-INSTRAW and UNDP, with funding from Japan WID.

\*Source: Vullnetari, Julie and Russell King. 2010. Migration, Remittances and Gender-Responsive Local Development: The Case of Albania. Santo Domingo.



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**Albania is the most dramatic example of post-communist migration. It is estimated that one-fourth of the total Albanian population is living abroad, primarily in Greece. According to World Bank figures, in 2006 remittances to Albania totaled US \$1.36 billion or 14.9% of the country’s GDP. Women made up 41% of the total Albanian migrant population in Greece in 2001. Most of them arrive through family reunification and have found work in domestic service and care work, in response to the growing demand in this sector.\***

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## REFLECTION QUESTIONS GENDER ANALYSIS OF A LIFE STORY



ACTIVITY 1.5

1. What gender roles are present in the case study?
2. What gender inequalities and/or power relations are evident at each level?  
Micro (personal, family and community):  
  
Meso (national):  
  
Macro (international):
3. Is there any evidence of changes in gender equity that can be attributed to migration?
4. What challenges or obstacles to development are present in the case study, especially in terms of gender equality? What might an intervention designed to overcome such obstacles look like?





## 1.6 EMPOWERMENT IN THE BALANCE



**OBJECTIVES:** Evaluate to what extent migration is contributing to the empowerment of women and identify what factors may be disempowering. Identify possible points of intervention in both origin and destination.



**MATERIALS/PREPARATION:** Flip chart paper and markers, or slide with a drawing of a balance with the word “Empowerment” on one side and “Disempowerment” on the other. Separate slide with the table “Points of intervention.”

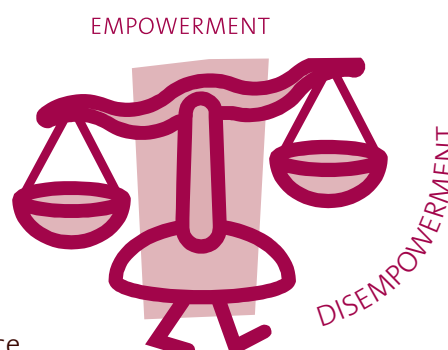


**ESTIMATED TIME:** 30-40 minutes (20-30 for the activity and 10 to discuss key lessons learned)




### FACILITATION




1. Section 1.4 of this guide mentions some of the ways in which migration contributes to both the empowerment and disempowerment of women. Prior to this activity, be sure to explain the different types of empowerment that appear in the definition of the concept in section 1.3.1
2. This activity is best done together in a plenary session, and should be led by the workshop facilitator.
3. Draw a balance on a sheet of flip chart paper and write the word EMPOWERMENT on one side and the word DISEMPOWERMENT on the other.
4. For about 10 minutes, identify and discuss different factors from participants’ own experience that they consider should appear on one side or the other of the balance (empowerment-disempowerment). First, ask: In what ways do you think that migration is empowering for women? Then, ask: What factors limit their empowerment or are disempowering for migrant women? Abbreviate each factor into a word or two and put them on the balance. The “factors” should be causes of empowerment and not effects. If participants are slow to jump in, begin by offering an example such as “isolation in the workplace” or “increase in purchasing power.”
5. Use the last 20 minutes to discuss potential points of intervention in order to empower women both in origin and destination. These can be interventions at the community, national, or international levels, and should be designed to alter the factors that are disempowering women. To guide the brainstorm, you may wish to take note of participants’ ideas on a flip chart paper divided up as follows:





Points of Intervention			
	In origin	In destination	Responsible Party
Community			
National			
International			


**KEY LESSONS**

- 
 Migration tends to have mixed and sometimes contradictory effects in terms of the empowerment of migrant women.
- 
 Sometimes factors can be both empowering and disempowering, depending on the circumstances.
- 
 Important considerations: At what costs does empowerment come? How can we mitigate the factors that are disempowering migrant women?



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# **IMPACT OF REMITTANCES ON LOCAL ECONOMIES IN ORIGIN COUNTRIES FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE**

## GOALS OF THIS GUIDE



- 1** Examine the phenomenon of remittances from a gender perspective
- 2** Introduce new elements to the debate on remittances for development
- 3** Raise new questions and consider different measures to promote a model of local development that is gender-sensitive

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES



- 1** Understand the relationship between gender and remittances, and recognize some common gender patterns in the sending, receiving, and usage of remittances
- 2** Learn the logic of the “virtuous circle” of remittances and development and identify some of its weak points
- 3** Identify specific problems women are facing in order to make productive investments or use banking services
- 4** Identify elements and actions needed to promote gender-sensitive local development





## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

**R**emittances – the money migrants send to their families in their country of origin – make up the most tangible aspect of the migration-development nexus. In the last decade, remittances have emerged as one of the most voluminous sources of external financing for developing countries. These financial flows have caught the eye of governments, financial institutions, and development organizations, many of whom have begun to identify and implement initiatives that aim to maximize the impact of remittances on poverty reduction and local development.

Many studies have focused on the effects of remittances in terms of **poverty reduction**.<sup>9</sup> Most families use remittances to cover basic household needs, such as food, housing, clothing, health, and education, in order to guarantee family survival.

However, the impact of remittances on **development** in origin countries leaves much room for debate. Remittances appear to have both positive and negative effects, as illustrated in Table 3.

**Table 3.**  
**Positive and Negative Effects of Remittances**

Positive Effects	Negative Effects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Increase in income at the national level</li> <li>❑ Contribution to foreign exchange reserves and to the balance of payments</li> <li>❑ Potential resource for the financing of entrepreneurial initiatives</li> <li>❑ Increase in local demand for goods and services</li> <li>❑ Resource for reconstruction following natural disaster or civil conflict, given that remittances to origin countries often increase in times of crisis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Greater demand for import of consumer goods (due to changes in dietary preferences and desire for acquisition of technological goods)</li> <li>❑ Rise in inflation</li> <li>❑ Creation or further entrenchment of inequalities between recipient and non-recipient households</li> <li>❑ Rise in land and housing costs</li> <li>❑ May lead to dependency</li> <li>❑ May discourage recipients (especially youth) from seeking out other income generation activities at the local level</li> </ul>

The most common model used to analyze and work on increasing the impact of remittances for local development has come to be called **“remittances for development.”** This model, which is also explained in Guide 1, section 1.1 of this manual, departs from an economistic vision of development that seeks to incorporate remittance recipients into the formal marketplace (which

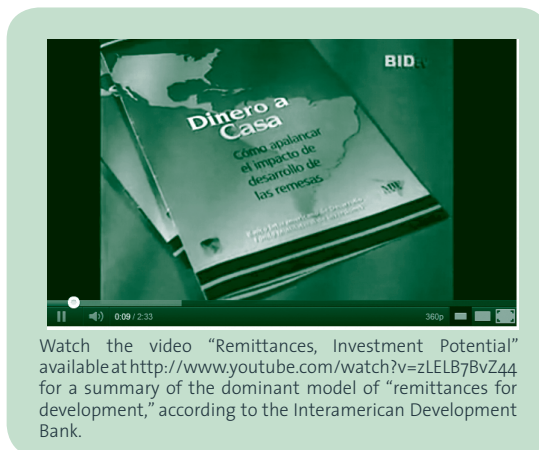
<sup>9</sup> See, for example, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). 2011. Impact of Remittances on Poverty in Developing Countries. Available at [http://www.unctad.org/en/docs/ditctncd20108\\_en.pdf](http://www.unctad.org/en/docs/ditctncd20108_en.pdf).



is considered the only means to development) through the saving and investment of remittances.<sup>10</sup>

When considered from the axes of analysis discussed in Guide 1, this model presents several deficiencies which end up limiting its efficacy. Among others, the dominant model:

- ❑ Follows an **individualist** perspective, which does little to take into account the role of families and social networks in migration and remittance management.
- ❑ Does not consider **gender**, or when it does, confuses it with sex – as if it were just another variable such as age or education level – instead of a factor that determines the power relations at play throughout the migratory process.
- ❑ Only focuses on **economic** aspects and not on the multiple dimensions that comprise human development.
- ❑ **Instrumentalizes** migrants and their families as “peons of global development” instead of creating real opportunities for them to decide on or benefit from development processes.
- ❑ Is **not sustainable**, since it only benefits some households, and the economic improvement of those households depends on the continuous receipt of monies from abroad.
- ❑ Focuses mostly on the **local level**, without considering the **structural conditions** which limit the potential of remittances to contribute to a more equitable and sustainable form of development.



This guide examines the impact of remittances on local economies, with a specific aim of helping those who are designing development interventions at that level. The goal is to provide practitioners with tools to incorporate a gender and rights perspective in the design of such interventions and to contextualize and link local development with national and international development.



## Stop & Reflect

1. Please mention two positive effects and two negative effects of remittances on local development.
2. Choose one of the five deficiencies of the “remittances for development” model and name some consequences or limitations that may result from it in terms of local development.

<sup>10</sup> For a look at the latest thinking on remittances from this perspective, see Dilip Ratha’s blog “People Move: A blog about migration, remittances, and development,” World Bank, <https://blogs.worldbank.org/peoplemove/team/dilip-ratha>





## 2.2 WHAT DOES GENDER HAVE TO DO WITH REMITTANCES?

**R**emittances are more than sums of money sent from one person to another. They represent links of solidarity, reciprocity, and obligation that connect migrants with their loved ones across national borders. People who send remittances are positioned by a variety of factors – gender, social class, ethnic origin – and act within **families and social networks** that are transnational. In turn, families and social networks are situated within other social, economic, and political processes that are strongly affected by the current model of globalization. (For more information on the relationship between globalization and women’s migration, see Guide 1, section 1.4). In addition to monetary remittances, there are also **social remittances**, which can be understood as “ideas, behaviors, identities, and social capital that flow from receiving- to sending-country communities” (Levitt 1999: 927). Graphic 9 summarizes this conception of remittances.

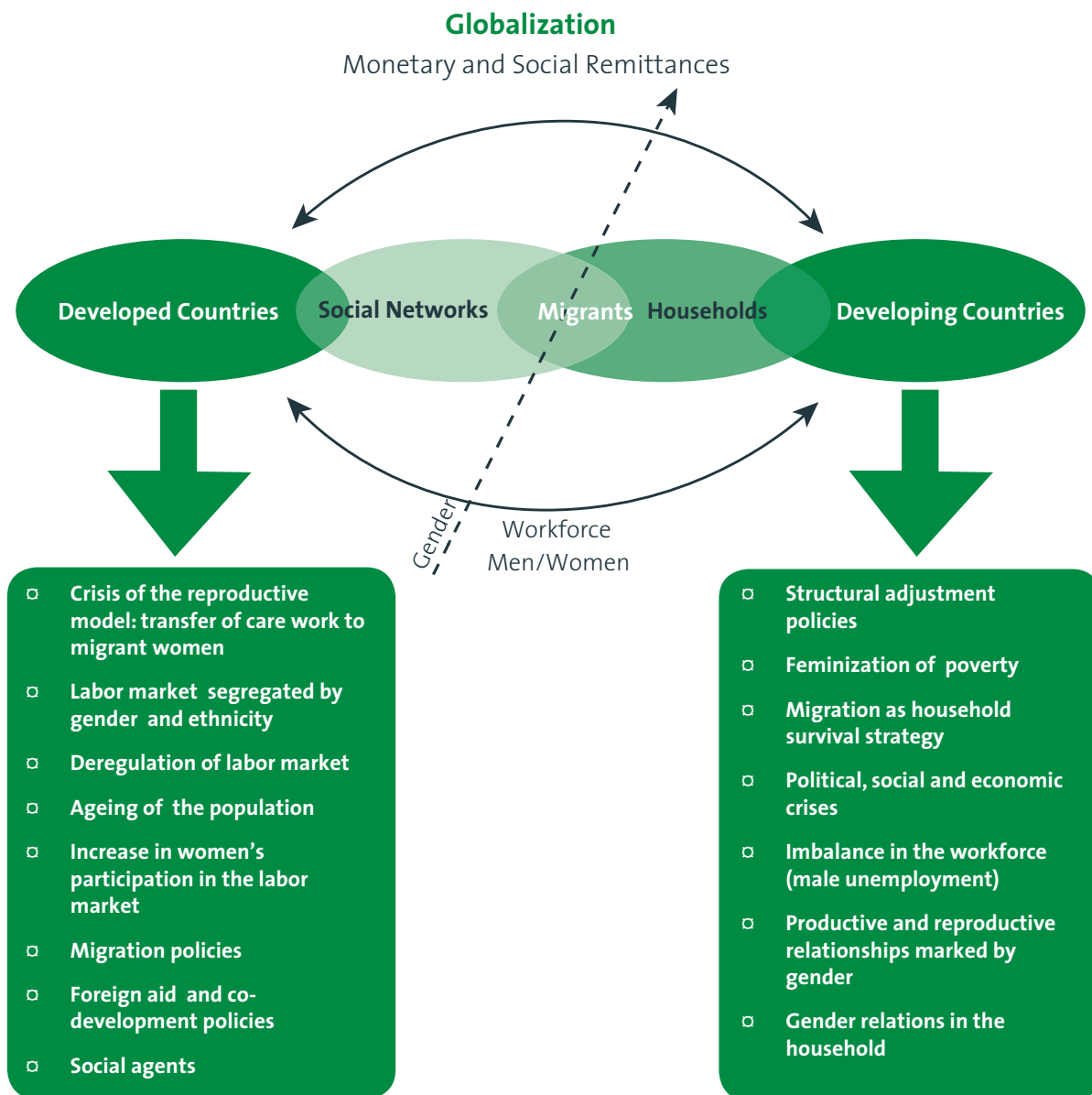
*Remittances are more than sums of money sent from one person to another. They represent links of solidarity, reciprocity, and obligation that connect migrants with their loved ones across national borders.*

In this complex map of interacting actors and factors, developing countries send labor to developed countries which, in turn, have high demand for migrant labor due to the deregulation of labor markets, the massive participation of women in the workforce, an aging population, etc. The sex/gender system is a cross-cutting vector operating in all of these processes, both in origin and destination.

The **household** is the preferred unit of analysis for understanding the phenomena of migration and remittances. In it, gendered power relations affect decisions such as which household member will migrate, how remittances will be used, and who will benefit from them. While gender relations to some extent determine the patterns of sending and spending remittances within households, it has also been noted that migration and remittance management bring about changes in the system of power and authority within the family. The economic and social roles that women acquire upon sending or managing remittances can **transform gender relations** and promote broader social, cultural, economic and political changes.



**Graphic 9**  
**Conception of Remittances**



Source: UN-INSTRAW (now part of UN Women) 2005



In short, remittances are transfers sent by individuals who belong to households and transnational networks. All of these units – individual, household, and social network – are marked by power relations that derive from gender and other factors such as age, social class, etc. At the same time, these units are circumscribed by macro-level processes such as globalization, which is bringing about social and economic changes in both origin and destination. To a large extent, gender affects the possibilities and patterns of sending, receipt, and usage of remittances, while at the same time, the very act of sending or managing remittances may cause changes in gender relations.



### Stop & Reflect

1. Why do you think it is necessary to situate remittances within the family and broader social context? What does this perspective allow us to see?
2. What might be an example of a “social remittance”?
3. Choose a “macro”-level factor listed in graphic 9 from either destination or origin, and explain how it might affect women and men’s employment opportunities and/or ability to send remittances.

#### 2.2.1. GENDER PATTERNS IN REMITTANCE FLOWS

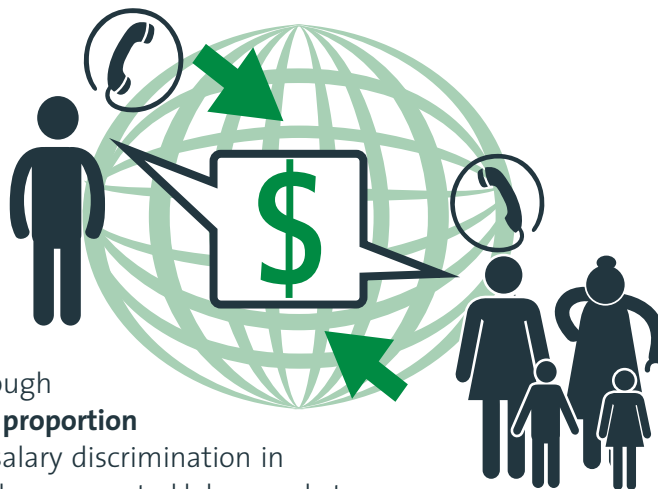
We have seen that gender affects the migration decision, social networks and job placement in destination countries, among other aspects. When it comes to remittances, several questions arise: How is the growing feminization of migration affecting remittance flows? How do gender roles influence the patterns of sending and spending remittances? And in the opposite direction, how are the sending and management of remittances affecting gender roles?

It is not easy to determine if there are important differences between men and women, due to lack of sex-disaggregated data and other analytical challenges such as distinguishing between management of remittances and decision-making power over their usage, ambiguity in the category “head of household,” or considering other intersecting determinants such as social class, ethnicity, or household structure. Nevertheless, some general patterns related to women’s and men’s relationships to remittance flows have emerged.



## DIFFERENTIATED PATTERNS OF SENDING REMITTANCES

- ❑ The sex of the remittance sender influences the **volume, frequency, and persistence** of remittance sending over time.
- ❑ Male and female remitters tend to send **similar quantities**, although this usually represents a **larger proportion of women's earnings**, due to salary discrimination in destination countries and gender-segregated labor markets.
- ❑ Having to remit this high percentage of their earnings involves great effort and **sacrifice** on the part of female remitters, which may affect their personal level of well-being in the destination country, ability to progress in their career or to save for their own future.
- ❑ In general, men tend to reserve more money for personal expenses while women tend to sacrifice such expenses in order to send more money home, thus reinforcing **gender roles** which assign women the responsibility of being the ultimate guarantor of family well-being.
- ❑ Men tend to send money to a more concentrated **number of family members**, while women support a broader array of extended family members. This responsibility may lead to the extension of their stay abroad, or even to women having to abandon the original objectives of their migratory project.



## DIFFERENTIATED PATTERNS OF RECEIVING REMITTANCES

- ❑ **Women make up a large majority of remittance recipients and administrators**, regardless of whether the sender is a man or a woman. Migrant men tend to remit to their wives and/or mothers, while migrant women send money to the woman in their family who is taking care of her children (less frequently, women may send remittances to their husbands, especially when they remain in charge of the household and children).
- ❑ Women tend to send remittances slightly **more frequently** than men, and are more likely to respond to **unexpected expenses** that arise in the household in origin, acting as a sort of insurance policy or shock absorber in times of crisis.
- ❑ It is important to distinguish between **receiving the remittance and having decision-**



**making power** over how it is used, since the recipient is not always the one who decides over how to use the money or who benefits from it. Oftentimes, the sender decides how it will be used; in other cases, the remitter, especially if male, may maintain contact with other family members (for example, his mother) in order to ensure that his wife spends the money according to his instructions.

## DIFFERENTIATED PATTERNS OF REMITTANCE USAGE

**Table 4.**  
**RECEIVING REMITTANCES ≠ DECIDING ON THEIR USAGE**  
Example from UN-INSTRAW case study in Senegal

Who decides how remittances will be used?			
Sex of recipient	Recipient decides	Remitter decides	Other person decides
Male	67%	16%	17%
Female	50%	30%	20%

In a case study in Senegal, only 50% of the female remittance recipients have the power to decide over how the remittances will be used, whereas the remitter continues to decide over their use for 30% of the women. When the recipient is male, in 67% of the cases he is the one who decides over remittances usage, whereas only 16% report that the sender retains control over the decision-making. This example illustrates that male remittance recipients are more likely to retain decision-making power over remittances than female recipients. In addition, when male migrants send remittances to their wives, a power relationship is formed between the wife and her husband's family, who often live in the same household, wherein each party struggles for control over the remittances, which can lead to conflict (Sarr 2010).

- ❑ A large majority of those receiving and managing remittances is made up of **women**. In their role as caretakers of the family, they tend to invest remittances in the **well-being of the household**. This supports the observation which has been made in other areas such as food security or microfinance, which holds that the greater control women have over the monetary resources of the household (whether as remitters who closely monitor how their remittances are spent, or as managers of remittances), the greater the tendency to invest in the well-being of its members.
- ❑ In a majority of households, remittances are used to cover **basic needs** such as food, housing, and clothing, and to increase access to consumer goods. This leaves a very slim margin, if any, for “productive investment,” casting doubt on one of the central assumptions of the dominant model. Remittances have been shown to function as a salary, not as capital.
- ❑ In addition to the ongoing household expenses, recipients use remittances for expenses related to the **health and education** of household members. Such investments tend to compensate for the deficient health care coverage and poor quality of education available in many countries of origin. When households have to pay for (often private) health and education services, this reduces the amount of money available for other activities.



- ❑ Remittances also serve as a **substitute for social protection** policies that many States fail to provide.

That is, remittances are used in lieu of a pension for migrants' retired parents, unemployment or disability insurance for siblings, subsidy for widowed or single mothers, etc. Women tend to be the primary beneficiaries of this kind of remittances, insofar as they are vulnerable to widowhood, family workloads that are not equitably distributed, etc.

*The greater the control women have over the monetary resources of the household, the greater the tendency to invest in the well-being of its members.*

- ❑ In some particular cases, such as in the Dominican Republic, it has been observed that many male remittance managers consider the remittances a private good, and therefore spend a part of the money on personal expenses, such as **entertainment** or alcohol. This type of behavior has led many women to start sending remittances to their mothers or sisters instead, as a way to ensure that remittances are spent exclusively on the well-being of the whole household.

These trends show that women are key actors in the remittances for development paradigm. Therefore, in order to be successful, local development programs that seek to increase the impact of remittances must depart from a clear comprehension of the different gender patterns in remittance usage, savings and investment.

**An alternative proposal:** A first, necessary step to understanding these characteristics is to always **disaggregate data by sex**, in censuses, household surveys, etc., in order to create a solid foundation of both documentation and statistics. Only by disaggregating the information gathered can we begin to see different patterns in sending, receiving, spending, etc. Then, this information can be used as a starting point to understanding the power relations behind such patterns. Ultimately, the goal is for practitioners and policymakers to be able to adjust initiatives and policy responses accordingly in order to make transforming gender inequities an objective in and of itself.



### Stop & Reflect

1. Which of the general patterns mentioned regarding the sending, receiving, and usage of remittances most reflects the migratory context that you know? Which of the patterns does not?
2. Choose one of the bullet points from this section and explain the impact that this pattern has in terms of human development.

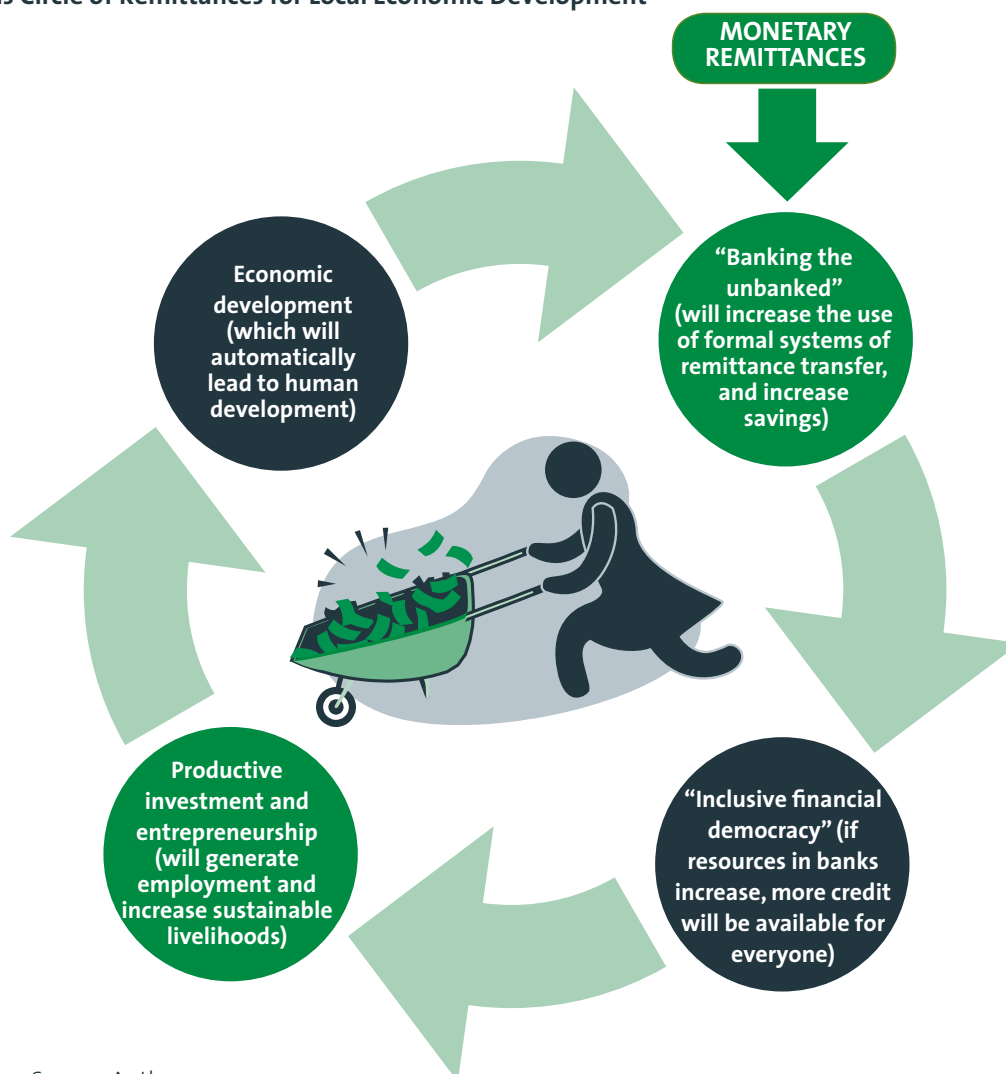


## 2.3 QUESTIONING THE “VIRTUOUS CIRCLE” OF REMITTANCES AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

*M*igration and development interventions at the local level tend to be based on a rather euphoric discourse about the positive impact of remittances on development. This discourse holds that the impact is both **direct and indirect**, on remittance recipient households and the entire community, respectively. The dominant model of “remittances for development” seeks to **maximize this impact at the community level**, by activating what we call the “virtuous circle” of remittances at the local level.

**Graphic 10.**

**Virtuous Circle of Remittances for Local Economic Development**



Source: Author



In theory, the **virtuous circle** works like this: if remittances are channeled through formal transfer mechanisms and there is a corresponding improvement in financial services and markets, recipient households will be able to access related financial services, especially credit (with remittance flows serving as a guarantee) and different insurance products (life insurance, health insurance, retirement insurance, etc.). In other words, increasing the resources available in the community and implementing changes in the banking system will give way to the creation of an “inclusive **financial democracy**” in which everyone can (and should) participate. Having access to credit would encourage people to take up **entrepreneurial activities and productive investment**, which are the cornerstone of this model of local development. The objective is to generate **economic development** through job creation, which would increase access to income and purchasing power, thereby making it possible for more people to purchase goods and services in the market.

In order to promote this circle of events, the **most common measures** aim to: reduce transfer costs; channel remittances through formal services; extend banking services to the poor or others who are outside of the formal system; promote investments in entrepreneurial activities in origin and transnationally; promote the purchase of other financial products such as health insurance or housing loans; and to build the capacity of migrant associations to participate in development projects in their country of origin.

Many interventions are oriented toward **women as their target population**, for various reasons, many of which have to do with the differential patterns mentioned in section 3.2.1 (for example, because women remit a higher proportion of their salary over a longer period of time; and because the majority of remittance recipients are women). As in microfinance programs, a certain **vision of women** exists in which they are depicted as more responsible and therefore better borrowers. This vision can easily lead to the instrumentalization of women instead of their empowerment.

### SOME DEFICIENCIES OF THE VIRTUOUS CIRCLE

1. The vision of development underlying this model is **neoliberal and economistic**. The solution to poverty, according to this model, is to incorporate the poor into formal markets, while ignoring inequalities and structural conditions which make them highly vulnerable.
2. One hypothesis of this circle is that by increasing economic development in origin, destination countries will be able to bring migration to a halt and encourage migrants to return to their home countries. These two objectives are clearly **aligned with destination countries' interests** in creating policies to control migration.

*Remittances  
function more  
like a salary  
than capital.*





3. Though remittances may have a direct impact in terms of poverty reduction for households, this **impact must be evaluated at different levels:** the household as a whole, individual household members, and the community at large.

- **Households** are not homogenous and harmonious units. They are made up of different members who each have distinct interests. The power relations between them determine which benefits each will receive from remittances.

- In the **community**, impacts may vary according to social class, gender, and ethnicity. Also, inequalities between recipient and non-recipient households may deepen.

- In the **destination country**, it would seem important to ask “what are [remittances] not spent on in order that they might be sent abroad and who is affected by this lack of spending” (Pessar 2005: 5).

4. In many places, remittances barely manage to reduce **vulnerability** for households in crisis, such as providing food security in southern Africa.
5. Remittances function more like a salary than capital, leaving a **very low percentage left**

**Table 5.**  
**Savings and Investment of Remittances in a community in the Philippines**

Financial Service Used	Number	%
Savings account in a bank	22	6.8
None	303	93.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Proportion of Household Income from Remittances		
Less than 25%	11	3.4
Between 25 and 50%	13	4.0
Between 51 and 75%	30	9.2
More than 76%	271	83.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Monthly Household Income without Remittances (Philippine pesos <sup>11</sup> )		
None	226	69.5
Less than 1,000	7	2.2
1,000 – 2,500	30	9.2
3,000 – 5,000	46	14.2
6,000 – 10,000	11	3.4
15,000 and above	5	1.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Plans to Start a Business with Remittances		
No	321	98.8
No response	4	1.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Guerrero and Sobritchea, UN-INSTRAW (now UN Women) 2010

<sup>11</sup> During the field work for the study cited, the exchange rate was approximately US\$ 1 = 46.9 Philippine pesos.



**over for savings or investment** (see, for example, table 5 on savings and investment in the Philippines). The idea is that by “banking the unbanked,” remittance recipients will be able to save, thus converting their remittances into capital. However, this process is very limited, due to the small margin available for savings, as well as the structural deficiencies in origin, which make individual entrepreneurial initiatives more of a survival strategy within the informal sector than a viable means to get ahead.

**In sum**, efforts to lower transfer costs and to “bank” the remittance market may be positive elements to help families make the most of remittances. However, such measures will not be sufficient without designing a strategy of human development – not just financial development

#### Alternative Proposals

- ☒ Research women’s access to financial services in both origin and destination (migrant women and remittance recipients).
- ☒ Work with financial institutions to develop specific services targeted toward migrant women/remitters and remittance recipients (e.g. savings, credit, and other services related to investment).



#### Stop & Reflect

1. Some people have compared the remittance phenomenon to the microfinance phenomenon based on their potential to reduce poverty and vision of development. What do you think remittances and microfinance have in common in terms of their concept of development? In what ways do they differ? What are the similarities between the remittance and microfinance paradigms in terms of their vision of women?
2. The model of “remittances for local development” assumes that there is a virtuous and automatic circle between banking mechanisms and entrepreneurship. Do you agree? What obstacles to women’s participation and investment might be left out of this picture?
3. How do women figure within the “remittances for local development” paradigm? Is there any risk to considering them in this way?



## 2.4 VIRTUOUS CIRCLE OR VICIOUS CYCLE? OTHER IMPACTS OF MIGRATION AND REMITTANCES AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

**I**n addition to assuming that there is a virtuous and automatic circle between “banking the unbanked” and increasing investment, the “remittances for development” paradigm also holds that remittances benefit the whole community in various ways:

- 1 The multiplier effect:** It is assumed that an increase in consumption will translate into increased commercial activity and job creation.
- 2 Alleviation of social inequalities:** Since many remittances are sent to poor households, it is assumed that they will decrease levels of poverty throughout the population.
- 3 Greater productivity:** Since a good part of remittances is spent on education and health, improvements in these areas will presumably result in higher levels of “human capital,” and therefore, greater productivity.
- 4 Financial democracy:** Supposedly, when financial institutions have more resources coming in, they will be able to circulate them throughout the community by offering credit. This will open up more opportunities to create sustainable livelihoods for remittance recipient and non-recipient households.

As for the **multiplier effect**, it is worth looking into its actual magnitude, and seeing who actually benefits from it. The effects may be diverted to certain social groups which are better positioned in the markets, creating only certain kinds of employment (e.g. male-dominated activities such as construction). Likewise, gains from the increase in consumption may translate into higher corporate profits (e.g. capital intensive industries), but not necessarily into job creation. In the absence of comprehensive development plans, there is no guarantee that quality employment will be generated or that the playing field will be level enough for women to access it.

The multiplier effect may also be **diverted to other regions** outside migrants’ communities of origin. There is a tendency to invest remittances in cities or other areas with fewer structural problems, which contributes to internal migration and the relocation of returning migrants



Remittances may create new inequalities between households that receive remittances and those that do not, as we can see in the high emigration town of Las Placetas, San José de las Matas, Dominican Republic. Photo credit: Allison Petrozziello

to urban areas. Similarly, increases in consumption may benefit other countries more than the origin country, insofar as the increase in demand is for imported products rather than locally-made goods.

With regard to **social inequalities**, the phenomenon of remittances may actually exacerbate them. First, those who migrate abroad **do not usually belong to the poorest of the poor**, so the incoming resources do not necessarily reach the most vulnerable. Table 6 shows that in countries like Colombia and the Dominican Republic, remittances are sent mostly to middle-class families living in urban areas, not to the poorest families who live in rural areas, as in the case of Guatemala. Second, as mentioned above, remittances can also create new inequalities between recipient and non-recipient households. The problem is not only that recipient households enjoy a higher standard of living while other households remain poor. Rather, when there is an increase in purchasing power and consumption of some, this can drive up costs of housing, agricultural land, building materials, and other goods and services, which negatively affects the consumption of non-recipient households. In Lesotho, for example, where there is a long-standing tradition of men migrating to work in South African mines, migrants' families have come to represent a rural elite, theirs being the only households with a small surplus available to save and invest.

Regarding the alleged increase in **productivity**, it has been observed that even when there are marked improvements in public health indicators and education levels, these are not necessarily accompanied by higher or better employment offerings at the local level. In other words, improvements in the availability of human capital run up against local job markets that are incapable of fulfilling new professional and personal aspirations, especially for women, who often



### Diverting Investment toward the City

Example from UN-INSTRAW case study in Albania

*Genti's mother manages the family budget, whereas all of the adults in the family discuss the business finances. Although they work in the village, Genti and his family have invested in an apartment in Durrës, the second largest city in Albania. "We were considering investing in a warehouse to store apples. I am interested in selling and exporting because I used to work in a supermarket in Greece. The problem is that the State doesn't help us in this town. We do not have enough of a guarantee that we will be able to sell the product. Sometimes, the treatment we buy for the trees is no good; we buy it, but it may be expired. That is why it is better to buy in Greece."*

find even fewer job offerings due to gender discrimination and sex-segregated labor markets. This clash adds to the trend of **internal migration and what has been called the "brain drain,"** wherein the educated leave their home towns in search of greater opportunities in the cities and sometimes abroad.

This is particularly true in many rural areas, where structural problems and power imbalances between urban and rural areas lead many to see the countryside as a place with no future.

**Table 6.**

**Comparison of Remittance Recipient Profiles in Colombia, Dominican Republic and Guatemala**

	Colombia	Dominican Republic	Guatemala
Women	70.7%	50%	55%
Region	Mostly urban	Mostly urban	Mostly rural
Social Class	Middle and upper	Middle	Middle and poor
Poor	4%	6.2%	40%

Source: Robert, Elisabeth, 2009



## HOW DOES THE STATE FIT INTO THE PICTURE?

The so-called “**financial democracy**” – or the incorporation of millions of new customers into the global banking system – is not necessarily “inclusive.” In fact, it leaves out several important elements, such as the role of **public institutions** (central, regional, and local) in the provision of State assistance and as a duty bearer responsible for **guaranteeing rights** such as education, health, and social protection. A large part of many families’ remittances goes toward covering these expenses, due to the inexistence or inadequacy of the public system. This has at least two negative effects:

When private citizens have to cover expenses that should be guaranteed through public expenditure, little is left over for households to save and/or invest.

When these services are subsidized through private remittance flows, the population is less likely to demand that the government take public responsibility for improving services.

If progress is not made toward the guarantee of these rights, households that do not receive remittances will continue to face the same problems in terms of access to health and education services. Similarly, collective remittances (for example, migrant associations making donations for public works) tend to compensate for the lack of public services (cemetery repair, bridge and road construction, etc.), absolving the State from responsibility toward its citizens.

*Democracy  
cannot be built  
through access  
to finance.*

Remittances may also function as a substitute for **social protection** systems. That is, sometimes they are sent to support aging parents who do not receive pensions or to help siblings who are unemployed. Instead of pressuring States to assume responsibility for such public expenditure, the remittance for development model proposes that banking institutions offer private insurance products as part of a package of financial services linked to remittance transfers.

The emphasis on the role of remittances to meet education, health and social protection needs can be seen as a step towards the **privatization of development strategies**. This minimizes the importance of macro-level intervention, leaving it up to the individual to find her way out of poverty and to compensate for structural deficiencies in her community.

In short, if remittances are to have a greater impact on local development, they should not have to replace State investment. Remittances will only be able to bring about sustainable development within the framework of **broader policies** that tackle the structural problems of migrants’ communities of origin.



**An alternative proposal:** Strengthening citizen participation at the local level, especially women's citizen participation, is key so that they can pressure public institutions to fulfill their duty as guarantor of human rights. This process should take place in both origin and destination countries.

*Economic progress requires simultaneous political progress, and vice versa.*

Rather than limiting our understanding of **democracy** to its financial element, it should be seen as “a form of political and social organization that responds to collective interests, where men and women of different groups and sectors have a voice and decision-making capacity. Democracy is a form of governance designed to **promote economic and social structures that allow for the well-being of each and every person with justice and equity**” (Rodríguez Fernández and Trehwella 2009, our translation). A basic condition of democracy is the opportunity for women to participate on equal terms in political, economic, social and cultural development and to benefit equitably from the outcome.

*“Although remittances can selectively relieve the poverty of recipients and enable household (and sometimes wider community) consumption and saving, they do not automatically generate development, and should not be regarded as a substitute for policies that do so” (New Economics Foundation, Mitchell 2006: 16).*

Within the democratic system, both **political** and economic transformations must take place in order for there to be development, especially when we are working toward a model of development based on all people being able to access and exercise their human rights in equal conditions.

For example, such political transformations might include the creation of public services to complement and encourage the redistribution of unpaid domestic work that has been traditionally done by women. At the same time, this creation of public services would lead to the creation of employment for women, thus reinforcing the role of public institutions as guarantor of decent work for women (Pérez Orozco 2007).



### Alternative Proposals

- ☒ Organize public hearings, dialogues, seminars, etc. on the topic of remittances and development. Promote the participation of a wide variety of stakeholders (migrants and their households, government representatives and politicians, international development agencies, financial institutions, migrant associations, NGOs, etc.), ensuring women's full participation.
- ☒ Strengthen the capacity of migrant associations and other relevant organizations, especially women's groups, to participate in policy dialogues and other events on migration and development, and to include a gender perspective in their approach to these issues.
- ☒ Include both recipient and non-recipient households in interventions in origin communities in order to avoid further entrenchment of inequalities in areas of high emigration.



### Stop & Reflect

1. In your experience, in what ways are communities benefiting from remittance inflows? Are these benefits distributed equally within the community? Who benefits the most?
2. When remittances are invested in health, education, or social protection, in what ways is this beneficial for community development? Might this investment have any negative consequences at the community or national levels?
3. In what ways does the alternative proposal of democracy outlined above differ from the concept of "financial democracy"?





## 2.5 INVESTMENT AND “BANKING THE UNBANKED” FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

**W**ithout a doubt, remittances can play a key role in the promotion of micro- and small-scale productive investment, especially through the availability of microcredit and other financial services. However, several considerations must be made in order to promote investment and the use of banking services from a gender perspective: How do we define what is considered a productive investment? Are women and men benefiting equally from these investments? Should the formal banking of remittances complement or substitute public policies? Should the guiding principle be social equality or market efficiency?

In the minority of cases where there is a portion of remittance money available to start a microenterprise (with or without additional credit), such activities face severe limitations, which may be even greater for female entrepreneurs. The following are some **specific problems facing women’s microenterprises**:

- ▶ If women have lower education levels = fewer entrepreneurial skills and **increased barriers to accessing credit**.
- ▶ Greater investment in the household (especially health and education) and less access to credit = **smaller investment**.
- ▶ Smaller amount invested = business highly dependent on unpaid family labor (often women’s unpaid labor), with **little capacity to generate employment**.
- ▶ Following gender norms, women often invest in businesses considered “appropriate” for them (e.g. beauty salons, and small food, clothing, and accessory shops), which are often **not as lucrative as other types of businesses**.
- ▶ **Gender inequalities** in access to land, credit, education, etc. also present challenges to women’s investments.
- ▶ **End result:** micro businesses that are not profitable and difficult to sustain over the medium and long term (similar to small businesses in general)



### A financial institution that seeks to increase the impact of remittances on local development should...

1. *Be committed to the community*
2. *Offer flexible operating procedures (interest rates, payment schedules, collateral required, size of loans) that respond to the needs of both male and female beneficiaries*
3. *Integrate financial and non-financial services (such as training, investment advice, etc.)*

In order to overcome these challenges, initiatives should include technical assistance, support, and accompaniment for entrepreneurs, so that their businesses yield results that go beyond simply producing enough income for women to sustain their households.

### TOWARD A “GENUINE” FINANCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE THAT IS DEMOCRATIC, COOPERATIVE, AND COMMITTED TO LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

First, it is important to consider what type of financial institution (bank, cooperative, microfinance institution) is the best choice for promoting a model of local development that is equitable and sustainable. The **microfinance** market has been evolving from

small, socially-oriented institutions toward “financial inclusion” programs offered by larger institutions such as national banks. Many smaller organizations, which sometimes receive external or public financing, aim to work from a democratic and/or cooperative perspective, and tend to show greater commitment to goals such as social (and not just financial) returns.

On the other hand, **banks** tend to have more resources and therefore are more likely to be viable. Most operate from a mercantilist logic which values profitability over broader development goals such as social equity. Many initiatives continue to focus on inclusion of remittance recipients into the formal banking system as a key element to promoting local development. However, evidence shows that migrants tend to invest in urban areas, which means that their resources do not necessarily remain within the community of origin. Instead of promoting local development, this ends up increasing regional inequalities.

In order for the remittance circle to be “virtuous” at the local level, the financial institutions promoting this growth must be **committed to the community**. This means that they strive to keep resources within the region, such that migrants’ families’ savings can allow for the extension of credit to those who remain behind. Secondly, **operating procedures must be flexible** in order to facilitate access for those who have traditionally been excluded from banking services. This includes accessible interest rates and collateral requirements, and appropriate loan sizes. Third, it is recommended that such offerings incorporate **non-financial services** such as training, accompaniment, technical assistance, etc.



## HOW DO WE DEFINE PRODUCTIVE INVESTMENT?

According to the “remittances for development” model, **productive investment** is defined as the “the establishment of small businesses that then provide a continued source of income and generate benefits that allow the business to grow” (Pérez Orozco et al 2008:83). This vision focuses exclusively on the capacity for growth, and is therefore quite limited. It does not recognize the **many kinds of initiatives** that women and men establish, nor the **diverse motives** that drive them, nor the **non-financial assets** that they bring to the table (e.g. experience, traditional knowledge, or social capital). As a result, their viability is undervalued, making it difficult for female micro-entrepreneurs to access credit offered through the formal banking system.

An **alternative conception of what constitutes productive investment** could include “any type of economic initiative with the potential



### Good Practice #1: Singapore

#### Compass Club program of the aidha micro-business school

For many migrant women, the monthly remittance is life's sole purpose. Certainly, the remittance is a central focus of new students enrolling at aidha, a Singapore-based micro-business school. Aidha's students are domestic workers – women from the Philippines, Indonesia, India, or Sri Lanka who leave their families behind to find the employment income that might end their family's poverty. For them, the remittance offers hope, but it is also a filial duty. And, as budgeted, it can consume more than half the woman's monthly income.

But the 'budgeted' remittance represents only a portion of the total monies sent home. Each month, there are also remittances for 'exceptional' costs: a sister is to be married, a cousin needs medicine, an uncle's debt must be repaid...Requests might come with explanation but often they are simply 'instructions' from husbands or fathers to 'send more.'

Remit, remit remit...Saving is rarely possible. But without saving, there can be no return. What begins as a two- or four-year work experience ends up becoming a ten- to twenty-year hard labor sentence. There is no 'partnership' between migrant and family, no shared commitment to the migration 'plan.' In line with her gender role, the migrant woman serves as the much-praised but still subservient daughter or wife, providing income as needed, on demand.

Aidha's unique Compass Club program was designed to respond to this complex financial and empowerment challenge. Structured as small, peer support groups, our clubs provide a structured, educational environment in which, with the support of peers and a dedicated mentor, participants acquire practical financial skills and a new sense of self worth. With monthly meetings, recognition for their savings, and the pride of accomplishment, our students emerge from the clubs with empowered identities. No longer just dutiful daughters, they recognize themselves as primary breadwinners and as family leaders who have both the right and the responsibility to influence consumption and investment activities.

Along with this new identity come other positive changes such as banked savings, investment in income generating activities, and a new family contract detailing the shared plans for family progress. The results are impressive: savings grow from meager under-the-mattress amounts of S\$10-20/month to banked sums averaging S\$250/month. The productive investments are equally impressive: Compass Club graduates describe with pride their new livestock, homes or land, and the small eateries or taxi services they have financed.

These investments are made possible through connections aidha has made with microfinance institutions in their participants' countries of origin. The model follows a philosophy of “education with credit” in order to create synergies and opportunities that help migrant women and their families end poverty in their lives.

For more information, visit [www.aidha.org](http://www.aidha.org).

*Submitted by Dr. Sarah Mavrinac, President, aidha*



to become a means of empowerment and/or autonomy for those undertaking it, whether individually or collectively, and initially on a relatively small scale” (Martínez 2007: 2). This definition allows us to reconsider what is seen as productive. From this perspective, we may also include subsistence initiatives, child/dependent care cooperatives and other types of services for individual and collective well-being, as perfectly “productive” in terms of human development.

Let us consider the following **alternative criteria to evaluate what is considered productive investment**:

*“Women (like men) create enterprises in order to achieve their aims in life. These aims are not always profit or the quest for material success, but can also include achieving economic security for their families, education for their children, or being able to escape from a violent or abusive relationship. These objectives are just as valid as profit motive” (Martínez 2007:7).*

**1 Sustainability:** the enterprise’s existence does not rely on the continuous consumption of resources. Sustainability should be measured from a multidimensional perspective: environmentally (destruction of natural resources is usually an invisible cost); socially (activities that are not reliant on public resources like subsidies, fiscal benefits, etc., or unpaid work and/or social networks); and financially (sustainability implies lack of dependence on constant flows of external income like remittances, and does not necessarily have to involve increasing profit margins, given that profitability does not equal sustainability).

**2 Degree of democratization:** To what degree does the initiative promote collective decision-making processes and equitable distribution of tasks and profits?

**3 Synergy:** capacity of the activity to create horizontal and vertical linkages (including both economic activities and social networks)

**An alternative proposal:** In sum, in order for formal banking and investment to be gender-sensitive and effective in terms of local development, a different kind of financial infrastructure is needed – one that is committed to the community, has accessible interest rates and operating procedures, and includes support services that go beyond assessing financial feasibility. Likewise,



we must transform our notion of productivity to include other activities which contribute to well-being, empowerment and/or personal and collective autonomy.

The guiding principle behind such initiatives – that is, if we would like to promote a holistic and sustainable model of local development – should be social equality, not just market efficiency. Formal banking of remittances should be a complement to – not a private substitute for – public policies promoting development and equality. These policies should be directed toward human development, which involves expanding people’s capacity to enjoy the right to education, health, decent work, and improved infrastructure.

## 2.6 WHAT CAN BE DONE? SOME ALTERNATIVES TO CONSIDER

In order to dynamize the local development process, the phenomena of migration and remittances should be included within a **comprehensive strategy**. Remittances are not a magic ingredient to simply “add to the pot and stir”! Rather, remittances are a family strategy to compensate for non-existent or ineffective development policies and programs: housing, education, health, social protection, employment generation and in the case of collective remittances, infrastructure.

By analyzing the actual usage of remittances and recognizing the limitations of their potential for local development mentioned in this guide, we have come to the conclusion that **migration should be considered as a phenomenon that reveals needs and deficiencies** at the local level. In other words,

*When the resources the diaspora sends to their families and home communities are used to cover expenses that should be included within public budgets such as health or education, this points to the shortcomings of national and local public policies and the inability to guarantee citizen rights throughout their territory (Fundación Carolina and UN-INSTRAW, now part of UN Women, 2010, our translation).*

**Table 7.**  
**Remittance Use in Recipient Households in Rural Lesotho**

Item	% of households that use remittances for...
Food	89.3
Clothing	76.1
Education	56.0
Transport	50.0
Funeral and burial costs	28.7
Seeds	24.4
Savings	18.7
Fertilizer	18.5
Celebrations	7.1
Cattle purchase	1.4
Wedding	1.1
Personal investment	0.0

If remittance usage reveals needs and lacks at the local level – and therefore, points out where local development priorities should lie – this table shows us that there are problems related to food security, access to education, high transportation

Source: Household survey, South African Migration Project, cited in Crush, Dodson et al (UN-INSTRAW, now part of UN Women 2010)



In this sense, the phenomena of migration and remittances also point to persistent gender equalities. For example, migration exposes many obstacles facing women – especially poor women in rural areas – in terms of their access to formal banking services, land and property; excessive work load; labor market insertion and other income generating activities. In one way or another, all of these obstacles limit their ability to benefit from the influx of remittances in their communities.

Once we have identified the structural problems and deprivations which are preventing the realization of equity and human development, we can design appropriate initiatives that go beyond “banking the unbanked.” Again, any attempt to “maximize the development potential of remittances” must be situated within a broader strategy that takes as its starting point the existing gaps and needs.



## Good Practice #2: Colombia/España

### **Multiservice Care Cooperative, an initiative of Colombian migrant women in Valencia, Spain, with support of SISMA Mujer**

Through a project entitled “Gender and Remittances,” the Colombian feminist organization SISMA Mujer has created a transnational initiative that aims to “consolidate the role of Colombian migrant women as development actors in their country, through strengthening their organizational capacity in Valencia (Spain) and establishing a multiservice care cooperative as a development tool in the Department of Risaralda (Colombia).” This initiative has a number of innovative elements:

- ❑ Built around more than just the economic aspect of migration; seeks to build many different capacities, including participants’ empowerment within their families and societies
- ❑ It is an association, which will allow it to go beyond the micro level and become a medium-sized business (at least in the Colombian context), which makes it more likely to be sustainable
- ❑ Process of organization and group formation, respectful of women’s autonomy
- ❑ Training women on the subject of rights, cooperatives, entrepreneurship
- ❑ Implementation by phases, allowing for improvisation and motivating the women to be creative, while also recognizing that this has discouraged some members who want “things to happen now,” which is characteristic of the people in the region where the project is being implemented
- ❑ Builds upon women’s existing knowledge and expertise, which they have learned while participating in global care chains, elevating it from the domestic sphere to the social and entrepreneurial sphere, and divesting it of negative connotations associated with the domestic sphere
- ❑ Transnational project, linking women remitters or migrant women who plan to return with other recipient women (pairing up peers here and there, to the extent possible)
- ❑ Role of the NGO as facilitator, resource administrator, and promoter of institutional partnerships for the project, but with a clear understanding that the idea and management are theirs, but the project belongs to the women
- ❑ Process of defining and delimiting the project carried out with the women themselves, based on their desires and interests
- ❑ Feasibility studies (financial, commercial, legal) carried out with the accompaniment of an expert in the subject

*Submitted by William Mejia, Research Group on Human Mobility, Red de Universidades Públicas del Eje Cafetero ALMA MATER, Colombia*



## ALTERNATIVE PROPOSALS TO THE DOMINANT MODEL

1. Strengthen **public institutions** so they can fulfill their role as guarantor of people's well-being.

Migration has a significant impact on life in origin countries: people, and therefore human resources, leave; families are divided; remittances are sent back, etc. Therefore, it is important to take this phenomenon into account within State, regional and local social and economic development policies and plans that regulate employment, education, social protection, and support families. These policies should be based on internationally recognized principles of human development, including strong emphasis on distributive justice (a just allocation of resources in society) and equity in the broadest possible sense.

2. Create **local development plans with a holistic – not economistic – vision**, so that there is a framework to guide individual and collective initiatives of recipient households, migrant returnees, and citizens at large.

In the absence of a comprehensive development plan, nothing guarantees that there will be job creation, much less the equitable distribution of opportunities among men and women, both of which are key drivers of emigration from many places. When developing such a plan, it is important to ensure the equal and effective participation of men and women.

The unit of analysis of the development plan should be neither the individual nor the household, but the territory<sup>12</sup>, since progress cannot be made on an individual basis alone. State and local governments should consider offering targeted technical and financial assistance to promote women's associations and cooperatives, as well as their participation in wider initiatives that go beyond "traditionally feminine" activities. Likewise, efforts should be made to link up women's initiatives with others, including horizontal and vertical linkages to strengthen their ability to participate in value chains.

3. Promote **dialogue and collaboration** between local, national and transnational stakeholders in the identification and implementation of migration and development initiatives, including women's groups and migrant associations.

Some initiatives require the participation of public entities and the contribution of additional resources (financial, human, informational, etc.). An important first step is to hold dialogues and coordination meetings involving different stakeholders – primarily

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<sup>12</sup> The territory is conceived of not only as an economic entity with comparative advantages that can be strengthened so communities can compete in global markets, but rather as a space which synthesizes economic, political and cultural/ideological processes with environmental conditions and other external factors such as neoliberal economic restructuring.





government representatives from origin and destination countries (national and local), along with migrant and migrant women's associations in destination countries, migrants' families in origin, international development organizations, and NGOs that work on related topics, among others.

4. Develop remittance- and publicly-funded initiatives related to **reproductive activities**, such as child care cooperatives.

Care work, which continues to be seen as women's responsibility, is the invisible base of the economy (being fed, clothed and kept healthy are what allows the beneficiaries of care to go out and be productive members of society). As such, care has high economic and social value. Therefore, it is important to consider reproductive work within comprehensive development planning processes. It would be strategic to promote initiatives such as care cooperatives (see Good Practice #2, SISMA Mujer) for several reasons: 1) it is a way to value reproductive work while generating employment for women; 2) such cooperatives offer women a quality service that they can count on, so they can go out to work or take up other activities for their own personal development; 3) they allow for a more equitable distribution of care work. (See guide 3 for more information on care work and migration).

5. Design and implement interventions to secure as rights two items on which a large part of remittances are spent: **health and education**.

It is impossible for microcredit and micro-businesses to become a motor of local development if the population does not have access to quality health care and education. People must be considered first and foremost as social subjects, before being able to become entrepreneurs (Garay 2010).

6. Promote **local financing schemes** that are capable of funding medium-sized initiatives and are committed to local development.

Financing for local development should come from a variety of sources, including small- and medium-scale programs which are as concerned about social equality as they are market efficiency. These programs should integrate non-financial services such as training and technical assistance, alongside financial offerings.

7. Direct State investment to **medium-scale job creation**, in order to move beyond micro-entrepreneurship and promote a more sustainable model of economic development.

In order for local development to be sustainable, the State should take measures to generate employment opportunities that go beyond individual micro-enterprise.





Such medium-scale initiatives could include the formation of new types of productive associations, starting with habitat construction and infrastructure improvement (Garay 2010).

8. Promote **women's political participation** so normal their needs and interests are represented when identifying priorities at the local and national levels.

#### Examples of Public Interventions to Overcome the Limitations of Micro-Enterprise

- *Provide investment guidelines and counseling to help channel investment toward diverse market niches.*
- *Help to change the structural conditions which impede or hurt investments (chronic rural problems such as lack of irrigation, roads in poor condition, lack of reliable electricity, etc.).*
- *Promote comprehensive local development plans, so that migrants and remittance recipients who wish to invest can integrate their efforts within a larger community framework.*
- *Create alternatives that allow for stable labor force participation and decent pay, in order to counteract the dependency on remittances that comes from a lack of other opportunities.*



## ACTIVITIES

- 2.1** Quiz on Gender and Remittances
- 2.2** Video: Interview with Carmen Moreno on CNN
- 2.3** Case Study: Lorna's Life Story
- 2.4** Debate "What do we mean by 'productive use' of remittances?"
- 2.5** Analysis and Reformulation of a "Remittances for Development" Project



## 2.1 QUIZ ON GENDER AND REMITTANCES<sup>13</sup>



**OBJECTIVE:** Survey the group's prior knowledge of gender and remittances, and dispel some related gender stereotypes.



**MATERIALS/PREPARATION:** Photocopies of the quiz and pens, or slides with the quiz questions



**ESTIMATED TIME:** 25 minutes






### FACILITATION

1. This activity is suitable as an opener toward the beginning of the unit on remittances. It will help the facilitator to assess how familiar participants are with the topic, and to adapt subsequent activities accordingly.
2. Hand the quiz out to participants as they arrive, and ask them to complete it individually.
3. In a short plenary session, ask those who answered A to raise their hands, then those who answered B, etc. Ask one person who answered each one to explain why s/he chose that answer. Share the correct answer with them and ask if they agree, or if they can think of another example.
4. **Variation 1:** Go over the responses in a plenary session at the beginning of the workshop as an introduction to the topic.
5. **Variation 2:** Instead of going over the answers in a plenary session, collect the quizzes and, during a break, quickly create a slide or two showing the results of the quiz, i.e. X number or percentage responded YES or NO. Present the responses and correct answers following the break in order to get into the topic at hand again.
6. **Variation 3:** Instead of handing out the quiz, create slides with the quiz questions and answer them collectively. This variation is recommended if you are short on time or would like to do a faster version of the activity.

<sup>13</sup> Activity adapted from quiz developed by Elisabeth Robert for UN-INSTRAW (now part of UN Women).



### KEY LESSONS

-  Inequalities in the labor market in destination countries channel migrant women into sectors that are less valued by society and therefore paid less. This translates into migrant women's average salary being less than men's; however, women often send a greater percentage of their income home in the form of remittances.
-  A majority of remittance recipients is made up of women, who have their own patterns of remittance usage. The money they receive is usually not enough to start a business. Those who do attempt to start a micro-business face particular obstacles that derive from gender inequalities.
-  Interventions must focus not only at the local level, but also at the structural level in order to overcome some of the challenges to development or at least to level the playing field.



1. **Migrant women's average earned income tends to be \_\_\_\_\_ migrant men's income.**
  - A. Equal to
  - B. Greater than
  - C. Inferior to
2. **Most remittances are received by:**
  - A. Women
  - B. Men
3. **Micro-businesses created by women using remittances:**
  - A. Face the same difficulties as micro-businesses created by men.
  - B. Face additional difficulties that derive from gender inequalities.
4. **Remittances sent by women make up a proportion of their monthly income that is...**
  - A. Less than the proportion of monthly income sent by men
  - B. Greater than the proportion of monthly income sent by men
5. **Promoting gender-sensitive development through migration and remittances involves:**
  - A. Focusing on local development and increasing women's access to financial systems so that they can generate their own employment.
  - B. Considering local, national, and international factors that may encourage (or block) gender equality, especially throughout the migratory process.



## ANSWERS TO QUIZ ON GENDER AND REMITTANCES



### ACTIVITY 2.1

1. C. Migrant women's average monthly income tends to be less than migrant men's monthly income, due to the little value assigned to the jobs that they do (cleaning, washing, taking care of children and the elderly, etc.). Regulatory frameworks, laws, and policies (or sometimes the lack thereof), channel migrant men and women into different kinds of work. "Men's work," especially in construction, tends to be better paid than "women's work" in domestic work and care work, or other services. This is aggravated by restrictions upon migrant workers' (especially domestic workers') ability to change jobs, limited access to information, and little public recognition of their basic labor and social rights.
2. A. Women are the primary recipients and administrators of remittances, regardless of the sex of the person sending remittances. This means that in order for local development programs based on remittances to be successful, they must have a clear understanding of the differential gender characteristics in remittance use, savings and investment. At the same time, such programs must work toward gender equality and avoid the tendency to instrumentalize women for others' well-being.
3. B. Given that women invest more in basic household needs, little, if any, money is left over for other kinds of investments. Other issues such as lower educational levels also make it difficult for them to access credit. As a result, their initiatives tend to be small, highly dependent on family members' unpaid labor, concentrated in traditionally feminine activities that are less profitable than other sectors, and unlikely to be sustainable over the medium term.
4. B. Although migrant women tend to have lower average monthly income than migrant men, they tend to send a higher proportion of their income. In other words, men tend to earn more, and may send a similar or slightly higher monthly remittance than women, but that amount makes up a greater percentage of women's earnings. Many migrant women place extreme limits on their personal spending in the destination country, as well as investments in their own well-being or entertainment, and may even go into debt to be able to send remittances.
5. B. Without modifying structural conditions, small, individual, remittance-based investments will do little to bring about development or women's empowerment. The limitations facing such initiatives cannot be overcome at the individual level alone. UN-INSTRAW (now part of UN Women) case studies, as well as those carried out by other researchers, show that remittance-backed investments in such circumstances will have little to no impact on development. Interventions must be made through public institutions in order to improve overall conditions and overcome such limitations.



## 2.2 VIDEO: INTERVIEW WITH CARMEN MORENO ON CNN



**OBJECTIVE:** Reflect on the relationship between feminization of migration and the sending of remittances.



**MATERIALS/PREPARATION:** Photocopies of the reflection questions, computer, projector, speakers, reliable internet connection if you do not have the video, “Carmen Moreno CNN Interview” video available on CD and at the following link:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xYHJ7sJ8dtQ&list=PL54CA22BoA48C48D6&index=9&feature=plpp\\_video](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xYHJ7sJ8dtQ&list=PL54CA22BoA48C48D6&index=9&feature=plpp_video)  
Click on CC to turn on English subtitles.



**ESTIMATED TIME:** 30 minutes





### FACILITATION

1. This activity is simple and appropriate for any audience. It is ideal for opening up discussion on gender and remittances.
2. Preparation: make sure you can project the video and that the sound works properly. Watch it at least twice before the session to familiarize yourself with the topics it covers. Go over the reflection questions as well.
3. During the session, hand out the reflection questions for participants to look over. Explain that they are to take notes during the video, and will have time afterward to organize their responses.
4. Clarify that the video commentary only refers to the case of Dominican women in Spain, not to all migrant women.
5. Start the video. Duration: 8:37 minutes.
6. Have participants respond to the reflection questions individually, applying what they have learned about feminization of migration and remittances from the conceptual part of this guide, or in earlier presentations.
7. Discuss their responses in a plenary session, while taking notes on flip chart paper. Ask the group: How does gender influence the sending of remittances?
8. **Optional topic:** return. The topic of migrants' return to their country of origin is mentioned. Specifically, all of the migrant women in the case study wish to return to their home country, but in reality not all of them will be able to. Ask: In your experience, what obstacles do migrant women face to being able to return home? Why might they choose not to?



#### KEY LESSONS .....

-  Remittances sent by women have the potential to mitigate poverty in their families and may also be used to create small businesses.
-  However, migrant women and their families continue to face problems that remittances alone cannot resolve. Public policies are needed to promote local economic development, while also working toward gender equality.





1. What remittance sending patterns does Carmen Moreno mention?
  - A. From whom to whom?
  - B. For what uses?
2. Is what we have seen in the video similar to the migration context that you know/work with? In what ways is it different?
3. What surprises you or catches your attention in this interview? Why?
4. Of the women who have returned to their home country, 100% of them in this study started a small business, such as small food or clothing shops, or a gelatin-making operation. In your opinion, what is the potential of these kinds of micro-enterprises? What pitfalls or limitations do they face?
5. At the end of the interview, Ms. Moreno mentions the importance of public policies in order to find solutions and improve the situation of migrant women and their families. Can you think of any examples of public policies that are needed?

## 2.3 CASE STUDY: LORNA'S LIFE STORY



**OBJECTIVE:** Identify the productive potential of remittances, as well as obstacles to investment and possible interventions from a gender perspective.



**MATERIALS/PREPARATION:** Photocopies of the life story and reflection questions, pens



**ESTIMATED TIME:** 45 minutes



### FACILITATION

1. Familiarize yourself with the life story and reflection questions. Try doing the exercise yourself first.
2. Divide participants into pairs or small groups by counting off (1-2-3-4), and hand out the case study to each group (with enough copies for each participant).
3. Ask them to read the story, select a note taker, and to discuss and respond to the questions together.
4. In a plenary discussion, go over each question. Ask one group to share its answers and the other groups to add to what has been said if they have any additional ideas to share.



### KEY LESSONS



Using remittances for education can be considered “productive” in terms of human development.



Interventions that aim to increase the impact of remittances run the risk of using or instrumentalizing migrants, especially if special efforts are not made to create mechanisms for migrants to participate and decide over development processes.



Initiatives to promote remittance investment should be accompanied by public policies that aim to create hospitable conditions for investment, to promote gender equality, and to meet people's basic needs (access to housing, education, health, employment, etc.).

# Philippines

## Lorna

### “I sacrificed myself for the sake of my children”

In the early 1980s, Lorna left her home town of Lemery in the Philippines for Italy in order to leave her husband, who was having an extramarital affair. Since her siblings and cousins were already working in Italy, it was an opportunity for her to get away and to earn enough money to put their five children through school. Divorce is illegal in the Philippines and the social stigma of separation led Lorna to migrate. She wanted to leave her relationship, and thought that her absence might help to resolve things.

After 5 years of working in Italy as a nanny, Lorna returned to find that her husband had fathered 5 children while she was gone. She then returned to Italy to continue working to pay for her children's university. After 10 years of working abroad, her children called her to come home because their father was sick and needed someone to take care of him. “Of course I took care of him. I was his wife. I just sacrificed myself for the sake of my children, because they didn't want me to separate from him. They never wanted me to leave.” She took care of her husband for a year and a half before he passed away from diabetes complications.

Today, Lorna is 55 years old. She never returned to Italy. Instead, her children went abroad to continue a cycle of migration that many families from Lemery experience. Three of her five children moved to Rome after she returned. Her first daughter went in 1990 and currently works as a nanny, followed by her son in 1992 who is a chef at a popular restaurant, and more recently, her youngest daughter who left in 2006 and works as a domestic worker. Lorna took care of her son's 4 children in the Philippines for 7 years before they were reunited in Italy. Her oldest and youngest sons who remained in the Philippines worked as fishermen before recently migrating to work in a factory in Korea.


Lorna maintains several business ventures. Initially, her family had a fishing business which employed about 20 men, but when her husband died she no longer wanted to manage it. Lorna's main business is her sari sari (small goods) store. She also sells rice, which brings her more customers because she has the support of local leaders. Lorna also rents out a videoke machine (karaoke with a small monitor).

As the remittance manager for her family, Lorna is in charge of purchasing property for her children abroad, and supervising the homes they are building. “The remittances they have sent over the past year and a half were used for my husband's medicine and hospitalization, but after that I used the money for land. My children were not really involved. They just told me to tell them how much to send because I'm their manager and I make the decisions. They have no idea what the houses they are having built look like.” Her children in Italy have no other investments aside from property.

Migration and remittances are permanent fixtures in the lives of people in Lemery. As a former migrant and mother of migrants, Lorna understands the sacrifices and benefits of having a transnational family. So far, her family has been quite fortunate, as it was not difficult for them to migrate to Italy, and today they are able to purchase land and make small investments. The social networks and connections they had in Italy and among their community in Lemery played a significant role in facilitating migration and influencing their personal drive to contribute to their family and community.

This life story was published in March 2010 and pertains to the project “Gender and Remittances: Constructing Gender-Sensitive Development,” implemented by UN-INSTRAW and UNDP, with funding from Japan WID.

\*Source: Guerrero, S. and C. Sobritchea. 2010. Migration, Remittances and Gender-Responsive Local Development: The case of the Philippines. Santo Domingo.



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**The Philippines is one of the largest labor exporting countries in the world, with almost 10 million Filipinos working abroad. Italy has a significant Filipino migrant population with 128,000 permanent residents, 84,000 temporary workers, and an estimated 20,000 workers with irregular status. The feminization of migration from the Philippines is evident: of the 26,000 Filipinos in Rome, 16,000 are women. Most of them find work as domestics or caregivers, in response to the growing demand as more Italian women participate in the formal labor market. 77% of Filipino remittance senders in Italy are women.\***

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## REFLECTION QUESTIONS ANALYSIS OF LORNA'S LIFE STORY

ACTIVITY 2.3



1. How do Lorna and her family spend the remittances? In what ways might these expenditures be considered “productive” and/or as contributing to human development?
2. In what ways have migration and/or remittances contributed to the empowerment of Lorna? In what ways have traditional gender roles been upheld through Lorna’s migration story?
3. From a gender perspective, what are some of the obstacles to further investment in Lorna’s story?
4. Is there potential for productive investment in the life story? What can government institutions do to increase that potential?
5. Can you think of an intervention or program that could increase the impact of remittances in this case? How might such an intervention promote gender equality?



## 2.4 DEBATE “WHAT DO WE MEAN BY ‘PRODUCTIVE USE’ OF REMITTANCES?”



**OBJECTIVE:** Understand the difference between the human development approach and the economic approach to development through a debate on the concept of ‘productive use’ of remittances.



**MATERIALS/PREPARATION:** Photocopies of the arguments for each group, podium (or chairs) from which each group will present its arguments, watch or clock to keep track of time, card with the words “1 minute”



**ESTIMATED TIME:** 1 hour



**FACILITATION**

1. This is a slightly more complicated activity recommended for use further along into the workshop when participants have a solid understanding of the foundational concepts from guides 1 and 2. Before beginning this activity, you will have to have explained the concepts of human development and economic development, as well as the progressive reductionism evident in the “remittances for development” approach which is explained in Guide 1, section 1.3.2 “The right to development.” It is also recommended to have presented information from Guide 2, especially sections 2.3 “Questioning the ‘Virtuous Circle’ of Remittances at the Local Level” and 2.4 “Virtuous circle or vicious cycle? Other Impacts of Migration at the Local Level.”
2. The activity consists of setting up a debate between two groups who will argue from two distinct positions. Each group will defend differing notions of what constitutes “productive” use of remittances in development terms.
3. Divide participants into two groups by counting off 1-2-1-2. They will not necessarily agree with the position that they will have to defend; the exercise requires that they try to understand and take up the logic of one argument or the other. Another option is to explain the two positions and allow participants to choose the group of their preference. Then, if one group is much bigger than the other, you can ask some people to switch to the other group.
4. Explain the basic tenets of “economic development” to Group 1: According to the dominant paradigm, if more remittances are channeled through formal banks and there is more “productive” investment of remittances, then remittances will increase local economic development. In addition, this approach considers one of the main obstacles to productive investment to be the fact that recipient households use remittances to cover basic needs instead of saving and investing. Group 1 will defend this dominant paradigm, arguing that the current use of remittances is not productive enough in terms of (economic) development, and will offer some ideas as to how remittances can be made more productive.

5. Next, explain the basic tenets of the “human development paradigm” to Group 2: This guide discusses different limitations of the dominant paradigm from a human development perspective, such as an increase in social inequalities and the absence of the State in this model. The human development approach does not believe that development challenges can be resolved in the marketplace alone, and argues that it is necessary to strengthen the capacity of the State to guarantee human rights, in order to expand people’s capacities and liberties. Group 2 will defend this position, arguing that investing remittances in education and health is indeed productive in terms of human development, but that remittances alone cannot be the motor of an entire development strategy. This group will also offer alternative ideas as to how to implement their approach.
6. Hand out the work sheets with the outline of arguments for each group, “Economistic development” for Group 1 and “Human development” for Group 2.
7. Explain that participants will have 15-20 minutes to organize their arguments. They should review the list of arguments and “make them their own” by thinking of examples, additional points, and one or two ideas of possible interventions based on this approach. Each debate team should choose a speaker, and the rest of the team will take notes on the arguments of the other team.
8. The debate will be structured as follows:
  - ❑ **Opening argument:** Each team will have 5-7 minutes for the speaker to present their vision of remittances and development and to propose their ideas of interventions. If the team prefers, other members will also be able to add to the speaker’s arguments (the speaker may choose to yield remaining time to other team members).
  - ❑ **Notes for rebuttals:** When a team is presenting, members of the opposite team should take notes on their arguments in order to respond and refute their points following the opening arguments.
  - ❑ **Rebuttals:** Those who have taken notes will have the opportunity to briefly explain why they think the other team’s proposals will not work, or to point out flaws in their approach. Each team will have 3-5 minutes.
  - ❑ **Closing argument:** Each speaker will sum up his/her team’s position and response to the rebuttals in a closing argument of no longer than 2 minutes.
9. During the debate, keep a stop watch close at hand to keep track of time, as well as a card announcing “1 minute” to hold up when the speaker has 1 minute remaining. Take note of the most controversial or debatable points, as well as any argument or topic in common that comes up in both groups.
10. **Variation:** If you are short on time, you can cut back the time allotted for each phase of the debate, or you can limit the debate only to the presentation of opening arguments.



#### KEY LESSONS .....

- By asking the question “What do we mean by ‘productive use’ of remittances?”, we are questioning the notion of what is needed in order to “produce.” Do we only need remittances? Or also infrastructure, solid institutions, comprehensive policies, etc.?
- This debate leads us to question the model of development itself, and to champion the human development paradigm based on its holistic perspective. The human development approach understands economic development not as an end in and of itself, but rather as part of a social and collective process that seeks to expand people’s liberties and capacities.



GROUP 1

## ECONOMISTIC DEVELOPMENT



ACTIVITY 2.4

### SUGGESTED ARGUMENTS:

- ❑ Migrants are rational economic actors whose remittances contribute to the development of their home countries.
- ❑ The problem is that their families use the remittances mostly on consumption. They neither save nor invest. This is a missed opportunity. If remittances are not being used productively, their impact on economic development will be limited.
- ❑ What we need to do is promote the inclusion of remittance recipients into formal banking services, especially designed for women. If they open a bank account and start saving, banks will amass more capital and will be able to extend credit to both remittance recipients and non-recipients in the community at large.
- ❑ We should also promote the productive investment of remittances, especially in micro-businesses, in order to create more jobs in the community.
- ❑ With remittances coming into the community, people using banking services, and greater productive investment, there will be more money circulating in general.
- ❑ Thus, families will be able to purchase the services they need through the market, including health care, education, care services, cleaning service, etc. This will generate more employment in other sectors as well.

### WRITE DOWN ADDITIONAL EXAMPLES AND ARGUMENTS HERE:

### INTERVENTIONS:

- ❑ Therefore, we think that the following must be done...





## SUGGESTED ARGUMENT:

- ❑ The use of remittances for food, housing, health, education, etc. is “productive” indeed in terms of human development. Remittances help some families to overcome the deprivations (poverty, lack of services) that restrict their liberties, and they also increase access to basic rights such as health and education.
- ❑ Although the effects of remittances on human development are generally positive, remittances cannot serve as the cornerstone of any development strategy for a number of reasons:
  - ❑ Not all households receive remittances. In this sense, the “remittances for development” approach is too individualist, as it focuses on the capacity of individuals to resolve their problems through private means, instead of bringing about improvements that will benefit all community members.
  - ❑ This runs the risk of increasing inequalities between people who receive remittances and those who do not.
  - ❑ Market mechanisms alone cannot bring about human development. Other dimensions must be considered, including equality, empowerment, social integration, and democracy.
  - ❑ This leaves out the role of public institutions, which are ultimately responsible for guaranteeing the well-being of all residents within their jurisdiction.
- ❑ If families must send someone abroad in order to earn a decent salary in order to cover costs of services that should be paid for by the State, the impact of remittances on local economic development will always be limited.
- ❑ In order for remittances to have a greater impact on development, interventions have to go beyond formal banking and productive investment. Before encouraging investment, we should analyze how remittances are actually used in order to determine which services they are subsidizing and therefore, where the deficits lie in governments’ provisions for citizens’ basic needs.

## WRITE DOWN ADDITIONAL EXAMPLES AND ARGUMENTS HERE:

## INTERVENTIONS:

- ❑ Therefore, we think that the following must be done...

## 2.5 ANALYSIS AND REFORMULATION OF A “REMITTANCES FOR DEVELOPMENT” PROJECT



**OBJECTIVE:** Develop participants’ analytical capacity through the analysis and reformulation of a typical initiative from a gender and rights-based perspective.



**MATERIALS/PREPARATION:** Photocopies of the project descriptions and work sheets, pens, flip chart paper, and markers for each group



**ESTIMATED TIME:** 1 hour (25 minutes for analysis, 25 minutes for alternatives, 10 minutes to discuss conclusions)



### FACILITATION

1. This exercise is best suited for development practitioners to help them apply their knowledge to project design. It is a slightly longer activity that would make sense toward the end of the workshop.
2. The primary argument of the exercise is that before becoming entrepreneurs, people first must be considered (1) rights holders who enjoy (2) conditions of social equality or a somewhat “level playing field.” This exercise gathers several examples of projects that are typical of the “remittances for development” paradigm. The idea is that participants identify what is missing from these projects in terms of gender, human development, the transnational dimension, and migrants’ participation.
3. Before beginning, you will have to have explained these four concepts, drawing upon the explanations in Guide 1, sections 1.3.1 “Gender as a central analytical category,” 1.3.2 “The right to development,” 1.3.3 “The spatial dimension of development: From transnational to local” and 1.3.4 “Migrants as protagonists of development.”
4. Familiarize yourself with the two different project examples and the work sheets that follow.
5. Divide participants into work groups of no more than 4 persons each.
6. Explain the objective of the activity and hand out the materials. Go over the prompt questions together to ensure that everyone understands the four columns on the work sheet.
7. Ask each group to select a note taker who will be in charge of reading their ideas out loud / presenting them later on.



8. They will have 1 hour to complete two tasks: 1) analyze their case study using the Analysis matrix and 2) come up with ideas to modify and/or reformulate the project from a gender and rights-based perspective using the Alternatives matrix.
9. During the working period, the facilitator should circulate among the groups to make sure that they understand the activity and are on the right track. The exercise is somewhat complex, and participants will not have all the information they need to do a complete analysis. The idea is for them to analyze the case study to see what elements are present and what is missing, in order to fill in the gaps or reformulate it using the second matrix. Encourage participants not to get bogged down trying to answer all of the prompt questions, but rather to use them to launch into a brainstorm regarding the category they fall under.
10. Participants should write down their ideas on two sheets of flip chart paper replicating the table from their work sheets ANALYSIS and ALTERNATIVES.
11. Groups will have the opportunity to present their analysis and ideas during a plenary session. If there is more than one group with the same case study, they should present one after the other in order to allow for discussion after all groups have presented.
12. Be careful to allow roughly the same amount of time to discuss alternative ideas as you do analysis of what is missing.
13. If you have an assistant facilitator, ask him/her to type up observations and main ideas in a Word file and/or directly onto PowerPoint slides with some preliminary “conclusions.” This will be useful both to sum up main ideas at the end of the session or workshop, and to include in the workshop report.
14. **Variation 1:** Have the groups only do the critical analysis of their project, and leave the brainstorm of alternatives for larger group discussion in the plenary session.
15. **Variation 2:** If you have plenty of time and all participants have good internet access, you could give them an assignment prior to the session of looking for their own example of a “typical” project to analyze. The quantity and quality of available information varies by web page and project, but they could begin a general search at the following sites:

**Inter-American Development Bank , Multilateral Investment Fund:**

<http://www5.iadb.org/mif/HomeDNN/tabid/40/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

**International Fund for Agricultural Development, Financing Facility for Remittances:**

<http://www.ifad.org/remittances/index.htm>



## KEY LESSONS

- A majority of “remittances for development” projects, if they consider women at all, often do so in a way that seeks to take advantage of their managerial capacity and reproductive role as household administrators without necessarily considering their specific needs or strategic measures that could lead to their empowerment. In so doing, they run the risk of instrumentalizing women instead of empowering them.
- Currently, a large part of family remittances is being used to cover basic household needs: food, housing, education, and health. Not all families receive remittances, meaning that remittance-based development initiatives could actually worsen inequalities between households. Alternative ways of guaranteeing basic rights for all people must be sought, such as through public policies or comprehensive development planning processes.
- Many “remittances for development” projects focus on the origin country as the only place in need of development, while many destination countries are also facing serious development challenges. In addition, possibilities for local development in origin are largely determined by structural factors, such as participation in markets, neoliberal policies, etc. Interventions must take place at several levels in order to achieve the desired impact.
- Migrants’ involvement in such projects tends to be limited to sending resources. Practitioners and policymakers must seek out new ways to involve the migrant population in decision-making processes about migration- and remittance-based initiatives so that they are able to participate not only as investors but also as beneficiaries of development.



**PROJECT:** “Remittances and emigrants as resources for development”

**COUNTRIES:** Cape Verde and Italy

**IMPLEMENTED BY:** a local NGO. The project draws on the broad geographic coverage of the NGO and its experience in microfinance and microcredit, including enhancing beneficiaries’ administrative capacities, promoting business creation, and reproductive health services.

**DURATION:** 18 months

**BUDGET:** €200,000

**GENERAL OBJECTIVES:** Reduce poverty and guarantee food security for the most vulnerable families and individuals of Cape Verde through better use of migrant remittances through microcredit.

**SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:**

- ❑ Generate detailed information, gathered in participatory fashion, on the rates of family emigration from Santiago, as well as specific problems regarding remittance flows, costs and usage, and short and medium term needs.
- ❑ Implement a pilot microcredit system, using emigrants’ resources and external funds to encourage savings and the partial use of remittances in productive activities.
- ❑ Inform women throughout the country on the rules of emigration, in order to reduce their vulnerability.
- ❑ Strengthen the role of the emigrant community to get involved as decentralized development actors.

**TARGET POPULATION:** approximately 6,000 female heads of household and their families (who have migrant family members abroad and receive remittances) on the island of Santiago, Cape Verde and diaspora groups in Italy.

**MAIN ACTIVITIES:**

- ❑ Preliminary, participatory survey to identify the typology and usage of remittances, associated costs and transfer mechanisms.
- ❑ Define strategies to use remittances to finance productive activities.
- ❑ Disseminate information among families of migrants, especially women, on the different possible uses for remittances for income generation activities instead of consumption.



## CASE 1 CAPE VERDE



### ACTIVITY 2.5

- ❑ Establish a pilot fund to finance entrepreneurial activities started by migrant-sending families.
- ❑ Establish credit guidelines, offer technical assistance, and finance pilot projects.
- ❑ Train diaspora groups in northern Italy on project management and small business administration.

**ACCORDING TO THE NGO:** “The Project will help the population, especially women who are the most vulnerable in our country, in the fight to eliminate poverty and to guarantee food security. It is innovative because it will help women remittance recipients realize the fragility of using remittances only for consumption and will encourage them to use remittances for income generation activities. In this way, it aims to improve the use of migrants’ remittances in order to contribute to social development and raise the incomes of women heads of households in Cape Verde. The remittances will be used through the establishment of a micro-finance circuit to invest in productive activities. In addition to creating a fund, our organization will act as intermediary in the sending of remittances by offering lower costs than banks.”



**PROJECT:** “Entrepreneurial leadership pilot program focused on migrant families’ transnational networks”

**COUNTRIES:** Peru, and diaspora organizations in Italy, Spain, U.S. and Japan

**IMPLEMENTED BY:** NGO focused on women’s rights

**DURATION:** 24 months

**BUDGET** €160,000

**GENERAL OBJECTIVE:** Strengthen the links between migrant organizations and migrants’ families’ organizations in Peru in order to increase productivity through investment of remittances.

**TARGET POPULATION:** Transnational families from the Junin region in Peru and Peruvian migrant organizations abroad

**CONTEXT:** Migrants from Peru send around US\$424 million to their families in Junin. These remittances are used primarily on consumption and education, with only 8% being invested in development or the management of small businesses. Migration is also creating transnational communities that contribute to the economic development of Peru through new ideas and resources for investment. However, the Junin region has not exploited the full potential of remittances; 57% of Junin’s population continues to live below the poverty line, and 24% live in extreme poverty. Some of the challenges to poverty reduction are the high unemployment rate and the lack of public policies that promote employment and migrants’ resources.

**ACTIVITIES:**

1. Strengthen the capacities of the target population through training on entrepreneurship and international trade
2. Encourage the target population to undertake entrepreneurial projects by supporting 20 family businesses and promoting migrant investment in these businesses
3. Update available information on transnational families
4. Implement a regional governmental strategy for Junin to promote investment of remittances



# PROMPT QUESTIONS

ACTIVITY 2.5



Gender as an analytical category	Human development	Transnational dimension	Migrants as protagonists of development
<p>What <b>information</b> are we missing in order to carry out a proper gender analysis?</p> <p>What inequalities might there be at the <b>micro level</b> (individual/household), <b>meso level</b> (social networks, labor market) and <b>macro level</b> (bilateral agreements, globalization processes) that could affect the success of the project?</p> <p>Is there any risk of <b>instrumentalizing</b> or using women?</p> <p>What possibilities are there for <b>empowering</b> women through this initiative?</p>	<p>What are remittances currently spent on? What <b>needs</b> are they covering?</p> <p>What <b>rights</b> are not being guaranteed by governments?</p> <p>Is there any risk of this project increasing or deepening <b>inequalities</b>?</p> <p>What is considered “<b>productive</b>” use of remittances according to this project?</p>	<p>What role do <b>public institutions</b> play in this initiative, if any?</p> <p>How <b>sustainable</b> is this model of development for the origin country? For groups in the destination country?</p> <p>What <b>structural problems</b> could be contributing to the problems that the project is trying to solve? Could any of these problems affect the success of the project?</p>	<p>What kind of <b>vision</b> does this initiative have of migrants? (a. Subjects who are creating development, b. Subjects who decide over development, or c. Beneficiaries of development).</p>

CRITICAL ANALYSIS





Migrants as protagonists of development				
Gender as an analytical category	Human development	Transnational dimension		
<p>How can the <b>empowerment</b> component be strengthened?</p> <p>Is there room to promote the more <b>equitable distribution</b> of family work? Or to improve women's negotiating <b>power</b> within households?</p> <p><b>ALTERNATIVES</b></p>	<p>What other alternatives are there in order to guarantee the fulfillment of these <b>rights</b> (aside from micro-entrepreneurship)?</p> <p>What kinds of <b>public policies</b> could complement this initiative in order to guarantee people's rights?</p> <p>How could the objectives be reformulated from a rights-based perspective? (Remember to consider both origin and destination)</p> <p>How might we broaden the notion of what is considered productive?</p>	<p>What kinds of public policies are needed in destination countries in order to <b>protect the rights</b> of the migrant population?</p> <p>What political measures must be taken to address the <b>structural problems</b> you have identified (at the national or international level)?</p>	<p>What adjustments could be made to <b>avoid the instrumentalization</b> of migrants?</p> <p>How can migrants' <b>participation</b> be encouraged in a meaningful way so that they can be decision-makers and beneficiaries (not just investors)?</p>	



# ANALYSIS MATRIX



ACTIVITY 2.5

Migrants as protagonists of development	
Transnational dimension	
Human development	
Gender as an analytical categoria	
	CRITICAL ANALYSIS



	Gender as an analytical category	Human development	Transnational dimension	Migrants as protagonists of development
ALTERNATIVES				

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## RESOURCES FOR FURTHER CONSULTATION

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# GLOBAL CARE CHAINS

## GOALS OF THE GUIDE

- 1** Explain the concept of global care chains as a linkage between origin and destination countries
- 2** Introduce the issue of care in the political agendas emerging from the migration-development debate

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 1** Understand the concept of global care chains
- 2** Make the link between migration, care, and development
- 3** Identify problems in origin and destination countries, as well as potential points of intervention and stakeholders who can bring about change
- 4** Generate debate about possible reforms related to migration and care work

This guide explores the topic of global care chains, a phenomenon which is taking place within the context of globalization, feminization of migration, and the transformation of social welfare states. Chains are formed when women migrate to work in the care sector (domestic work, personal healthcare services, etc.), while transferring care work in their own households in origin and sometimes in destination to other women. Considering the global aspects of care chains affords us a broader perspective on the migration-development link, and allows us to publicly debate issues that tend to fall outside the political agendas for development in origin and destination countries alike. Above all, analysis of care chains enables us to: 1) re-value women's economic contribution and recognize the role gender plays in the organization of our socioeconomic systems; and 2) expose the (low) priority given to the daily maintenance of society (caregiving) within socioeconomic systems and the policies that shape them. In a context in which many countries are facing "care crises," it is argued that migration neither causes the problems in origin countries nor does it resolve them in destination countries; rather, it reveals existing problems and the urgency of finding solutions from a transnational perspective.





### 3.1 WHAT ARE GLOBAL CARE CHAINS?

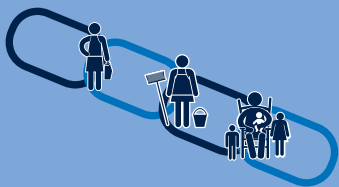
**Care work** is the name given to all the daily activities that sustain our lives and health, such as domestic work (food preparation, cleaning, laundry) and personal care (of children, the elderly, people who are sick or have a disability). These activities are most commonly performed by women within the household for free. This derives from the traditional sexual division of labor, in which women have been assigned the role of unpaid care giver and men have been assigned the role of provider/paid worker. There are also paid care services, such as domestic work, child care, elder care, etc., which are also considered “feminized jobs” based on their association with women’s traditional gender role.

In recent decades, the traditional system of care provision has become unsustainable, even entering into **crisis**, in countries of the global North and South alike. In the North, **social changes** – including the mass integration of women into the paid work force, the transformation of family structures, aging of the population, and changes in women’s expectations for their lives – have pushed the traditional model to its breaking point. However, neither governments (nor the private sector nor male partners) have assumed care as a social responsibility and therefore public issue, which means that the primary responsibility for providing care continues to fall on the private household, and especially women. The welfare **state has gone into crisis**. In the absence of public solutions, individual women are devising diverse strategies to cover household care needs, including hiring a domestic worker or nanny, who is quite often a migrant woman.

Countries of the global South are also experiencing a “**crisis of social reproduction**” (Herrera 2006), due to the difficulties households are facing in the guarantee of daily life-sustaining processes. Structural adjustment plans and subsequent neoliberal reform packages have had a disproportionate impact on women who, like their counterparts in the North, are also assigned primary responsibility for family well-being. As a consequence, and in response to the demand for female labor to provide care services in the North,



Source: Poster text taken from Noticiero Intercultural de ACSUR Las Segovias, Spain.  
Photo credit: Graphic design workshop Traficantes de Sueños



*The care crisis has been a driving factor behind the feminization of migration.*

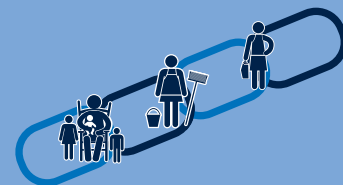
many women are emigrating to work in this sector in many different destination countries, thus contributing to the growing **feminization of migration**. The women migrating are often mothers who then must leave their own children under the care of their mother or sister, thereby transferring care work to yet another woman in their country of origin. (For more information on the relationship between globalization and feminization of migration, which is the context within which the phenomenon of global care chains occurs, see guide 1, section 1.4).

Global care chains exist transnationally, arising out of the need to sustain daily life. They form when households transfer care work from one home to another, based on power hierarchies such as gender, ethnicity, social class, and place of origin (Pérez Orozco et al 2008:88). In its simplest form, a care chain might materialize like this: in the destination country, a woman who has been struggling to reconcile her professional life with the care needs of her family decides to hire a migrant woman to take care of the housework. At the same time, the migrant woman worker has to devise a way to cover the care needs of her own family, which is a task that often falls on the shoulders of other female family members, whether in origin or destination. In the lowest links of the chain, the value ascribed to care work is even lower, and this work is often performed without pay at all (Yeates 2005). Thus, at the end of the chain we often find that the migrant's eldest daughter, sister or mother

#### Example of a global care chain

*A Spanish family decides to hire a Dominican woman named Cristal to look after their grandfather, who requires constant care. The family initially assumed that one of the daughters-in-law, Carmen, could take on this task, leaving the job she took up when her children had grown up and left home. However, Carmen did not wish to return to full-time caregiving, and it turns out that sharing the costs of hiring a migrant woman between all of the grandfather's children is not that expensive. In turn, Cristal (the worker they hired) migrated in order to earn enough income to sustain her family; she left her own children in her mother's care in the Dominican Republic. Cristal, who has become a transnational mother, monitors from afar the quality of care that her children are receiving, and eventually decides that they will receive better care in the hands of her sister-in-law, who is a teacher. Her children go to live with her sister-in-law for a time, until she too decides to emigrate. Thus, the responsibility for caregiving is transferred again, this time to Cristal's oldest daughter, who ends up quitting school in order to fulfill this responsibility.*

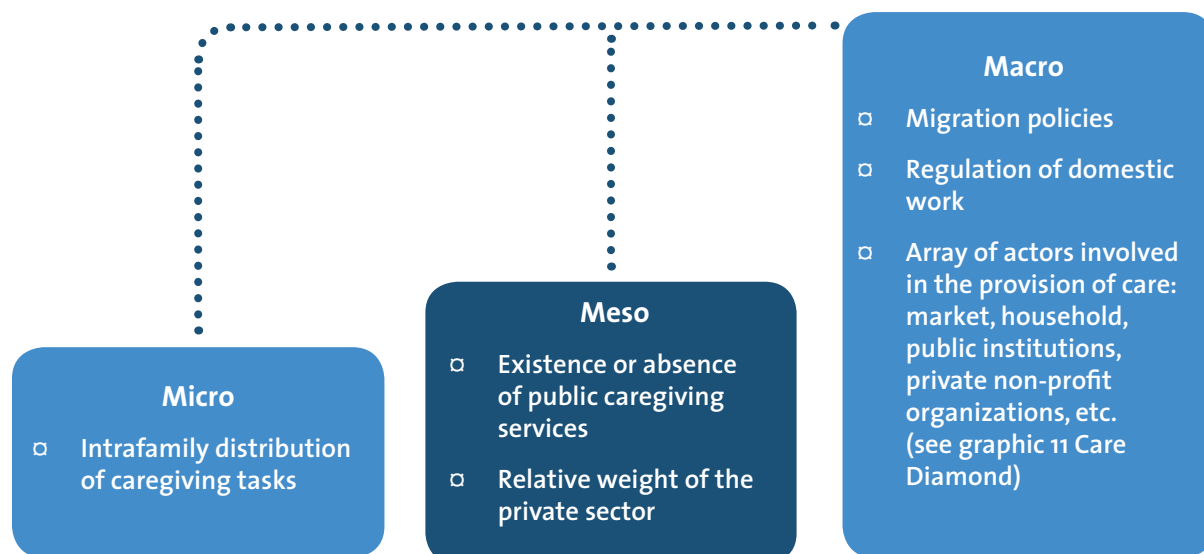
Source: Adapted from Pérez Orozco et al 2008



has taken over the care work that she used to perform before migrating abroad to care for someone else's family.

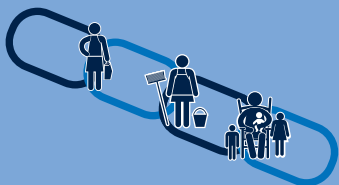
Men and women perform **different roles** in care chains, with men generally being the beneficiaries of care while women are the providers and/or managers of care. Women who give care are motivated by different factors; some do it for a salary, while others provide care out of affection, a sense of responsibility, coercion or guilt. There are also men who provide care, but this tends to happen either to cover a temporary need or when it is a paid job, such as caring for the elderly.

Moving beyond the level of the individuals involved, we see that the **form** that care chains take depends on several factors that pertain to the micro, meso, and macro levels:



Taken together, this arrangement or model is what we call the **social organization of care**.

The model of social organization of care typical in countries of the global North has come to depend on the externalization (outsourcing or commoditization) of domestic work and caregiving. This involves a process of mobilizing labor through family and social networks as well market mechanisms. This mobilization oftentimes requires that workers migrate, whether internally (from rural to urban areas), just across the border (for example, Guatemalan women crossing into Mexico), or internationally/transregionally (for example, Filipina women in Italy). The ways in which families externalize caregiving vary according to the families' position in the care chain: for poorer households in origin countries, the strategy is for mothers to emigrate in order to perform care work abroad, which requires a reorganization of their own household; for households with more resources in destination countries, the strategy is to employ feminized, imported labor (Yeates 2005).



Instead of correcting the inequitable distribution of reproductive labor, care chains depend on and perpetuate inequalities, transferring caregiving tasks to women of another social class, migratory status, or ethnic origin. With domestic work, employer households tend to reproduce gender dynamics by undervaluing the work of the woman they have hired, just as they have traditionally undervalued work performed by housewives. It is not surprising, then, that this

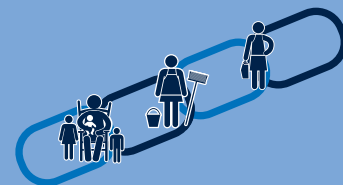
work tends to be precarious and poorly paid, with less than desirable working conditions.

### Do men participate in global care chains?

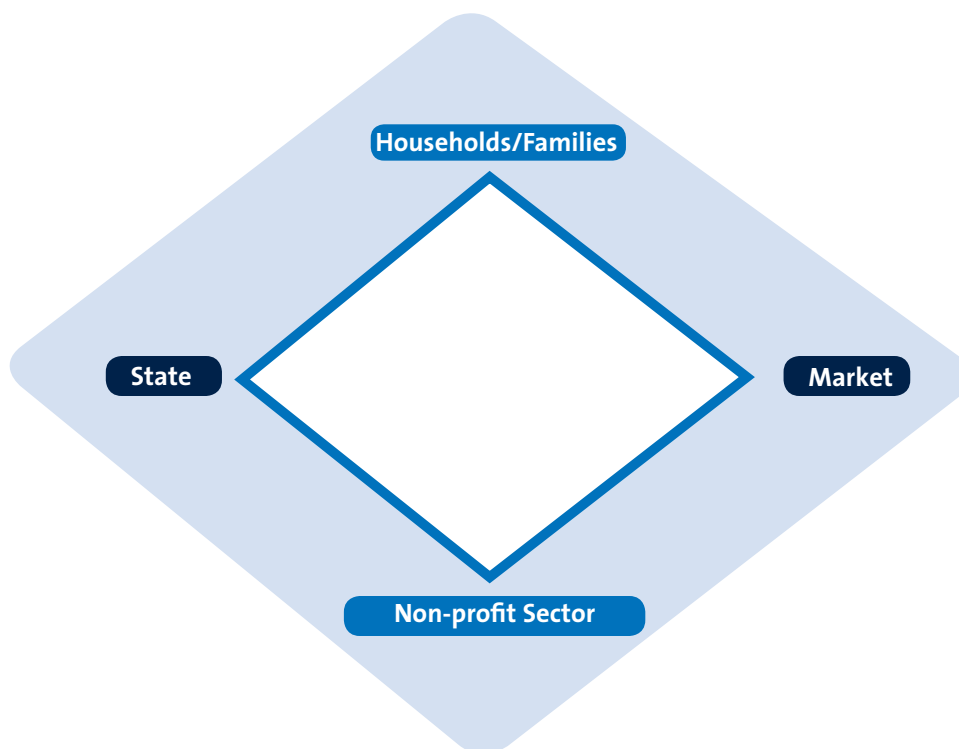
- ❑ *There are indeed men who perform care work. In origin countries, when women migrate, men often increase the time they spend on unpaid caregiving, especially when they are in charge of young children. However, this arrangement tends to be transitional and temporary, often relying on the support of a wide circle of women (that is, care is dispersed). In destination countries, men are increasingly performing paid care work, especially for elderly men. However, when a man migrates, his departure does not usually involve a significant reorganization of the household in the country of origin. Most men do not assume the responsibility of being primary caregivers, neither before nor after migration. Therefore, men's migration does not bring about the formation of care chains.*
- ❑ *Although the protagonists of care chains are women, we must consider the ways in which other actors are involved, especially men, public institutions, and businesses. In this way, we can come to see the absence of these actors in terms of assuming responsibility for caregiving, as well as their presence as those benefiting from the care provided through the private, women-led global care chains.*

Source: Orozco 2009

In short, what the different models of the organization of care have in common among countries is that: 1) caregiving is undervalued if not invisible, and is not counted as an economic element; 2) in large part, the system continues to depend on the unpaid or underpaid work performed by women; 3) public institutions do not assume caregiving as a social responsibility (or they take up a complementary role to households); 4) households are still left to figure out their own solutions, which often involve externalization and/or women's migration; and 5) as women are migrating globally, solutions to the care crisis have come to rely on their migration.



**Graphic 11. Care Diamond**



Source: UNRISD 2010

## ? Stop & Reflect

### Formal Market

1. Are global care chains forming within the migration context that you are most familiar with? Who is migrating and who is providing care? Why do you think it is like that?
2. What existing inequalities lead to or are present in the formation of care chains? What inequalities are perpetuated through the care chains?
3. What shape does the social organization of care take in your country? Who/which entities are involved? Do you believe that caregiving is considered a political and social issue of concern?

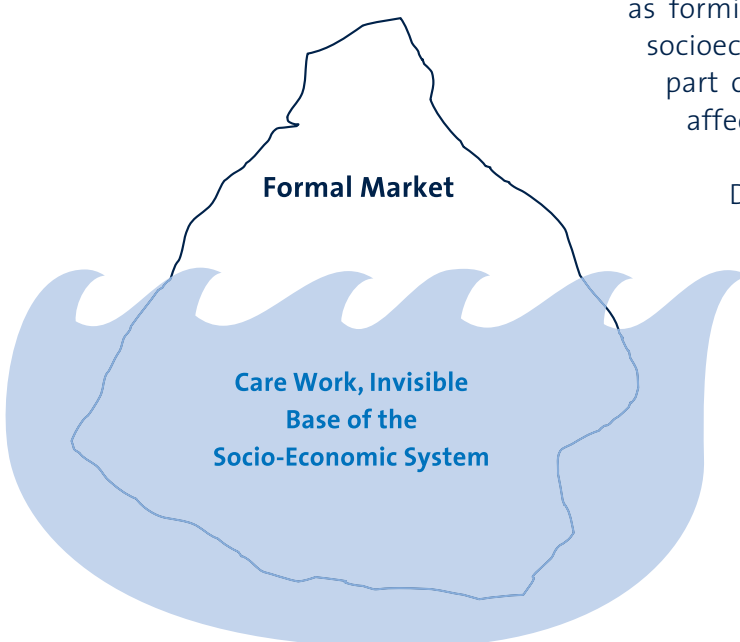


## 3.2 CARE AS AN ELEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT

When seen from an **economistic** perspective, it would seem that global care chains are evidence of the functioning of the marketplace, since they facilitate the movement of the feminized labor force to work in this sector (see Guide 1, section 1.3.2 for more information on the economistic vision of development). In addition, the volume of remittances sent by migrant women and their impact on home communities may also be seen as positive aspects of the phenomenon of care chains (see Guide 2 for analysis of remittances from a gender perspective). However, these observations only capture the monetary exchanges in care markets, and thus have limited explanatory power to understand the relationship between caregiving and development.

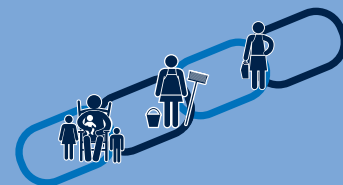
From a **rights-based perspective**, care is a key dimension of human development, which is understood as the capacity to live a life worth living. This approach sees the economy as encompassing more than just the functioning of market. Rather, the economy is understood as the multi-faceted process of sustaining life, or the satisfaction of human needs and provision of resources needed for people to acquire capacities and liberties. **The most urgent and daily need of all people throughout their lives is care.** In addition to providing material needs (cleanliness, food, physical assistance) and emotional needs (recognition, accompaniment),

**Graphic 12**  
**Socio-Economic System as an Iceberg**



caregiving reproduces the labor force by preparing its participants to go out and earn income. In this way, the daily provision of well-being can be seen as forming the invisible base of the entire socioeconomic system, like the submerged part of an iceberg. As such, care directly affects possibilities for development.

Despite its importance, caregiving continues to be rendered **invisible** in public accounts, political agendas, and society at large. In large part, this is due to the fact that caregiving has traditionally been provided for free by women within the private sphere of the household and as such, it has not been considered work.



The invisibility of caregiving has several dimensions:

- ▶ No **pay** for many caregiving jobs
- ▶ Absence of **data** to measure caregiving and **concepts** to capture care
- ▶ Lack of social **rights** associated with caregiving
- ▶ Inexistence of **regulations** establishing minimum labor conditions and required qualifications
- ▶ Lack of social **value** assigned to care work

Care work does not necessarily become visible when some of the tasks are transformed into paid domestic work. The invisibility simply takes on a different shape. Now the invisible woman working is no longer the housewife without access to her own income or rights to retirement or vacation...but a migrant domestic worker with no contract and an irregular migratory status.

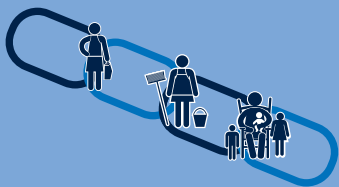
In summary, if we understand that care forms the invisible base of the socioeconomic structure, with a clear social and economic value, then we should consider caregiving as part of the process of creating sustainable livelihoods that provide the resources needed for human development. So, the questions we must ask regarding development are not about the effects of care chains on the labor market or remittances, but rather: **What impact do care chains have on the social provision of care in origin and destination countries? What problems are made more visible in origin and destination countries when women migrate to work as caregivers?**



### Stop & Reflect

1. What role does care play in socioeconomic systems?
2. Why is caregiving “invisible”? What are some of the consequences of its being invisible?
3. What is the relationship between global care chains and human development?





### 3.3 CARE IS ALREADY GLOBAL

Care work, like almost all aspects of socioeconomic systems, is affected by globalization. Within this process, migration is transforming modes of caregiving, resources available for providing care, ways of managing and understanding the family, motherhood and fatherhood, and the very concept of what constitutes “good care.” In this sense, the capacity to meet daily needs on either extreme of the care chains depends on what happens in other countries, at both the macro and micro levels: changes in employer households affect the people they hire; changes may occur in origin that lead to family reunification either in the destination country or back home; social, migration, and labor policies affect the growth of the care sector, conditioning job opportunities for migrant women as well as their ability to remit. For all of these reasons, we must consider the demand for and provision of care from a transnational perspective.

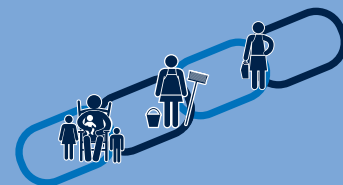
#### 3.3.1 PROBLEMS IN ORIGIN COUNTRIES

In origin countries, the phenomena of feminization of migration and the formation of care chains present several challenges, including: the redistribution and constant readjustment of care work within the household; transnational motherhood and the impact of migration on children who remain in origin; and the possible export of the care crisis.

Following the migration of a woman, the household must **redistribute** the care work that she used to perform among the remaining family members. The most common arrangement is for other women (mother, sister, oldest daughter) to assume this responsibility, which leaves them with less time to dedicate to other activities such as education, personal improvement, or paid work. This increases their dependency on remittances. Sometimes, the household may resort to hiring a domestic worker, who is often another migrant from the countryside or from a neighboring country. This solution is also private, which follows the pattern of absolving the State from its responsibility to guarantee social reproduction. In this way, internal migration processes link up with transnational migration, and the chains get longer and more complicated, with governments continuing to abnegate their responsibility to respond to the care needs of their constituents.

It is common for migrant women to stay involved in the management of care in their transnational households, especially since **constant adjustments** must be made to the original care arrangement. These changes depend on the willingness and availability of substitute caregivers, the changing needs of children and the elderly, the participation (or not) of male members of the household, especially husbands when the migrant women have children. The selection of who will be in charge tends to follow a hierarchical pattern based on gender and generation, with the first option being the husband if there is one, though it is not common for the husband to assume





the full management of all care work. In the absence of a willing/available husband, caregiving responsibilities will be left to the migrant's mother or mother-in-law, sister, or in the absence of these options, the oldest child. Each arrangement has its own complications; however, it is worth pointing out the particular difficulties facing the eldest children when they are left in charge. For some young men, having to care for younger siblings involves a shift in their gender role, which can lead to their suffering rejection or harassment by their peers for being "effeminate." In other cases, the distinction between caregiver and the person being cared for may become blurry, whether because there is little age difference between siblings or because the grandmother who is in theory caring for her grandchildren is also a person in need of care.

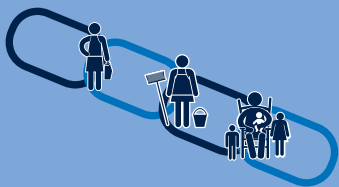
Another challenge for households with migrant mothers abroad is having to invent new forms of providing care despite physical distance (Salazar Parreñas 2001 y 2005). This phenomenon has come

### Criteria for choosing a family caregiver in Bolivia: Gender, generation and "temporary availability"

*For mothers, the decision to migrate involves securing the support of a close and trusted family member who will provide the best possible care for her children. In the case of Bolivian women who are migrating to Spain, there appears to be a hierarchy of criteria for choosing who will substitute their care work, based on the gender and generational position of possible caregivers. Following these criteria, a first option is their husbands, when they have one, although the migrating mothers generally take the precaution of having a woman take the reins on the bulk of the work. The people who are assumed to be available are the migrant women's mothers or mothers-in-law because they presumably do not have activities outside the home and may already know the children's routine if they have been living together. When neither grandmothers nor aunts are available, the substitution is transferred to the older siblings.*

*In this sense, the selection is linked to the "temporary availability" of whoever is to replace the migrant mother. In the case of the grandmothers, this comes at a time when they have already completed a cycle of domestic work and possibly work outside the home. For the oldest children of the migrant, it involves not having work responsibilities beyond the time required for organizing household work. In these cases, it is assumed that the family's material needs will be covered by the migrant parents' remittances, which unfortunately is not always the case.*

Source: Jiménez Zamora et al, UN-INSTRAW (now UN Women), 2010



### Migration and care in a context of HIV/AIDS: Case study from Lesotho

*The HIV/AIDS epidemic is generating high demand for care work. In highly affected countries, the epidemic is shifting the configuration of households and the organization of care work therein. In Lesotho, for example, the epidemic has had the following impacts (Magrath 2004:18): increase in household dependency ratios; increase in the number of widows and female-headed households; incomplete households (missing one parent or entire generation); households with additional orphan in the care of next of kin (often elderly women); orphan-headed households; defunct households (when both parents die, the children are dispersed to live with relatives). In all of these configurations, pressure falls on other household members, especially women, to care for the sick and others they have inherited as dependents. Likewise, the loss of income that the affected persons used to bring in, together with the costs of caring for the sick, leave many women with few options but to migrate themselves in search of paid employment. In a vicious cycle, migration exposes migrants and their families to HIV, increasing women's care load and leading more women to migrate.*

Source: Crush et al, UN-INSTRAW (now part of UN Women) 2010

to be called **transnational motherhood**. Even though migrant mothers are not involved in the physical work of caring for their children, this does not mean that they abandon parenting altogether. Instead, they often seek out new ways of caring despite the distance, such as telephone or internet communications, household management from afar, emotional support, visits, and sending remittances. These transnational forms of caregiving show that the affective and management components of this work can transcend the physical presence of the responsible party. They also involve an expansion of traditional notions of motherhood to also include economic provisioning. (For more information on the transnational family, see Guide 1, section 1.4).

One issue that has become quite controversial is **the impact of migration on the children who remain behind** in origin countries. Since care is a valuable resource, it is argued that children from poor countries are paying the highest price for this transfer of caregiving abroad, after the women themselves. There is a tendency to blame migrant mothers – much more so than migrant fathers – for many different problems facing children and youth in origin, from cognitive and emotional difficulties in small children, to early pregnancy, drug use, and gang activity among adolescents (Paiewonsky 2007).

Separation certainly comes at a high emotional and affective cost for children and mothers alike. However, there is very little empirical evidence that demonstrates that women's migration



is the cause of behavioral problems, and where evidence does exist, results have been mixed at best.<sup>14</sup> Such criticism also tends to ignore the important role of extended family networks in providing care and guidance.

Instead of simply blaming mothers for the problems facing youth, more analysis is needed which takes into account many different factors together, such as the role of fathers, public resources available for children and youth, affection and care provided by family and community networks, etc. **It is very likely that the migration of mothers is not the cause of these problems, but an attempt to resolve or compensate for existing problems.** In this sense, their migration may mitigate some problems, highlight other existing problems and/or worsen others. More studies are needed to ascertain the real impact of migration on families in order to come to a better understanding of the issue and to be able to design interventions that contribute to the well-being of the children involved and their migrant parents. Migration policies must also be modified to allow for mother-child visits and/or family reunification, and to place paternal responsibility for raising children on the public agenda.

### Transnational Families: Philippines-Germany and Philippines-Singapore

*Tracie and Freddie, irregular Filipino domestic workers in a German city, entrusted their stranger compatriot to take their eight-month old daughter with her back to the Philippines. She will soon join her older sister living with Tracie's parents. She will probably get to see her brother every now and then, who is being raised by Freddie's parents in another barrio. Why does this couple live apart from their children? Precarious life conditions, long working hours and a constant fear of deportation have led them to practice transnational parenting. Germany has no labor recruitment scheme for 'less-skilled' sectors, including domestic and care work, from non-European countries. Combined with a non-existent amnesty, many migrants from 'third countries,' like Tracie and Freddie, are thus compelled to live and work without a positive migration status for an extended period of time.*

*But is it any better if an official channel for labor migration exists? On the other side of the globe, we find Linda, a 34-year old single mother, one of the 60,000 Indonesian domestic workers in Singapore under a two-year contract. Fifteen years have lapsed since she took up her first job in Singapore, leaving her then-six-month old baby girl, Dewi, in the care of her parents. While Linda is a regular migrant, in Singapore there is no route open for family re-unification for 'low-skilled' workers like her. Consequently, she visits her daughter every second year during her holiday, which*

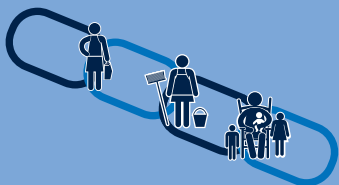
*has made Dewi come to believe that her grandparents are her 'biological' parents.*

*Material security and a good quality of education for their children are the common tangible gains in the stories of Tracie, Freddie, and Linda. Their labor migration is predicated on the hope for intergenerational social mobility. In addition, they both had no choice but to arrange childcare across nation-state borders, relying on extended families. They live in a land of work, not a land for family life. This has given rise to a generation who is 'in touch' with their parents via mobile phone and the Internet. For some parents these modern communication technologies are an essential means of everyday parenting. Moreover, transnational parenting tends to be gendered. It is usually migrant mothers who are and feel in charge of virtual bonding at a distance.*

*What about fathers? Dewi's father left the family before she was born. Freddie, who had initially looked after the couple's two children in the Philippines, could not cope with the childcare responsibilities and followed Tracie to Germany. An increasing number of women independently migrate for work, yet the 'feminization of migration' alone has not transformed the deep-seated gender bias in transnational care and bonding.*

*Source: Jiménez Zamora et al, UN-INSTRAW (now UN Women), 2010*

<sup>14</sup> For example, studies in the Philippines found that the educational performance of migrants' children was lower than that of children of non-migrants (Battistella and Conaco 1996) while other studies show no significant difference or even that migrants' children have better performance (for example, University of the Philippines et al 2002 and Scalabrini Migration Center 2003).



Beyond the impact on households in origin, concerns also arise regarding the overall effect of women's migration on society. Might their migration bring about an **“exportation of the care crisis”** from destination countries to origin countries? Put another way, is the same care crisis being replicated in origin, as caregivers migrate to care for other people in far away homes? Given the lack of rigorous studies on the topic, we cannot know for sure whether women's migration itself is leading to a similar crisis in origin. We do know, however, that origin countries are also facing major challenges to social reproduction – availability of employment, budget cuts to health and education, etc. – which are leading many women to migrate in the first place. Likewise, origin countries are also facing some of the same problems related to the social organization of care that exist in destination countries: daily difficulties reconciling paid and unpaid work for women involved in caregiving, insufficient or low quality of available care, and little coverage of care needs in general (these are even more grave in areas with high incidence of HIV/AIDS – see the example of Lesotho in text box). Lastly, origin countries may also face the potential challenge of having to provide care for their elderly, especially when there are high rates of net emigration in combination with a growing proportion of elderly among those left behind.

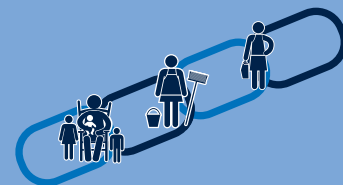


### Stop & Reflect

1. In your experience or knowledge, what are some problems facing households that have migrants abroad in terms of...
  - a. The distribution of care work
  - b. The care and raising of children
  - c. The care of aging persons
2. Do you think that women's migration is the cause of these problems, or that it is the result of existing problems? Or both? Why?
3. Do you know of any program or initiative that seeks to address the problems described in this section?

### 3.3.2 PROBLEMS IN DESTINATION COUNTRIES

In destination countries, migrant women's contributions are crucial in order to at least partially cover the **care deficit** that has come out of the care crisis. The impact on households in destination countries is undoubtedly positive, since the availability of domestic workers or the purchase of



Source:  
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/fernandoreyes/3041189246/sizes/l/in/photostream/> (Accessed December 2011)

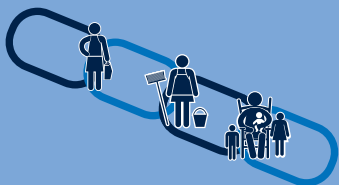
other types of services in the marketplace responds to urgent needs: covering a gap that no one else is available to cover; freeing up time for greater quality of life or to dedicate more time to one's professional career. It may also respond to expectations associated with social class. However, the purchase of care services in the market represents a privatized solution to the crisis, which is not a complete solution to the problem at hand and may even present new social challenges, such as “social dualization” (inequality) and a lack of sustainability.

The first problem, “**social dualization**,” refers to the inequality which is growing between households with enough purchasing power to buy the services they need, and households that are not so fortunate, which will receive inadequate or low quality care services. The danger of leaving the responsibility for caregiving exclusively up to the private sphere is that not all households will be able to purchase care. This goes against the **right to care**, which is a multidimensional right that includes the right to receive adequate care throughout the life cycle, the right to provide care, the right to decide whether to provide care or not, and labor rights in the care sector (see section 3.3.3 for more information on the right to care). It also contradicts the notion of human development.

Therefore, and secondly, **global care chains are not a sustainable or equitable solution**. The responsibility for providing care has still not been assumed as a social obligation which must involve men, the State, and the private sector. Care chains also tend to further entrench inequalities among women. Instead of altering the sexual division of labor, a new stratification of care work is emerging which is divided not only by sex, but also by other axes of inequality such as social class, ethnicity, and migratory status. So, the formation of care chains neither helps society progress toward a more equitable distribution of care responsibilities nor does it increase the social value assigned to this work. Instead, care chains may be a provisional but unsustainable solution to the care crisis, insofar as they are based on the expansion of the market and perpetuate the same conditions of invisibility, lack of social responsibility, and distribution of tasks along the same power hierarchy as the previous model (unpaid/underpaid work performed by women within households).

*“Ageing societies will still need migration in the medium to long term to fill critical labour shortages, care for the elderly and contribute to social security systems.”*  
– Olav Kjørven, UNDP, Chair of the Global Migration Group





*“How has the current demand for care been met? With a profound reorganization of society? With a redistribution of time in society for care and other activities? For now, the answer is no. At the moment, the new solution has been to import care resources, that is, to import women to perform care work.”*

*– Magdalena Díez Gorfinkel,  
Universidad Carlos III*

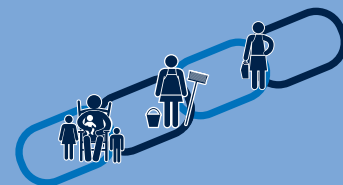
Migrant women also tend to face several problems in the destination country, such as lack of regulation or discriminatory regulations in domestic work sector and the subsequent violation of their labor rights (see Guide 4 for more information), as well as enormous difficulties to exercise their own right to receive care and right to give care (especially due to problems reconciling work and family life). Regarding the latter, the **reconciliation of paid work with care obligations** may be even more complicated when they have children in the destination country or when they manage to reunify the family, due to the working conditions (long work days), low pay (which makes it difficult for them to purchase care services in the market) and thinner social and family networks. Some strategies that migrant women employ

in order to resolve these issues include recruiting their mothers to migrate in order to take care of their children in destination, paying other migrant women by the hour, resorting to the help of neighbor women, or even leaving their children by themselves. These informal care arrangements are sometimes against the law in the destination country, which puts them in danger of being reported for negligence or neglect. On a whole, migrant households in destination countries face major challenges to being able to provide care (intensified in the case of domestic workers), and do not usually receive adequate support from public institutions. Nor are their care rights respected, which constitutes a first order problem for destination countries.



Source: <http://www.ibtimes.com/articles/139969/20110501/may-day-march-rally-2011-beltane.htm>

**An alternative proposal:** The care crisis could present an opportunity to restructure the system of care provision, which is currently not being taken advantage of. To make headway, the root causes of the problem must be addressed, including the invisibility of care in the economic system as it is currently structured, the limited participation of men in housework, the lack of social value assigned to women’s work, etc.



## Stop & Reflect

1. Do you think that hiring migrant women to work in the care sector in destination countries is a sustainable solution to the care crisis? Why or why not? What must be done to make the system sustainable?
2. In your experience, what obstacles do migrant women face to being able to enjoy their right to care (the right to receive care, the right to give care, and the right to freely decide whether or not to provide care)?

### 3.3.3 CARE IN THE DEVELOPMENT POLICY AGENDA

Despite its importance in sustaining daily life, well-being and the socioeconomic system itself, caregiving is generally left out of development **policy agendas**. This is due to the “naturalization” of the sexual division of labor, which has designated care work as a “women’s issue” that can be resolved in private homes.

However, it is clear that the **care crisis cannot be resolved by households or by the invisible hand of the market through economic development**.

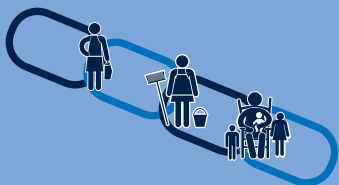
“We cannot assume *a priori* that the processes of growth and economic development will bring about an improvement in the provision of care and human well-being,” says the researcher Shahra Razavi (UNRISD 2009:5).

She explains that care is not a sector per se, but rather a set of material resources, time, aptitudes, and policies. This set requires certain conditions in order to be performed, including infrastructure, technology, and the availability of paid work in order to acquire the goods needed to provide care (food, transport money, etc.).

In order to create these conditions, **we must engage our societies in a broad ranging public debate on the social organization of care as part of our models of local, national, and global development**. Who should provide care? For whom? How? Where? In exchange for what? How do migrant women fit into this equation? Are their care rights being respected? This debate should revalue care work and ensure that those responsible for caregiving have full access

**Care:**  
**Not only a micro-level matter...**

*“The emphasis in micro distributional aspects in unpaid care work runs the risk of mimicking the kind of policies that propose to (miraculously) reduce poverty by ‘mobilizing hidden resources of the poor’, as if resources existed and redistribution alone (and ‘efficiency gains’) would do the trick” (Esquivel 2008:6).*



to citizen rights. Women, who have historically been responsible for providing care, should be heard in this debate, especially those who are participating in global care chains in both destination and origin countries.

In order to make care a firm part of citizenship and development processes, there has been a proposal to create and uphold a **universal right to care**. This right has at least three components:

The right to **receive** the care one needs throughout the different moments and circumstances of the life cycle

The right to **choose** whether or not one wishes to provide care, including a right to care in decent conditions and the right not to have to provide care

The right to **decent working conditions** in the care sector

Several intergovernmental agreements recognize the importance of including care within political agendas, including the Quito Consensus and the Brasilia Consensus. The Quito Consensus, signed on August 9, 2007 by the governments of 33 participating countries in the Tenth Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, is an example of progress in this regard. The document includes the intergovernmental recognition of...

*the social and economic value of the unpaid domestic work performed by women, caregiving as a public matter which falls within the purview of States, local governments, organizations, companies and families, and the need to promote shared responsibility by women and men within the family.*<sup>15</sup>

*Migration has become a private solution to an essentially public problem.*

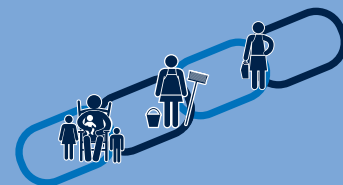
It also establishes commitments, such as: “To adopt the necessary measures, especially of an economic, social and cultural nature, to ensure that States assume social reproduction, caregiving and the well-being of the population as an objective for the economy and as a public responsibility that cannot be delegated.”

The **Brasilia Consensus**,<sup>16</sup> which was signed by the governments of participating countries in the 11th Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, lays out several measures toward the accomplishment of this objective, including the following excerpts:

<sup>15</sup> ECLAC, <http://www.eclac.org/prensa/noticias/comunicados/6/29456/DSC1-IQuitoConsensus.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> ECLAC, [http://www.eclac.cl/mujer/noticias/paginas/6/40236/ConsensoBrasilia\\_ING.pdf](http://www.eclac.cl/mujer/noticias/paginas/6/40236/ConsensoBrasilia_ING.pdf)





### Attain greater economic autonomy and equality in the workplace

- a. To adopt all the social and economic policy measures required to advance towards the attribution of social value to the unpaid domestic and care work performed by women and recognition of its economic value
- b. To foster the development and strengthening of universal care policies and services based on the recognition of the right to care for all and on the notion of sharing the provision of care between the State, the private sector, civil society and households, as well as between men and women, and of strengthening dialogue and coordination between all stakeholders
- c. To adopt policies conducive to establishing or broadening parental leave and other childcare leave in order to help distribute care duties between men and women, including inalienable and non-transferable paternity leave with a view to furthering progress towards coresponsibility
- d. To encourage the establishment, in national accounts, of a satellite account for unpaid domestic and care work performed by women
- e. To promote changes in the legal and programmatic framework aimed at achieving recognition in the national accounts of the productive value of unpaid work, with a view to the formulation and implementation of cross-cutting policies

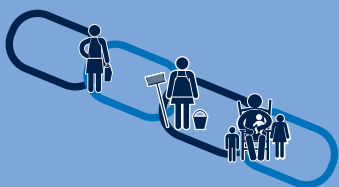
### Enhance the citizenship of women

- e. To increase public investment in social security, so as to comprehensively address the specific care and social protection needs of women that arise in situations related to ill health, disability, unemployment and life cycles, especially childhood and old age



### Stop & Reflect

1. In your country, is caregiving on the political agenda? Why do you think that governments are not assuming social responsibility for guaranteeing the provision of care?
2. What do you think about the proposal to create a “universal right to care”? What advantages are there to achieving the recognition and respect of this right? What interests might be blocking the recognition and upholding of this right?
3. In your country or professional context, are there any efforts underway to implement provisions similar to those listed in the Quito or Brasilia Consensus? How might the intersection with women’s migration be taken into consideration in these efforts?

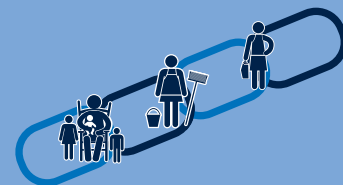


### 3.4 TRANSFORMING THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF CARE FROM A MIGRATION PERSPECTIVE

**T**his guide has explored how women's migration has become a private solution for a public problem, and has pointed out the urgent need to transform the social organization of care in both origin and destination countries. But how might we consider care in the debate on the migration-development nexus? Considering the intersection between migration and care allows us to reflect on important challenges facing global development, such as:

- 1 Inequalities in the migration process.** How are migration policies in destination countries affecting inequalities in the migration process? How are these inequalities deepened by existing social inequalities in origin and destination?
- 2 The sustainability of the current model of development and of women's liberation in destination countries.** Is it possible to resolve the care crisis through migrant labor, without attending to the underlying issues (limited male participation, lack of social responsibility of the State and the private sector)?
- 3 The right to care as an element of human development.** This refers to the aforementioned right to receive adequate care (especially for those in situations of dependence), and the right to freely decide over care (e.g. whether or not one would like to provide care).

In previous sections, we have seen that the provision of care is a key pillar of development, since it secures the preconditions for there to be progress in health, education, security, economic development, etc. Care should also be a central topic of debate on the relationship between migration and development, given that the demand for care in destination countries and the challenges to social reproduction in origin countries (privatization of health services and education, economic crisis) are key drivers of women's migration. We have also seen that there are care crises on both ends of the chains, and that women's participation can only partly mitigate these larger structural challenges. The serious problems associated with denial of care rights in countries of origin are not created by migration, nor does migration resolve these problems in destination countries. In both cases, however, it can reveal the existence of these problems. In other words, the phenomenon of global care chains, similarly to that of remittances in this regard, makes visible existing deficiencies.



**Who is responsible** for identifying the gaps revealed by global care chains and intervening? An important first step in the transformation of the unjust system within which global care chains operate is to promote **dialogue and cooperation** among diverse actors and sectors which may not normally interact, despite the interests they may have in common. These include groups and institutions working on the issues of **gender equality, caregiving, and migration**. Examples of those who should be involved include:

- ❑ **Governments** – national, district and/or municipal. For example, ministries of foreign relations (and consulates), migration, labor, women/gender, social welfare
- ❑ **NGOs** – working on human development, migrant rights, feminism and women's rights
- ❑ **Churches and social service agencies** – involved in providing care services and/or assisting migrants and their families
- ❑ **Grassroots organizations** – associations of migrants, families of migrants, and migrant women (where they exist)
- ❑ **Labor unions** – domestic workers' unions and associations
- ❑ **Civil society networks** – for example, migration and development networks, or feminist organization networks
- ❑ **Universities and research institutes** working on issues related to migration, gender, care and/or development.



### Good Practice #3: Spain

**Reform of the Domestic Work Labor Code: Crossing migration with a crucial social debate on how to reorganize care**

**A dialogue between domestic workers, migrant associations, feminist movement, government and labor unions**

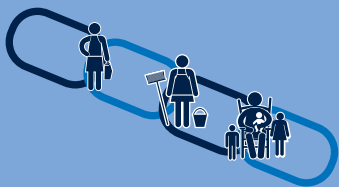


In 2009, UN-INSTRAW (now part of UN Women) supported an interesting process of dialogue and exchange among diverse actors (domestic workers' associations, migrant women associations, and organizations of the feminist movement) with common interests, but little or no contact between them to date regarding domestic workers' demanding respect for their rights. Domestic workers' historical set of demands regarding the inclusion of domestic work in the general labor code was enriched by the inclusion of specific problems facing migrant women who work in this sector (who today make up a majority of domestic workers in Spain).

As a result of this process of exchange and collaboration, this set of organizations was able to come to a consensus and publish a set of proposals. The proposals are divided into three sets: domestic work, specific situation of migrant women domestic workers, and the broader framework of the social organization of care as an essential component of models of development (and as a strategic link between migration and development).

This proposal document was presented to government representatives and major labor unions for review during a key moment in which reforms to the Special Regime which used to regulate domestic work in Spain were being debated.

*The proposal document is available online here: <http://www.un-instraw.org/media/documents/GCC/pliego%20de%20propuestas%20lugar%20justo%20empleo%20hogar-Espaa.pdf>*

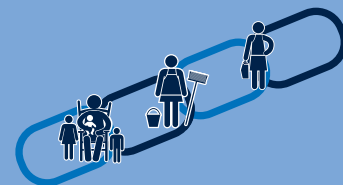


Intervening to create a more equitable distribution of care work from a gender and migration perspective can be complex but also stimulating, since it affords us the opportunity to transform societies from their very foundation. Such an undertaking must involve creating strategic alliances among diverse interests, proposals, sectors, and movements. Many times, this requires helping stakeholders to overcome apparent contradictions or differences in order to see common interests over the long term in terms of gender equality, migrants' rights, and the specific needs of migrant women. Sometimes groups working on migration face similar challenges to those working on gender and care, though oftentimes the two have barely entered into dialogue with one another. Graphic 13 shows several overlapping points, which are ripe for discussion between the two.

### TRANSFORMATION OVER THE SHORT AND LONG TERM

When we consider the topics of migration and care together, we can clearly see that the current model of global care chains is not sustainable, since it depends on the import and export of migrant women who work in this informal, poorly regulated sector with minimal protections. (For a broader discussion of domestic workers' labor rights, see Guide 4). To transform this model, we must begin to effect at least two types of changes:

1. **Short term:** immediate reform to improve the management of migration in terms of the provision of care, minimize exploitation, and protect the rights of migrant women and their families in origin and destination.
  - ❑ **Improve migratory conditions:** rights to family reunification, annual visits, residency permit not conditioned upon maintaining same job; expand formal migration channels for migrant women care workers. It is also worth debating the possibility of creating policies that go beyond the nation-state, such as migrants being able to pay in contributions toward their own retirement in the destination country and then receive the benefits in their origin country.
  - ❑ **Improve working conditions:** more and better regulation of the domestic work and care work sectors in general (see Guide 4 for more discussion of this topic), following the stipulations of the ILO Convention 189 concerning decent work for domestic workers.
  - ❑ **Improve living conditions:** guarantee access to health care, and promote policies on work-life balance that include the migrant population. Such policies should include measures such as maternity and paternity leave, subsidies for the elderly, and well-functioning social security systems that alleviate the care work load, whether by providing resources for care beneficiaries or lowering the costs of those providing care.



**Graphic 13.**  
**Relationship and Pending Dialogue between Migration and Care Stakeholders**

**Why should stakeholders working on MIGRATION consider the issue of care?**

- The most common sector of labor insertion for migrant women is care work.
- Due to the care crisis in destination countries, there is likely to be growing demand for female immigrant labor.
- However, care is barely on the policy agenda, and so migration policies do not usually take into account this demand, meaning that few formal channels of labor migration have been established for women to work in the care sector.
- Care work tends to be informal or very poorly regulated, making migrant women caregivers vulnerable to exploitation.
- Unregulated migrant labor may be a temporary solution to the care crisis, but it is not sustainable.
- Migrants' families' right to care is often left out of the picture, leaving them to negotiate major difficulties in terms of reconciling work and care responsibilities, family reunification, etc.
- Women's migration exposes gaps and deficiencies in the social provision of care, both in origin and destination.

**PENDING DIALOGUE:**  
**What points do they have in common?**

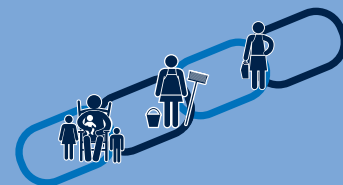
**Why should stakeholders working on CARE consider migration?**

- A large proportion of care workers are migrant women.
- In addition to difficulties associated with the informality of the sector (low pay, little free time, isolation, and vulnerability to abuse), migrant women have specific needs in terms of their:
  - Access to documentation
  - Ability to validate their degrees/exercise their profession
  - Access to health and care services for themselves and their families
  - Participation in spaces and social organizations that could defend their rights (labor unions, migrant associations)
- In origin, it is common to blame migrant women for social problems facing youth, instead of recognizing that their migration is often caused by difficulties providing care for their family in the first place.
- In this way, women's migration points to deficiencies in the care system in origin, and to possible points of intervention: lack of paternal responsibility; lack of social protection policies for the aging, sick or disabled; lack of investment in primary education, health, child care centers, or other services.



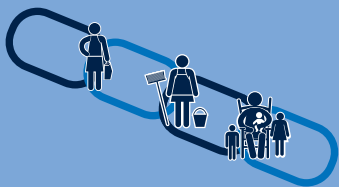
2. **Long term:** transformation of the social system of care provision, in origin and destination countries.

- ❑ **Rethink what services should be provided by the welfare state**, placing care in the center of the socioeconomic model as a highly important item on the development policy agenda.
- ❑ **Generate a model of shared responsibility** for care provision between the State, private sector, family (with shared participation of both men and women), and the non-profit sector. Provide or create incentives for the establishment of a variety of services and subsidies for children, the sick, elderly, disabled, etc.
- ❑ **Improve State provision of basic social and physical infrastructure.** Efforts must be made to guarantee at least minimum levels of health care services (including prevention), education, child and elder care, transportation, water and sanitation, before initiating talks about shared responsibility between State, private sector, family, and non-profits (Esquivel 2008).
- ❑ **Improve macroeconomic policies.** Macroeconomic regimes that focus on job creation and minimum wage tend to yield better results in terms of reducing general inequalities. Fiscal policy, especially tax systems and public expenditure, can be directed to balance out gender inequalities (Esquivel 2008).
- ❑ **Create and implement universal policies** designed to resolve critical problems linked to the life cycle and intervene directly to provide for care needs in different phases of life.
  - ❑ **For youth:** policies focused on facilitating the transition toward adult life in adequate conditions, with a decent education, adequate labor force preparation, job placement, and ability to form a new household in secure conditions.
  - ❑ **For adults:** job creation policies, particularly in sectors that will reduce the burden of unpaid care work on women, thus reducing the care deficit while providing income for those employed in this sector (Antonopoulous 2008).
  - ❑ **For the elderly:** retirement pensions, in order to eliminate elderly parents' reliance on their children for material and economic support; subsidies for elder care.



### What can be done?

- ❑ **Encourage debate within society.** *Make a special effort to ensure that the debate is not limited to the situation of domestic workers, but rather, that domestic work is seen as one piece within a portfolio of options that societies have to satisfy care needs. It is likely that a preferred solution will be the creation of care services with State backing and accountability, where the workers will enjoy better working conditions than they would through the expansion of domestic service.*
- ❑ **Promote the organization of domestic workers** *while taking into account the particularities of this group which may present challenges to their organizing and articulating demands collectively.*
- ❑ **Lobby existing labor unions to take up the demands** *of domestic workers.*



## ACTIVITIES

- 3.1 **Video: “Global Care Chains”**
- 3.2 **Radio clip: “Women in Global Care Chains”**
- 3.3 **Video: “Women who Migrate, Women who Care: The New Sexual Division of Labor”**
- 3.4 **Case Study: Maribel’s Care Chain**





### 3.1 VIDEO: “GLOBAL CARE CHAINS”



**OBJECTIVE:** Introduce the concept of global care chains.



**MATERIALS/PREPARATION:** Notebooks or sheets of paper and pens, flip chart paper or whiteboard and markers, computer, projector, speakers, video “Global Care Chains” available on CD and on YouTube: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SkHq\\_XlzfOo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SkHq_XlzfOo).

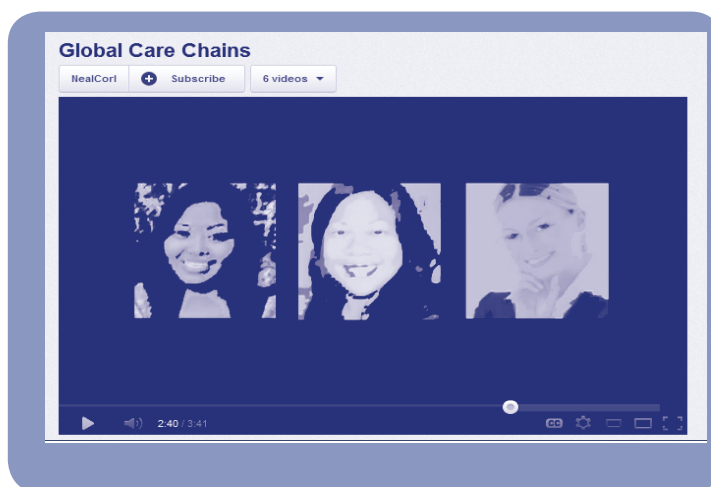


**ESTIMATED TIME:** 25 minutes



#### FACILITATION

1. Set up the video and double check that the projector and sound work properly. Watch it at least twice to familiarize yourself with the topics it covers and what is missing.
2. Draw a table similar to the following on a piece of flip chart paper or on the board, and ask the participants to do the same in their notebooks.







I noticed that...	This makes me think that...
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



3. Explain that they should take notes in the left-hand column on the things that call their attention from the video. After watching it, they will have time to reflect on their observations and jot them down in the right-hand column.
4. Start the video. Duration: 3:41 minutes.
5. After watching the video, have participants work individually to fill out their table (approximately 10 minutes).
6. In a group, ask them to share some of their observations, and note them down in your own table.
7. If the topics mentioned below under Key Lessons do not come up, ask about them. Some suggested discussion questions could include the following:
  - ❑ *Why are care chains forming? What consequences do they have?*
  - ❑ *Who is at either end of the global care chain? Who benefits from this situation? Who gets the least quality care/lowest amount of support?*
  - ❑ *Who is sacrificing? What is she sacrificing?*
  - ❑ *In the video, they say that “the market value of caring for children and the overall status of women both remain low.” What do they mean by this? Do you agree? Why is that the case?*
  - ❑ *What solutions does the filmmaker put forth? What other solutions can you think of based on what we have seen in the workshop/what you have read?*

#### KEY LESSONS .....

-  The persisting ideology still assigns care work to women, as if it were their exclusive responsibility.
-  Migration often involves “de-skilling” of migrant women. This is a process through which women are channeled toward certain sectors which require fewer qualifications, regardless of their education or previous experience.
-  By paying attention to whom is at either end of the chain, we can see who is benefiting from the transfer of care work, and at whose expense (who is receiving the least quality care).
-  While men’s sharing in care responsibilities and workers receiving a living wage are laudable measures, broader discussions must take place on the responsibility of governments, the private sector, and the non-profit sector in order to transform the social organization of care.



## 3.2 RADIO CLIP: “WOMEN IN GLOBAL CARE CHAINS”



**OBJECTIVE:** Deepen our understanding of global care chains by analyzing the injustices at work and possible solutions.



**MATERIALS/PREPARATION:** Photocopies of the work sheet, computer, speakers, MP3 file on CD “Women in Global Care Chains” (radio clip produced by Valentina Longo, Laura Schettino and Amaia P. Orozco)



**ESTIMATED TIME:** 45 minutes



### FACILITATION

1. Make sure you can open the sound file and listen to it with no problem. Listen to the clip at least twice before the session in order to familiarize yourself with the topics it covers.
2. Go over the facilitation questions and possible responses below.
3. During the session, hand the work sheet out while you are preparing the radio clip. Instruct participants that they are to take notes on each segment as they listen to the clip.
4. Start the radio clip. Duration: 13:14 minutes. You may wish to pause it between each segment to allow participants time to jot down notes on each segment. At the end, allow a few minutes for people to complete their notes.
5. Facilitate a group discussion based on the following questions. Write down the most important ideas on flip chart paper or a whiteboard.
  - a. What is a global care chain? Why is the metaphor of a chain used?
    - *Networks of households which transfer their caregiving tasks from one household to another on the basis of power axes (gender, social class, ethnicity, place of origin). Globalization of care is one of the most relevant, yet invisible dimensions of globalization.*
  - b. What is the relationship between public services and global care chains?
    - *Chains are linked to a lack of public care services. Women’s care work often makes up for the deficiencies in public systems (e.g. health care and education).*



- c. Where are men in global care chains?
  - ❑ *Beneficiaries of women's care work, more than participants.*
- d. What are the aspects of the so-called “unfair care regimes”?
  - ❑ *Lack of social responsibility for care and social reproduction in general*
  - ❑ *Economic systems pay more attention to businesses' needs than to people's care needs*
  - ❑ *Men's lack of participation*
  - ❑ *The link between care and inequality. Some groups can access what we call decent care, while other social groups have precarious or vulnerable care arrangements.*
  - ❑ *Some people can choose whether or not they wish to provide care, while others do not have that choice.*
- e. What stigma surrounds the transnational family?
  - ❑ *Mothers are frequently blamed for “abandoning” their children, which supposedly causes problems in their lives.*
- f. What difficulties do migrant women have in providing care for their own families?
  - ❑ *Migrants tend to be considered as labor, rather than as people with their own lives and family obligations.*
  - ❑ *Difficult to reconcile paid and unpaid care work, and/or to achieve family reunification.*
- g. What is suggested in order to transform the system of the social provision of care?
  - ❑ *Recognize that care should be a social and political priority.*
  - ❑ *Foster social responsibility toward care among public authorities, men, and society as a whole*
  - ❑ *Guarantee a universal and multidimensional right to care.*
- h. What are the different aspects of the right to care?
  - ❑ *The right to receive appropriate care, the right to choose whether to care or not, and decent working conditions when care is performed for pay.*



6. To conclude, ask the group: What is the function of the concept of “global care chains”? What do they allow us to see?



#### KEY LESSONS .....



The current system of social provision of care is not sustainable in origin or destination countries, since it depends on poorly paid or unpaid women’s labor to compensate for a lack of public services and lack of government responsibility for providing care.



In order to transform this situation, care must be taken up within the policy agenda, as a shared social responsibility between the State, private sector, and households (and within them, between men and women).



One proposal that has been put forth is to consolidate and promote a “universal right to care,” which consists of all people being able to receive the care they need, choose whether or not to provide care, and to have decent working conditions when care is performed for pay.



# WORK SHEET, RADIO CLIP “WOMEN IN GLOBAL CARE CHAINS”



ACTIVITY 3.2

Write down some key points after listening to each segment of the radio clip.

Global care chains	
Public services	
Men's participation	
Social inequalities	
Diverse families, transnational families	
Labor or people?	
An apocalyptic scenario?	



### 3.3 CONFERENCE: “WOMEN WHO MIGRATE, WOMEN WHO CARE: THE NEW SEXUAL DIVISION OF LABOR”



#### OBJECTIVES

1. Engage in the debate on global care chains and the social organization of care.
2. Understand the role of migration in relation to care and development.



#### MATERIALS/PREPARATION:

Photocopies of the work sheet, computer, projector, speakers, video “Women who Migrate, Women who Care: The New Sexual Division of Labor” available on the accompanying CD and with English subtitles at the following link: <http://youtu.be/p-fWUGmDFqY>



ESTIMATED TIME: 1 hour



#### FACILITATION

1. Make sure you can show the video and that the sound works properly. Watch it at least twice before the session to familiarize yourself with the topics it covers: global care chains, the role of the State, transnational families, and rights and demands.
2. Look over the work sheet that follows and familiarize yourself with possible answers under the Key Lessons section.
3. During the session, while you are preparing the video, hand out the work sheet with reflection questions for participants to look over. Indicate that they should take notes during the video and that they will have time to organize their answers following the video.
4. Start the video. Duration: 24:07 minutes.
5. Have participants work in pairs to answer the questions, applying their knowledge about global care chains from the conceptual part of this guide.
6. Discuss answers in a group, and take notes of key ideas on flip chart paper.



## KEY LESSONS

- 🔑 “Global care chains exist transnationally, and have been established with the aim of sustaining daily life. Within them, households transfer care work from one home to another, based on power axes like gender, ethnicity, social class and place of origin” (Pérez Orozco et al 2008:88)
- 🔑 The forming of care chains reveals many different problems with the current social organization of care, such as:
  - ❑ Exploitation of care workers
  - ❑ Care deficit
  - ❑ The State neither assumes care as a social responsibility nor values it as work.
  - ❑ Migration policies often make it difficult for domestic workers to regularize their situation
  - ❑ Management of transnational families
  - ❑ Lack of respect for labor rights
- 🔑 Some proposals to resolve the problems revealed by care chains include:
  - ❑ Encouraging debate within society on the social reorganization of care
  - ❑ Insist on respect for and implementation of existing regulations and laws
  - ❑ Encourage domestic workers to get organized, while also recognizing the difficulties facing this particular group to articulate themselves collectively
  - ❑ Lobby labor unions to include domestic workers’ demands within their agenda



1. What is a global care chain?
2. What problems do care chains reveal?
3. What proposals are put forth to begin resolving these problems?



### 3.4 CASE STUDY: MARIBEL'S CARE CHAIN



#### OBJECTIVES

1. Understand how a global care chain works.
2. Identify problems in origin and destination countries, as well as potential points of intervention, and key stakeholders in order to bring about changes.



**MATERIALS/PREPARATION:** Flip chart paper and markers, Photocopies of the case study and the work sheet



**ESTIMATED TIME:** 45 minutes



#### FACILITATION

1. Familiarize yourself with the case study and the possible answers to the work sheet.
2. Hand out copies of the case study and work sheet. It is up to you whether they should work individually, in pairs, or in small groups.
3. Explain the objectives of the activity, and go over the work sheet together before having them read the case study.
4. If they work in groups, it is best for one person to read the case study out loud while the rest follow along on their sheet.
5. Allow about 25 minutes for them to complete the exercise, and 20 minutes for group discussion.
6. In a plenary session, instead of simply having groups present their responses, ask the following questions in order to generate debate:
  - ❑ *What difficulties is Maribel facing in terms of meeting care needs?*
  - ❑ *What are the potential difficulties facing employer families in Spain? What difficulties does the grandmother, Dina, face in Peru?*
  - ❑ *What actors are involved in the provision of care in this case study, in both origin and destination? Who is absent from the provision of care?*
  - ❑ *What are some potential points of intervention in terms of migration that could improve the living and working conditions of Maribel?*
  - ❑ *What are some potential points of intervention that could alleviate the women's work load in this case study?*



#### KEY LESSONS .....



The care sector is the most convenient labor insertion niche for migrant women lacking a work permit, due to the informality and poor regulation of care work.



Migrant women sometimes face difficulties reconciling paid work and their own family's care needs.



The social organization of care involves a variety of actors: State, private sector, non-profit sector, and individual households.



## CASE STUDY: MARIBEL'S CARE CHAIN\*



ACTIVITY 3.4

**Before migration:** At the age of 25, Maribel was living in her neighborhood, San Martin de Porres in Lima, Peru. She had finished high school, gotten married, had a daughter, and moved with her husband to the second floor of her parents-in-law's home, two blocks from her childhood home. She remained in that house when her husband migrated to Madrid, Spain. Before she herself migrated, her job was to take care of the household and the baby. Her mother-in-law, Dina, would share guidance and advice with her, and occasionally they would share meals and help each other out. However, the remittances Maribel was receiving from her husband were not enough to cover their expenses, so she made the decision to migrate in order to work alongside her husband, while leaving her daughter in Dina's care.

**The migration process:** Maribel's husband is a dental technician by profession, but neither certificates nor training had managed to land him a stable job with enough income to live off of in Peru. Several of Maribel's brothers had already gone to work in Spain. The women in the neighborhood would share information, which is how Dina was able to secure employment contracts for her sons (including Maribel's husband) and several other young people, who all migrated legally to work in Madrid. Not long thereafter, Maribel's husband sent for her under the family reunification policy. Once reunited with her husband in Madrid, they had another daughter, who is now six years old.

**Care work in destination:** Maribel cannot hold a formal job, as a condition of her migration status under family reunification. So, she has found work in the informal market, combining three jobs: child care, ticket taker in a small amusement park, and preparation of typical foods. In her apartment, which she shares with her brother-in-law, brother, and sometimes other recent arrivals from Peru, she cares for four children during the day. The composition of the group varies, but they tend to be children of other Latin Americans and occasionally Spaniards, who have to work and cannot find another affordable child care option. She knows that it is an irregular activity and that in case of an accident, the children's parents could report her. Her mother-in-law in Peru has experience working in the national Wawa Wasi<sup>17</sup> program, caring for children in her home. Maribel calls her mother-in-law to consult with her while she tends to her own wawa wasi in her home. Dina says that she can hear the children screaming and asking for things in the background. She tells Maribel to hang up and to avoid accidents with the children at all costs.

After the parents have picked up their kids, and Maribel or her husband has picked up their own daughter from day care, she goes to her second job as a ticket taker in an amusement park. There, she supervises kids' entrance and watches the children as they go on different rides. She also earns some side income preparing Peruvian foods and selling them within her community.

**Reconciling work and care responsibilities in destination:** Maribel is able to work because her own daughter, who was born in Madrid 6 years ago, attends a day care with an extended daily

<sup>17</sup> The national program called Wawa Wasi, which means "house of the babies" in Quechua, is a day care program created in 1994. The wawa wasi are neighborhood homes where children of up to 4 years of age are cared for. The caretakers are mothers who agree to watch a group of up to 8 children who range from infants to pre-school age. For their services, they receive a monthly stipend from the program, and a small daily fee from the families. By calling the care workers "volunteers," the State has been relieved of its obligation to recognize their labor rights.



schedule. However, she complains of practical scheduling problems (between the departure of her own charges and the pick-up of her daughter), and is always running between her informal daycare and her daughter's pre-school. She and her husband did not realize how difficult it would be to care for their daughter in Madrid, both due to the high cost of living and the demanding work schedule. Lately they have been debating whether or not they should keep her with them or send her to live with her grandmother in Peru, where she would be together with her sister, who is now 10 years old. On the other hand, for Maribel and her husband, a strong argument for keeping their daughter with them is having access to a high quality pre-school; whereas, were she to return to Peru, they recognize with a heavy heart for their older daughter, even if she were in a private school, she would not receive the same quality of instruction. In Spain they have gotten used to the exceptional service of their daughter's school: extended hours, good service, excellent materials.

**Care work in origin:** Dina says that she would be happy to receive her other granddaughter, if Maribel decides to send her. She has many years of experience as a micro-entrepreneur and social leader in Peru. She says she would barely notice the additional burden, given that she currently cares for Maribel's other daughter, three grandchildren of other children who have migrated, as well as the children in her wawa wasi which is subsidized by the State. Besides, she thinks that it would be better for her Spanish-born granddaughter to be with her sister and other cousins, instead of playing on her laptop all day in the day care center in Madrid. At the same time, although she doesn't admit it to Maribel, Dina is growing tired of the constant attention that her grandchildren and other children require, but she is resigned to caring for them, because she sees no other option.

**Future plans:** Maribel and her husband are determined to save all the money they can in order to return to Peru to live. However, they have had to face several setbacks to their plan: Maribel's husband not being able to have his credentials validated in order to practice his profession in Spain; the relegation of Maribel to the informal sector, and the low pay and long hours typical of informal work, due to her lack of access to a work permit; the high cost of living in Madrid; and the difficulties Maribel has had reconciling work and family obligations, which have cost her several job opportunities. So, when they go back to Peru for a visit next summer, they plan to ask Dina to look after her other granddaughter, despite the decline they feel that this would cause in the quality of her education.

\* Adaptation of Maribel's story from the case study: Anderson, Jeanine. (2011). La organización social de los cuidados y vulneración de derechos en Perú. Santo Domingo, República Dominicana: ONU Mujeres.



# WORK SHEET

## ACTIVITY 3.4



Facets of the social organization of care		Care chains	Notes from the case study
The distribution of tasks and responsibilities among different groups in society	Who does what throughout the global care chain?  Who don't we see in this case?  Where are the men?  Who takes ultimate responsibility for providing care?		
The (in) visibility of different kinds of care work	Who is performing "visible" (paid) care work?  Who is performing "visible" (paid) care work?		



Facets of the social organization of care		Care chains		Notes from the case study	
The presence of diverse stakeholders in the provision of care	What stakeholders are present? (public services, private sector, non-profit, households, other social networks)	What type of care services does each provide?  Who uses each type of care, and how do they combine services?			
Social rights and labor rights associated with care work  The right to give and receive care	Are the migrant care worker's labor rights being respected?  Does the migrant woman's family benefit from the right to receive care?				
The underlying ideology	In what ways is the sexual division of labor being reinforced, despite changes introduced by migration?  In what ways are gender roles changing in the social organization of care?				



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# **MIGRATION POLICIES AND MIGRANT WOMEN'S RIGHTS**

## GOALS OF THIS GUIDE

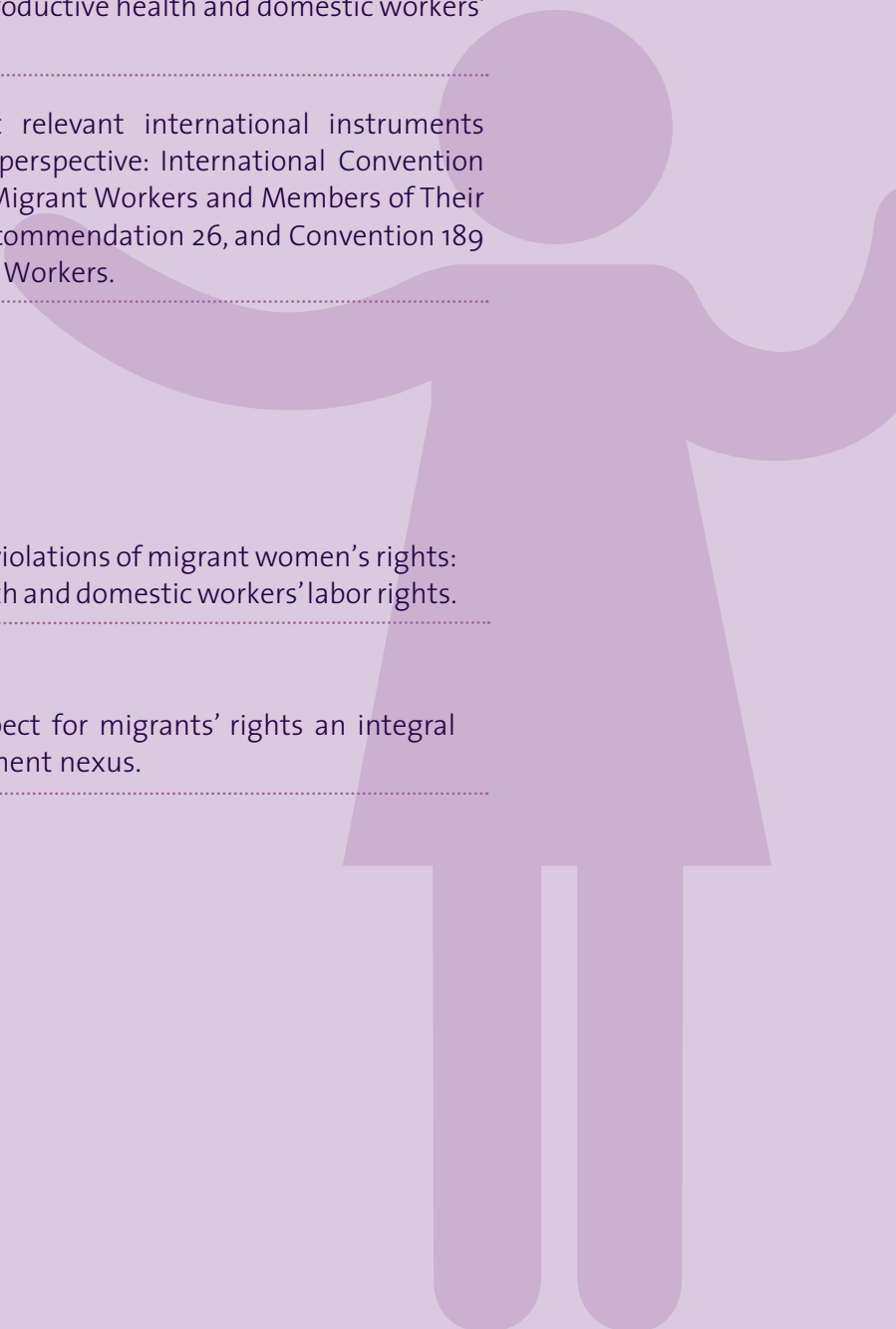


- 1** Reinforce the human development/right to development approach and its implications for understanding migration from a gender perspective
- 2** Expose the consequences of violations of migrant women's rights, especially in terms of the right to sexual and reproductive health and domestic workers' labor rights
- 3** Become acquainted with the most relevant international instruments related to migration from a gender perspective: International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICRMW), CEDAW General Recommendation 26, and Convention 189 concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES



- 1** Recognize two of the most important violations of migrant women's rights: access to sexual and reproductive health and domestic workers' labor rights.
- 2** Generate ideas on how to make respect for migrants' rights an integral component of the migration-development nexus.





## 4.1 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT APPROACH: THE NEGATION OF RIGHTS AS AN OBSTACLE TO DEVELOPMENT IN ORIGIN AND DESTINATION

**T**he human development approach is closely linked to human rights, in that it understands **development as the comprehensive right to fully enjoy all human rights**. This approach has been adopted by all United Nations agencies, as well as a majority of international development organizations. However, in practice, and in line with the neoliberal and economic vision that underlies many development programs and policies, more emphasis tends to be placed on economic development than on the expansion of people's liberties and capacities.

The almost exclusive focus on the effects of remittances on improving families' well-being in origin ignores the fact that this improvement is often the result of the **negation of migrants' rights** in origin, transit, and destination. In **origin**, the negation of the right to development is often what leads people to migrate in the first place. For example, Guide 2 argues that we can identify which rights are not being fulfilled (e.g. right to education, health, or social protection) by analyzing the items on which households spend the remittances they receive. For women, gender discrimination in the labor market, gender-based violence, control over young women, etc. are also important drivers behind women's migration.

When in **transit**, migrant women often encounter many affronts to their human rights. Those who travel with a smuggler may be abandoned along the way if they run into problems while in transit or upon arrival to the destination country. Migrant women are also vulnerable to physical and sexual abuse at the hands of smugglers, authorities, or others along their trajectory through transit countries (CEDAW GR 26, Article 12). Those who work as cross-border traders, for example, may be especially vulnerable to abuse by smugglers, traffickers, delinquents, and even the same border authorities who are supposed to be protecting them.

In **destination** countries, migrant women oftentimes are not able to fully enjoy their human rights either. Deficient migration policies end up contributing to situations of irregularity and victimization, which may be even graver in the case of women. At the same time, the lack of regulation of the most common sector of female migrants' labor participation – care work – leads to violations of their labor rights and right to care. Lastly, their access to health services, particularly sexual and reproductive health, is often blocked or limited by a variety of factors, to be explored in this guide.



## 4.2 MIGRATION POLICIES THAT AGGRAVATE INEQUALITIES

In recent decades, the migration policies of the primary destination countries have become much more restrictive, especially following the terrorist attacks of the early 2000s. When developing and refining migration policies, destination countries face the challenging task of balancing two major factors: **the interests of the free market and border control/national security**. Within the context of globalization, there is increasing market demand for cheap and unregulated labor; at the same time, migration policies are ever more focused on border control and the expulsion of undocumented migrants. Millions of migrants find ways to navigate these apparently contradictory circumstances, attracted by employment opportunities in destination countries, but with few regular channels through which to access them. The resultant enormous increase in irregular migration has been beneficial for multiple sectors of the economy of destination countries, which have come to rely on the availability of cheap and ‘flexible’ labor, easily exploitable and deprived of legal protection.

Despite the apparent demand for this type of labor, many migration policies continue to follow a model of “**stratified entry**.” This model is characterized by the exclusion or expulsion of broad categories of “undesirable” (generally low-skilled) migrants; admission or active recruitment of other categories of migrants



### Good Practice #4: Nepal

#### Pourakhi



In 2003, with the support of former UNIFEM (now UN Women), the first organization for and by migrant women returnees was established in Nepal. Pourakhi works to guarantee migrant women workers’ rights throughout the labor migration cycle through information, guidance, political advocacy, and empowerment.

The objectives of the organization are:

1. To advocate the rights of women migrant workers with Nepal Government and other concerned stakeholders to develop and implement plans and policies for creating an enabling environment for safe migration and empowerment of women migrant workers.
2. To provide information on foreign employment to migrant women workers and their families.
3. To act as a pressure group for the implementation of existing domestic laws and the ratification and implementation of international instruments concerned with the protection and promotion of the rights of migrant women workers.
4. To raise awareness on safe migration and the rights of migrant women workers and to advocate with different stakeholders.

For more information, visit [www.pourakhi.org.np](http://www.pourakhi.org.np).



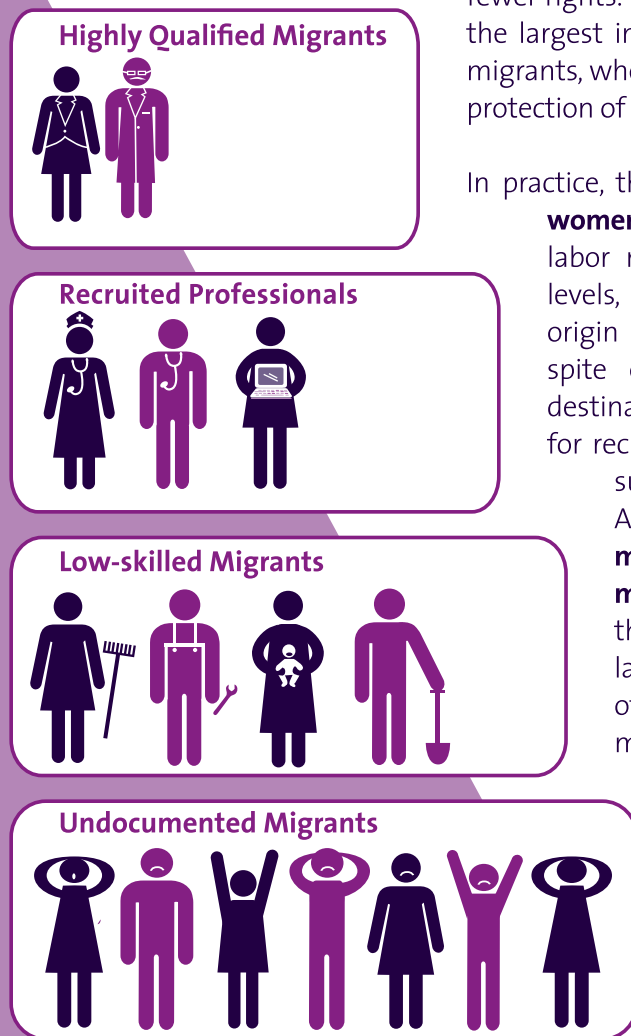
(according to quotas or professional qualifications); and the imposition of greater restrictions on family migration, family reunification, and granting of asylum to refugees (Jolly and Reeves 2005).

This system creates a hierarchy among different kinds of migrants, which has serious consequences in terms of their capacity to exercise their rights. At the top of the pyramid are highly qualified professionals in the sciences, business management, and information technologies, who are actively recruited and enjoy many privileges. The second group, which is much more feminized than the first, includes professionals who are recruited especially to work in nursing and health care; these migrants do not enjoy the same privileges in terms of length of stay, accompaniment or family reunification, or the right to opt for citizenship. Below this group are the least qualified migrants who enter through a quota system or as labor contingents for certain sectors; they have temporary work permits and enjoy even

fewer rights. The lowest group in the pyramid, and the largest in size, is made up of undocumented migrants, who are the most vulnerable in terms of protection of human rights.

In practice, this **stratification is quite harmful to women**, due to the gender segregation in labor markets, differences in qualification levels, and gender roles in countries of origin and destination (Piper 2005). In spite of the feminization of migration, destination countries tend to assign quotas for recruitment in male-dominated sectors, such as agriculture or construction. As a result, many countries have more **migrant women workers with irregular migration status** than men, despite there being obvious demand for their labor, mostly in the care industry and other services. Lacking other options, many women resort to the only means of entry available to them: as a **family dependent**, with no work permit and restricted or non-existent options to obtain one, much less a residency permit independent of the family reunification visa through which they were able to migrate. These

GRAPHIC 14. Hierarchy of “stratified entry”







determinants push many women toward informal sectors with lower pay and less than desirable working conditions, especially domestic work (see the case study of Maribel's care chain, exercise 3.4 of Guide 3).

### 4.3 LIVING AND WORKING CONDITIONS OF MIGRANT WOMEN

As we have seen, migrant women face multiple rights violations in origin, transit, and destination. This guide presents two key rights which are continuously denied to migrant women. The first refers to labor rights in **domestic work**, which is the most common labor insertion niche for migrant women throughout the world. The second is the right to health, particularly **sexual and reproductive health**, an area in which migrant women face particular obstacles when attempting to access services. These two rights, among others, tend to fall outside the priorities of public policymakers in destination countries. This reflects the precarious and vulnerable situation in which migrant women find themselves, due to the double discrimination they face for being women and foreign.

#### 4.3.1 WORKING CONDITIONS IN DOMESTIC WORK

As we have seen in Guide 3, domestic work and paid care work are examples of the gender segregation of labor markets and the reproduction of the sexual division of labor on an international scale. These trends, together



#### Good Practice #5: Ireland

##### Domestic Workers Action Group: Participation, empowerment and collective action

In 2004, the Migrant Rights Centre Ireland (MRCI) established the Domestic Workers Action Group (DWAG), as a result of the increasing numbers of domestic workers calling the MRCI drop-in centre with employment-related complaints which the government was not addressing.

DWAG is a Dublin-based initiative with 200 members, mostly migrant women employed in private homes. DWAG seeks to respond to the exploitation that many domestic workers experience in Ireland by empowering them to campaign for improved protections and standards.

DWAG takes a holistic approach which includes informing all domestic workers of their rights and entitlements, assisting domestic workers to seek compensation and to change their situation by seeking out new opportunities, such as training in childcare. DWAG ultimately seeks to build a strong organisation representing the voices of domestic workers while working towards better enforcement of existing laws and the introduction of new laws to improve conditions for domestic workers.

The core principles of DWAG are participation, empowerment and collective action. Participation is promoted by providing a safe sharing space and offering relevant information to domestic workers about workplace and immigration issues. Members participate in planning sessions, leadership development courses, social and fundraising events, and media training, film and photography workshops. This allows them to get to know one another, build confidence, and come to solidify as a group, all of which lead to their empowerment and collective action. The process of empowerment begins with sharing stories, enabling domestic workers to identify common problems and thus feel less isolated and divided from others. Sharing stories also facilitates the shift of focus from individual problems to collective issues.

One project that built upon these three principles was the quilt and multimedia installation "Blurred Boundaries." The title is a reference to the blurred boundaries between the private and working lives of domestic workers. The project was a creative way for 45 of the group's members to explore social and economic issues. It was used as an awareness-raising tool to aid DWAG's campaign for improved working conditions for domestic workers and resulted in engagement with the trade union movement to develop a "Code of Practice for Protecting Persons Employed in Other People's Homes".

For more information, visit:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LZOlpPBLt7c>

Source: Pablo Rojas Coppari, *Migrant Rights Centre Ireland (MRCI)*, facilitated by Eve Geddie, *Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM)*, [picum.org/en](http://picum.org/en) *International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM)*, <http://picum.org/es/>



## Good Practice #6: U.S.

### Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights



**31 Aug. 2010. David Paterson, Governor of New York, signs a new law on protections for domestic workers.**  
**Source:** <http://www.domesticworkerrights.org/>

Founded in 2000, Domestic Workers United (DWU) is an organization of Caribbean, Latina and African nannies, housekeepers, and elderly caregivers in New York. According to their website, they are “organizing for power, respect, fair labor standards and to help build a movement to end exploitation and oppression for all.”

In August 2010, DWU achieved a major milestone. The group got a bill signed that has come to be called the “Domestic Workers’ Bill of Rights,” which reforms New York State law to guarantee basic work standards and protections for the nannies, caregivers, and housekeepers who keep New York families functioning and make all other work possible. The Bill of Rights, which went into effect on 29 November 2010, is a comprehensive response to domestic workers’ vulnerability to abuse and mistreatment, and works to counter domestic workers’ exclusion from most labor protections. It includes provisions on work hours, day of rest, paid days off, workplace protection, and the right to organize.

For more information on DWU’s campaign, see:  
<http://domesticworkersunited.org/rightsandresources.php>.

with the growing demand for care services, channel a majority of migrant women toward this sector, even if they have professional qualifications in other fields. The low social value assigned to this work, the private sphere in which it is carried out, and the informality that characterizes this sector create conditions for all kinds of abuse to take place.

According to the International Labor Organization (ILO 2004: 59):

*Working conditions of domestic workers vary enormously. Some are treated as members of their employer’s family, while others are exploited and subjected to conditions which in some cases amount to virtual slavery and forced labour. Domestic workers often have to work long or even excessive hours of work (on average, 15-16 hours per day), with no rest days or compensation for overtime; they generally receive low wages, and have inadequate health insurance coverage. Domestic workers are also exposed to physical and sexual harassment and violence and abuse, and are in some cases trapped in situations in which they are physically or legally restrained from leaving the employer’s home by means of threats or actual violence, or by withholding of pay or identity documents.*

Several factors contribute to the particular vulnerabilities of workers in this sector:

**Absence or inadequacy of legal regulations.** In many destination countries, domestic work is not regulated, or is subject to “special regulations” that do not extend the same rights and protections awarded to other labor sectors. This means that domestic workers often lack decent working conditions in terms of salaries, work schedules, health insurance, arbitrary termination, unionization, etc.



**Absence of residency permit and/or work permit.** Many migrants who do not have a work permit find that the informality of domestic work makes it a relatively easy employment option to access; among all domestic workers, those who are in an irregular migration situation are the most vulnerable to exploitation. Some countries offer temporary permits for migrant domestic workers, which does tend to improve working conditions, but only in cases in which the permit allows the worker to change employers. On the contrary, when residency permits are tied to work permits, and loss of employment implies loss of legal residency, workers are in a much more vulnerable position.

#### Action Tool

*ITUC Action Guide  
Decent work, decent life  
for domestic workers  
<http://www.ituc-csi.org/csi-guia-de-accion-trabajo-decente.html?lang=es>*

**Social invisibility of domestic workers.** Domestic and care work is performed within the private sphere of the home, which makes it largely invisible to society, including public decision-makers. Since domestic work is characterized by the dispersion and social isolation of its workers, in particular when they reside in their employers' houses, abuse and poor labor practices are less visible and not as well documented as abuses of migrant men who work in other sectors – also characterized by exploitation, but more visible – such as agriculture or construction. This invisibility is also an important obstacle to their being able to establish connections with other domestic workers, participate in migrant social networks, and organize to demand their rights.

**Low levels of education among women domestic workers.** Although some women with high education levels find employment as domestics for lack of other options, a large majority of domestic workers have low educational levels. (The proportion of skilled vs. low-skilled migrant women working as domestics varies by country. In Spain, for example, a significant proportion of Latin American migrant domestic workers has secondary and university education levels). Those who do have lower education levels are more vulnerable for a variety of reasons: they present the highest levels of poverty and highest levels of irregularity; have fewer chances of obtaining other employment; and tend to have less knowledge of host society legislation, protections, and services to which, in theory, they have access. Thus, they are less likely to claim their rights, report abuse or make use of social and community organizations that support migrants.

**Poor pay for domestic work.** Poor pay obliges many domestic workers to stay put, even when suffering exploitation or abuse. First, the low income level of their households in origin drives them to continue sending regular remittances home to pay off debts and support the family. Second, a change of employment may involve a period of



### How many migrant domestic workers are there?

*Women make up approximately half of the estimated 213 million migrant workers worldwide and an important part are women and girl domestic workers.*

- ❑ *Asia is a large source of international migrants working as domestics both within Asia and beyond.*
- ❑ *Arab countries employ millions of migrant domestic workers. In Saudi Arabia, for example, there are approximately 1.5 million domestic workers, primarily from Indonesia, the Philippines and Sri Lanka.*
- ❑ *In Latin America, domestic workers make up to 60 per cent of internal and cross-border migrants. Migrant women from Mexico and other parts of Latin America make up most of the domestic worker labor force in the U.S.*
- ❑ *In France, more than 50 per cent of migrant women are employed in domestic work.*
- ❑ *In Italy, some 600,000 people are registered as domestic workers, the majority of whom are non-EU nationals. There are also many who are undocumented, not having a work permit, making an estimated total of 1.2 million workers providing domestic services to individuals.*

Source: WIEGO (no date)

unemployment, which many women are not in a position to afford, especially if, as a consequence of the social isolation of their workplace, they do not have access to social networks that may provide job leads or offer shelter and protection during periods of unemployment.

**Contradictions between migration policies and regulations on domestic work.** Many of the problems facing domestic workers are shared between native and migrant workers alike, such as the deficient regulation of this sector or the systematic non-compliance with such regulations where they do exist. However, migrant workers face additional difficulties that derive from the contradictions between migration policies and regulations on domestic work. For example, it is common for domestic work regulations to allow for verbal contracts, whereas migration policies often require a written contract to demonstrate the availability of employment and issue a residency permit. This discrepancy in policies makes it difficult for migrant domestic workers to obtain or renew their work permit. In other cases, the absence of unemployment insurance for domestic workers obligates migrants who



lose their job to keep making contributions of their own accord or through irregular means in order to renew their work permit, since one of the requirements is to demonstrate availability of employment. Another specific vulnerability has to do with fear of deportation. Irregular migrants may be loathe to report labor rights violations in their workplace, where labor inspections rarely occur, for this reason. Finally, it is often legal for employers to withhold high percentages of workers' pay for room and board, which prevents many migrants from meeting the minimum income required for reunification of their husbands and/or children.

#### Manual on migrant domestic workers' rights

*ILO. 2006. Protection of Migrant Domestic Workers in Destination Countries: ILO Human Rights Training Manual for Consular Officials and Labour Attaches*

*Click here:*

[http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@asia/@ro-bangkok/@ilo-jakarta/documents/publication/wcms\\_122313.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@asia/@ro-bangkok/@ilo-jakarta/documents/publication/wcms_122313.pdf)

Many of the obstacles to guaranteeing domestic workers' rights have to do with the fact that the job is performed within **the private sphere of the household**. However, the legal regulations and labor inspection mechanisms were designed for the **public sphere**, traditionally associated with men's work. Historically, family homes have been exempt from government inspection, meaning that the establishment of labor protections for domestic workers would necessitate inspections or other forms of supervision which could be perceived as an "invasion" of employers' privacy (Anderson 2006).



The massive insertion of migrant women in domestic work and care services challenges the **division between public and private**, as well as the **relationship between the private sector and the State** in the provision of care. Several

countries, including Great Britain and France, have created State subsidies for households to hire caregivers, especially for the elderly or disabled. This could be considered progress toward social and collective responsibility in the social provision of care, since it allows households to hire outside help and/or pay the women who had been performing this work for free. However, this type of measure can be a double-edged sword for several reasons: it reinforces the notion that care work is a women's issue in the private sphere,





## Good Practice #7: Spain

### Salud y Familia

The Association *Salud y Familia* (Health and Family) is implementing several programs with the aim to improve access to all health services for undocumented migrants in the Barcelona region. The association combines policy advocacy with ongoing contact with service providers and the government to guarantee undocumented persons' access to a health card.

In collaboration with the public hospitals of Cataluña, the "Mothers between two cultures" program aims to design and pilot test intercultural education activities targeted toward immigrant mothers of diverse origins who have children of three years or younger. The objective is to improve coverage and reduce unmet needs in the area of maternal and child health prevention and promotion, by strengthening knowledge, capacity and social support networks. This program has been particularly effective in providing orientation for recent arrivals, who do not know many people and often live in isolated situations. The Association also offers a program called "Assistance for At-Risk Maternity" which provides partial assistance for pregnant women to receive pre-natal care and psychosocial support.

In Spain, there are different rules regarding foreigners' access to the health system in each region of the country. In Barcelona, foreigners must have a passport, but do not need to have Spanish residency in order to access health care. Nor is it necessary to have a mailing address in order to register oneself with local authorities. In theory, access to health care for migrants should be possible; however, practitioners often request more documentation than the legally established minimum, creating more bureaucratic hassle than necessary.

In order to correct this problem, *Salud y Familia* began to document each incident in which a migrant was denied access to a health card. Incidents were compiled in a report which was sent to the government agency responsible for supervising the health system. The agency requested a meeting with the association, which has resulted in closer collaboration and the development of an action guide.

For more information, visit <http://www.saludyfamilia.es/eng/home.htm>

Source: Eve Geddie, Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM), [picum.org/en](http://picum.org/en)



legitimizes low pay, and resolves care needs through the exploitation of women's poorly paid work (whether through hiring a woman from outside the household or through paying the woman who has been caring for dependents within the household for free).

One example of this reinforcement of low pay for care work is that of Spain, where the Dependency Law recognizes that citizens in a situation of dependency have a right to access care services (in-home assistance, residential care, or day care centers). The law establishes the exceptional option of being able to receive an economic subsidy of 300-500 Euros for non-professional care services at home. However, as of 1 December 2009, 51% of the subsidies were of this type. This subsidy is not a worker's salary, but is rather a subsidy for the beneficiary, which means that the amount varies according to his/her level of dependency. Nor does it allow the care worker access to sufficient social protection – care workers are not eligible for maternity leave or unemployment, and are not able to pay contributions toward their retirement, etc. In addition, there are no supporting mechanisms to prevent this formula from becoming the primary means of meeting continuous care needs of dependent persons, instead of being combined with day care assistance, temporary residence, etc.



## WHAT CAN BE DONE?

Promote the **organization** of domestic workers, in order to receive training on their rights and to build their capacity to negotiate with key stakeholders to improve labor conditions while paying attention to the specific needs of migrant domestic workers.

Hold **dialogues** between labor unions, women's / feminists organizations, migrant associations (especially women migrant associations), Ministries of Women's Affairs and Labor, with an aim to regulate domestic work, give domestic workers the same rights as workers in other sectors, and establish mechanisms to monitor compliance.

Encourage **public and democratic debate** on how to build a more just model of the social organization of care, where there is an equitable distribution of care work among diverse actors (households—and within them, equal distribution between men and women, the State, and the private sector). Within this debate, clarify the role of domestic work within the social model of care that is desired.

### 4.3.2 THE RIGHT TO HEALTH, INCLUDING SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

Migrants' **access** to health care is generally limited and deficient, even in destination countries that offer relatively broad coverage and public access to services. On one hand, a majority of migrants are relatively young, so they tend to have fewer health problems



#### Good Practice #8: Malta



##### Migrant Health Unit

Most people who migrate to Malta arrive on boats traveling from North Africa across the Mediterranean Sea. Boats are regularly intercepted and all irregularly-arriving migrants are automatically placed in detention centers for 18 months.

Migrants are often unable to communicate with the doctor or with the administrative personnel in the health centers. There are very few organizations providing interpretation assistance to migrants. Cultural barriers further hinder the communication between migrants and health service providers. For some newly arrived migrants some aspects of health care services, such as surgical interventions and check-ups by doctors of the opposite sex, especially regarding sexual and reproductive health, may cause fears and misconceptions.

To address this gap, a special unit has been established within the Department of Primary Health to attend migrants. It is staffed with several 'cultural mediators' from the various migrant communities (Somali, Ethiopian, Eritrean, Congolese, and Nigerian). Despite their irregular migration status, these cultural mediators have been trained and are now employed by the Maltese health authority. Half of these are women, who provide assistance at the "women's clinic" in the health centers for prenatal & gynecological appointments.

In cooperation with these cultural mediators, the unit's founder, Marika Poddor Connor, began an awareness raising initiative about female genital mutilation (FGM). In 2008 alone, Malta received 242 women from countries with high prevalence of FGM. Marika has worked closely with the cultural mediators to educate herself about FGM, and has carried out focus groups on the practice among migrant women; in turn, she uses this information to raise awareness within migrant communities and among Maltese health professionals.

In addition to direct assistance and cultural sensitivity training for staff, the Unit has also conducted community outreach on sexual health, how to navigate the health system, mental health, etc. They have materials in many languages, including Somali, Tigrinya, French and Arabic.

For more information, visit: [https://ehealth.gov.mt/HealthPortal/health\\_institutions/primary\\_healthcare/migrant\\_healthunit.aspx](https://ehealth.gov.mt/HealthPortal/health_institutions/primary_healthcare/migrant_healthunit.aspx)

Source: Eve Geddie, Platform for International Cooperation on Documented Migrants (PICUM), [picum.org/](http://picum.org/)



### Good Practice #9: Costa Rica

#### Radio Program *Gente sin Fronteras* (People without Borders)



For 9 years, the Foundation *Género y Sociedad* produced a radio program for Costa Rican and migrant women and men, with the aim of strengthening their capacity as citizens and encouraging peaceful coexistence of both populations in Costa Rica, while applying the gender perspective. This program on migration and citizenship operated based on the understanding that in order to exercise one's human rights, every immigrant should not only have the basic elements to access them (e.g. identity documents, etc.), but should also have the effective capacity to exercise them, including: being equipped with accurate and timely information; knowing requirements, procedures, etc. to regularize one's situation in the country of residence; knowing how to read and write.

The radio program began as "Women without Borders," and after 3 years it was expanded to become "People without Borders." It continued focusing on women's situation, but broadened its coverage to include male listeners as well, who also have gender-related needs resulting from their migratory condition.

The program connected Costa Rican public institutions and the Nicaraguan consulate with immigrants, especially those who preferred to remain anonymous when consulting on procedures to regularize their situation, determining if their employers' treatment is legal (apart from being just, humane, etc.), communicating their situations or raising complaints.

From the beginning, the program enjoyed the continuous support of government representatives and NGOs working on immigration-related issues. This has enabled frank and open discussion with Costa Rican institutions and service providers (education, health, labor, etc.) who have the mandate of protecting the human rights of all persons who reside in the country.

The production and broadcasting costs were quite low (approximately US \$2,000/month) for such a high-impact initiative. It is estimated that for every listener, 5 other people receive the information indirectly. For "People without Borders," an average of 450 people benefited directly every day from the information broadcast on their rights and responsibilities as immigrants, making the cost per direct beneficiary US \$22 per person per month; indirectly, with only US\$ 4 per month, the program was able to inform an average of 450 people. Communication initiatives like this one are an effective way to maximize impact for relatively little money, rather than financing, for example, the production of expensive awareness-raising documentaries or trainings that reach a reduced number of people.

*Submitted by Ana Isabel García, Director Fundación Género y Sociedad (GESO), Costa Rica*

in some regards. On the other hand, it is unfortunately common, especially for women, to have had traumatic experiences during the migration journey, such as **sexual violence**. This risk, together with their low socioeconomic and educational levels, increases migrant women's vulnerability in terms of health. Other studies show that migrants present **relatively higher incidence of illness and work accidents**, due to the unprotected sectors where they find work, as well as high rates of **mental health** problems, including depression, suicide, drug and alcohol abuse, anxiety and stress.

A **series of factors tend to block migrants' access** to health care, including: migration laws and social policies in the destination country; migrants' labor conditions and low income; sociocultural background and experiences with health care system (or lack thereof) in origin; and racial/ethnic discrimination that migrants often face in the host society.

**Social policies.** Despite the fact that health is a human right upheld in several international conventions, access to services is not always possible, especially for migrants with an irregular migratory status. In most destination countries, a common belief is that guaranteeing migrants' access to health care is not an obligation, but an act of generosity paid for by the State. On the other hand, the informality of migrants' employment sectors, particularly domestic work, facilitates the hiring of undocumented workers and allows employers to hire them without





having to contribute the corresponding taxes and other withholdings. In effect, most destination countries only guarantee access to emergency health care, which is what is stipulated in the Convention on Migrant Workers and their Families. In those countries that do offer access to services beyond emergency care, there are often other insurmountable obstacles for the migrant population, such as lack of sufficient information, not enough time off to attend appointments and receive services, and bureaucratic barriers to access services.

**Migration policies.** As migration policies become stricter and the threat of being detained or deported increases, migrants become more reluctant to utilize health services. The lack of opportunities for regular migration has significant consequences on migrant health: an increase in irregular migration, human smuggling and trafficking places women at serious risk of abuse and sexual exploitation, both within the migration process and in their workplaces in the host country. Limitations on access to mental health and sexual and reproductive health services therefore affect women in particular.

**Linguistic and cultural barriers between migrants and health care personnel.** Language and cultural differences may present significant challenges to communication and treatment of migrants. Health care personnel are often unfamiliar with the particular needs of their migrant patients who, due to their own health background, migration experiences, and living and working conditions in the destination country, may present a different clinical picture than they are used to treating. All of this is aggravated by discriminatory attitudes on the part of some health personnel, out of racial-ethnic prejudice or discrimination based on the patients' migratory status. In terms of reproductive health, prenatal, childbirth and post-partum care vary significantly according to the cultural context, and these differences may result in uncomfortable situations for both patient and health care provider.



**Lack of information.** Many migrants simply do not understand how the health system works in the destination country, much less how to access it or how to find a health care provider. Many migrants also come from countries with deficient health systems, and therefore may have little experience dealing with them – especially poor women or those from rural areas.



**Costs.** Given that in the majority of destination countries, the health care services provided free of charge to migrants (particularly irregular migrants) are limited to emergency situations, the direct costs of services and medications and indirect costs of transportation and time lost at work can pose a significant obstacle. Migrants who are under an obligation to remit regularly to their home country may have a hard time justifying this “personal expenditure,” even when it has to do with their own health. This may affect women even more, given that they tend to earn less but remit a greater proportion of their income, and are socialized to sacrifice themselves for their family’s well-being.

**Bureaucratic barriers.** The process of accessing health services is sometimes long and complicated, not only for migrants, but also for providers, who are oftentimes unfamiliar with their migrant patients’ rights and corresponding procedures to uphold these rights.

The exclusion resulting from the abovementioned difficulties affects **migrant women’s health** in particular. Women tend to make more use of the health system, for both biological (pregnancy and childbirth) and social reasons (as those assigned responsibility for keeping the family healthy). It follows, then, that lack of access to services has a significant impact on women, for reasons that derive from gender inequalities: risk of suffering domestic violence and sexual assault (especially for live-in domestic workers), greater indices of poverty and unemployment, lower educational levels, etc.

The consequences in terms of migrant women’s **sexual and reproductive health** are quite serious. Although statistics vary according to population and context, there is a generalized tendency for migrant women to present higher levels than the local population of cervical cancer, adolescent pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, maternal mortality, babies with low birth weight, domestic violence, infant mortality, childbirth complications, premature births, etc.

Let us consider, for example, some **indicators of the situation of Latina migrants and their descendants in the U.S.**, where access to health care is a major public problem that is even more serious in the case of the migrant population.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, these figures are taken from Rios and Hooton (2005) and refer to the entire Latina population, both immigrant (53 per cent) and non-immigrant.



Latinas have the lowest indices of access to health insurance of all population groups. 56% of migrant women do not have any kind of health insurance, with even higher percentages among undocumented Latina migrants.

Rates of cervical cancer are more than double that of white women (15.8 vs. 7.1) and maternal mortality rates are also higher (8.0 per thousand vs. 5.8)

Rates of adolescent pregnancy among Latinas are the highest in the country (83.4), almost triple that of white teenage girls (28.5).

At the same time, Latina adolescents present the lowest rates of legal abortion (27.5) compared with white adolescent girls (32.0) and Afro-American (40.8).

Rates of HIV/AIDS among Latina women are 7 times higher than among white women.

Although studies show that migrant women are especially vulnerable to domestic violence, Latina migrants/descendants present lower rates of reporting to police and use of victim services. Government statistics indicate that only 30% of migrants who have suffered violence report it, which is even lower for undocumented migrant women (15%), versus 55% among the native population (Jolly and Reeves 2005).

Lack of access to contraceptives also raises levels of **unwanted pregnancy** and, as a result, the demand for **abortion** services. Returning to the example of Latina migrants and their descendants in the U.S., we see that their abortion rate is more than double that of white women (28 abortions per 1000 Latina women vs. 11 abortions per 1000 white women) (Henshaw and Kost 2008). This difference can be attributed in part to a chain of “lacks”: lack of health insurance and low income, which leads to lack of access to contraceptives, which results in more unwanted pregnancies (Fuentes 2010). Similarly, in European countries where abortion is legal and can be obtained through public health services, migrant women present abortion rates two and four times higher than native-born women (UNFPA 2007; Carballo 2007).

Even in countries where the right to freely choose whether or not to interrupt a pregnancy is respected, migrant women do not always have access to such services, leading many to resort to **self-induced abortions**, without medical assistance. Among poor migrant women in Europe and Latina and Caribbean migrants in the U.S., reports have shown that there is a subculture of using Cytotec (brand name of misoprostol) to self-induce abortions. In the case of Latinas and migrants



Cytotec (brand name of misoprostol) to self-induce abortions. In the case of Latinas and migrants of Caribbean origin in New York, both the practice and the drug itself are imported from their places of origin through migratory networks. In 2000, a study carried out in three reproductive health clinics in the state of New York found that many low-income migrant women used misoprostol to self-induce, since that alternative was easier and more affordable (Leland 2005). Since then, several migrant women have been taken to court for this, including a Mexican woman charged with homicide in South Carolina in 2005 and a Dominican woman in Massachusetts in 2007, both of whom self-induced abortions in the second trimester of pregnancy. In sum, the practice of illegal abortion not only exposes migrant women to prosecution before the law; it can also result in disastrous consequences for their health and personal and professional projects.

The CEDAW General Recommendation 26 recognizes inequalities that put migrant women's health, and especially their sexual and reproductive health, in danger. It also encourages States to develop policies that improve their access to health care. (See section 4.4.2 for more information).

### Recommendations to improve migrant women's access to health care

- ❑ *Train health service providers on their patients' cultural backgrounds. Encourage their collaboration with migrant women's organizations to tailor their services and/or make them culturally sensitive.*
- ❑ *Implement projects that aim to improve undocumented migrant women's quality of life, ensuring that budgetary resources are made available for such initiatives.*
- ❑ *Make the criteria for accessing health care more flexible for irregular migrants: health is not an emergency, but a fundamental right that should be respected at all times.*
- ❑ *Guarantee security and protection for women and children without documentation.*

Source: Virginia Wangare Greiner, Maisha e.V. African Women in Germany and European Network of Migrant Women (2010)



### Stop & Reflect

1. In your country, do domestic workers have access to the same labor rights and protections as workers in other sectors? If not, what obstacles are there to guaranteeing the labor rights of domestic workers, especially migrants?
2. In your country, what problems do migrant women have in order to access sexual and reproductive health services? Do you know of any program or policy that aims to improve this situation?



## 4.4 INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS: ICRMW, CEDAW GR 26 AND ILO CONVENTION 189 ON DOMESTIC WORK

### 4.4.1 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON THE PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF ALL MIGRANT WORKERS AND MEMBERS OF THEIR FAMILIES (ICRMW)

The principal international instrument that guarantees migrant persons' rights is the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICRMW).<sup>19</sup> It was approved unanimously by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1990, although 13 years would pass before it was ratified by the minimum number of Member States (20) in order to enter into force. The main problem facing the ICRMW is the low number of governments that have ratified it: as of March 2012, **only 34 Member States were signatories and 45 parties to the Convention**, the majority of which are migration countries of origin.

The Convention does not invent new rights. Instead, it gathers the general principles of human rights upheld by the six fundamental international

#### Key Protections of the Convention on Migrant Workers Applicable to both Regular and Irregular Migrants

- ❑ *Reaffirmation of the principle of non-discrimination*
- ❑ *Right to equal pay and working conditions*
- ❑ *Right to emergency medical attention*
- ❑ *Right to education for their children*
- ❑ *Right to cultural identity*
- ❑ *Right to effective protection of the State against intimidation and violence*
- ❑ *Diplomatic protection*

#### Protections Applicable only to Regular Migrants

- ❑ *Same labor rights as national workers (including unemployment insurance, social security, and the right to unionize)*
- ❑ *Right to receive social services, health care, education and training*
- ❑ *Recognition of the right to family reunification (although the language is ambiguous: "States Parties shall take measures that they deem appropriate and that fall within their competence to facilitate the reunification")*

<sup>19</sup> Available at: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/cmw.htm>



instruments, and applies them directly to migrants and their families. In other words, instead of pronouncing new rights, the Convention lists those that already exist and extends them to migrants based on the principle of equality between all people. A key aspect – which could explain the reticence of destination countries to ratify the ICRMW – is the recognition of the rights of migrants whose residency status is irregular. The Convention does this by declaring that the basic principle of legal equality will be recognized for all persons, regardless of their migratory status. This does not mean that irregular migrants enjoy all the same rights as those who have the necessary work and/or residency permits in the destination country; nor does it mean that States are obligated to regularize their situation. The only thing it guarantees is access to basic rights, regardless of one's migratory status.

Regarding migrant women, the Convention is the only instrument of its kind to use non-sexist language, explicitly specifying that each right applies to both women and men. However, the **ICRMW does not take into account the specific gender needs of migrant women**, such as recognition of their greater vulnerability to various forms of sexual violence or special protections for domestic workers or sex workers (Jolly and Reeves 2005). This gap can be compensated for at least partially by appealing to other instruments, especially the CEDAW General Recommendation 26.

#### 4.4.2 CEDAW GENERAL RECOMMENDATION 26

Unlike the ICRMW, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is the **second most ratified convention in the world** (187 Member States), following the Declaration of the Rights of the Child. In the framework of CEDAW, a series of general recommendations has been launched in order to clarify certain aspects of women's rights that warrant special consideration. Among these recommendations is the General Recommendation (GR 26) on women migrant workers, which was adopted in the 42nd session of the CEDAW Committee in November 2008.<sup>20</sup>

#### Guide on Strengthening Legal Protection of Migrants' Rights



*A user-friendly Guide to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (ICRMW) has been prepared by a network of concerned intergovernmental agencies and international civil society groups chaired by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). It is available for download here:*

<http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Press/HandbookFINAL.PDF>

<sup>20</sup> Available at: [http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/docs/GR\\_26\\_on\\_women\\_migrant\\_workers\\_en.pdf](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/docs/GR_26_on_women_migrant_workers_en.pdf)





The GR 26 recognizes the importance of the increasing feminization of migration flows and identifies **three categories of immigrant workers** that require protection: (1) Women migrant workers who migrate independently; (2) Women migrant workers who join their spouses or other members of their families who are also workers; and/or (3) Undocumented women migrant workers who may fall into any of the above categories. The Recommendation encourages States to develop laws and policies to protect their rights as women, as workers, and as migrants.

In terms of the specific **vulnerabilities of migrant women vs. those of migrant men**, the CEDAW Committee recognizes that:

*Although both men and women migrate, migration is not a gender-neutral phenomenon. The position of female migrants is different from that of male migrants in terms of legal migration channels, the sectors into which they migrate, the forms of abuse they suffer and the consequences thereof. To understand the specific ways in which women are impacted, female migration should be studied from the perspective of gender inequality, traditional female roles, a gendered labour market, the universal prevalence of gender-based violence and the worldwide feminization of poverty and labour migration. The integration of a gender perspective is, therefore, essential to the analysis of the position of female migrants and the development of policies to counter discrimination exploitation and abuse (Paragraph 5).*

General Recommendation 26 is an important instrument not only because of its broad geographic reach, but also because of the wide array of considerations it covers. It includes the different situations that foster discrimination against migrant women throughout the labor migration process, in **origin, transit, and destination countries**.



#### Good Practice #10: Greece

##### United African Women Association



Greece is a country that has recently become an immigration host country; hence, it is slowly and hesitantly developing its policies for migration management and migrant integration. African women are a numerically tiny part of the approximately 1 million immigrants who live in the country today. However, they are a population that suffers from the so-called double disadvantage of being a migrant and a woman. The United African Women Association ([www.africanwomen.gr](http://www.africanwomen.gr)) is a small but very active NGO that was created in 2005 by the single initiative of a woman from Sierra Leone, who had realized how helpless she was in acting only on her own when she was made unemployed after 11 years of work without compensation.

The United African Women Association is a trans-national and inter-ethnic association that brings together women from a large number of African countries. The aim of the association is to create awareness on various issues concerning the African women and their children living in Greece, to support and fight for their rights and in particular for the rights of the second generation; to create mutual bonds of solidarity between Africans and Greeks; to explore and incorporate the rich African woman heritage into the rich Greek heritage; to work hand in hand with other NGOs and associations that stand for justice and combat racism.

The work of the association has been crucial in campaigning for the naturalization of second generation African children born in Greece (see [www.kounia.org](http://www.kounia.org)), contributing thus to the recent change in Greek law (March 2010). It has also made visible and respectable the different and rich cultural traditions of African women in migration festivals and fairs, organized in and around Athens. It has worked together with local authorities (e.g. the Municipality of Kesariani, the Municipality of Athens) and with migrant organisations' networks (the Hellenic Forum of Migrants) providing a contact point for African women to receive information and participate in wider social and cultural activities concerning migration in Greece. The association also provides a friendly and welcoming place for women who suffer from domestic violence.

This association is an excellent example of women migrants' transnational political and social activism in that it brings together women from different African countries who are united by their migration experiences and problems in Greece and also by their wish to make Greece a better home for them and their children.

*Submitted by Anna Trandafyllidou, Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP), Greece*



In **origin**, for example, GR 26 indicates that women may lack “reliable information on migration, which may lead to increased vulnerability in relation to employers” (Paragraph 10) or upon their return they may suffer stigma associated with women’s migration or gender-based discrimination, such as compulsory HIV and AIDS testing for women returnees (Paragraph 11).

GR 26 also recognizes that while migrant women are in **transit**, they are often more vulnerable to sexual and physical violence and abandonment of their escort (Paragraph 12), among other risks.

In **destination** countries, migrant women may be subject to multiple forms of discrimination. GR 26 recognizes, among others, that:

Migrant women tend to be channeled toward “job opportunities that reflect familial and service functions ascribed to women or that are in the informal sector,” such as domestic work or certain forms of entertainment (Paragraph 13)

Informality – and the corresponding difficulty of obtaining a binding contract – exposes women migrant workers to various types of exploitation (Paragraph 14)

Visa terms often prohibit the woman migrant worker from changing employers even when suffering abusive treatment, lest she “become undocumented the minute she leaves her job” (Paragraph 15)

Working conditions (for example, in factory, farm, or domestic work) may have negative effects on their health, while inequalities obstruct their access to health care services, especially reproductive health services (Paragraph 17)

Women migrant workers may face dismissal from their job if they become pregnant, sometimes resulting in irregular immigration status and deportation (Paragraph 18)

They are more vulnerable to sexual abuse, sexual harassment, and physical violence in their workplace, especially in domestic work (Paragraph 20)

Their access to justice is limited by formal barriers (gaps in legal protection of women migrant workers) and practical barriers (language, not knowing rights, restrictions on mobility and telephone use) (Paragraph 21)

Undocumented migrant women are especially vulnerable to exploitation, for example as forced labor, and their access to minimum labor rights may be limited by fear of denouncement (Paragraph 22)

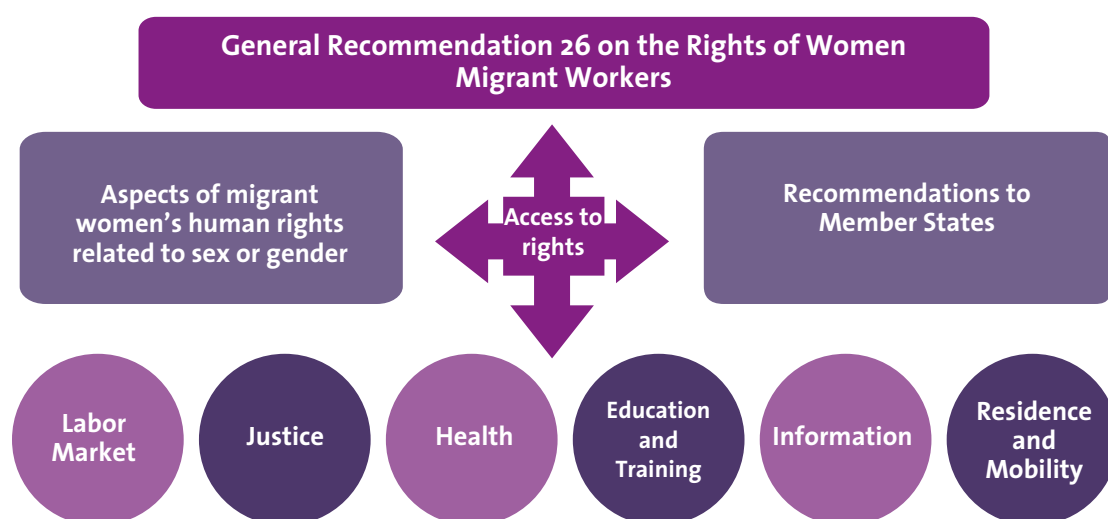




After identifying these vulnerabilities, GR 26 emphasizes **measures that States should take** – whether they are origin, transit or destination countries – in order to uphold their responsibilities toward women migrant workers.

In origin, it recommends measures that include, for example, training for potential migrants, legal services, procedures and supervision of recruitment agencies, services for women who wish to return or who have already done so.

**Graphic 15**  
**CEDAW General Recommendation 26**



Source: UNIFEM and UN-INSTRAW 2010 (now part of UN Women)

In transit countries, GR 26 recommends training, monitoring and supervising border police and immigration officials for gender-sensitivity and non-discriminatory practices when dealing with women migrants (Paragraph 25 a). It also encourages Member States that are transit countries to prevent, prosecute and punish all migration-related human rights violations that occur under their jurisdiction, whether perpetrated by public authorities or private actors (Paragraph 25 b).

*General Recommendation 26 is an important instrument not only because of its broad geographic reach, but also because of the wide array of considerations it covers.*

The recommendations for destination countries include, among others: lifting of discriminatory bans or restrictions on immigration; legal protection for the rights of women migrant workers, including the freedom of movement and association; non-discriminatory family reunification schemes; monitoring systems of recruiting agents and employers; social inclusion, integration and protection policies for undocumented migrant women workers (Paragraph 26).



Despite the advances that GR 26 achieves, it is important to remember that it is a **recommendation**, which means that it acts as a non-binding set of guidelines. On the contrary, a **convention**, such as the recently approved ILO convention on domestic work, is an international treaty that is legally binding, whose basic principles must be applied in countries that ratify it.

#### 4.4.3 ILO CONVENTION 189 CONCERNING DECENT WORK FOR DOMESTIC WORKERS

In March 2008, following an international campaign spearheaded by global unions, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) made the historic move of placing the question of decent work for domestic workers on the agenda of the 2010 International Labour Conference. Since then, the ILO, in partnership with labor unions and organizations from many countries, worked to develop international standards to improve the legal framework regulating domestic work. That global campaign culminated in the approval of the Convention on Decent Work for Domestic Workers in the 100th International Labor Conference of the ILO in June 2011.<sup>21</sup>



The instrument, which now has to be ratified by the different Member States, seeks to guarantee domestic workers' full enjoyment of fair pay, social security, equal treatment, right to organize and negotiate collectively, and the right to enjoy a life of dignity. When it is ratified by the minimum number of Member States and enters into force, it will be an important instrument that signatory governments can use to bring their national legislation into line with international standards of protection for domestic workers, including migrant domestic workers. The existence of this convention reinforces the efforts underway by many labor unions and civil society organizations to organize domestic workers and regulate their working conditions.<sup>22</sup>

Article 8 of Convention 189 draws attention to the particular situation of domestic workers who are migrants, stipulating that they be offered a written contract or job offer before migrating and that they enjoy the same rights as non-migrant domestic workers. Table 8 presents a summary of the protections included in the Convention.

<sup>21</sup> See the complete text of the Convention here: <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/convde.pl?C189>

<sup>22</sup> For more information, see [http://www.ilo.org/actrav/areas/WCMS\\_DOC\\_ATR\\_ARE\\_DOM\\_EN/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/actrav/areas/WCMS_DOC_ATR_ARE_DOM_EN/lang--en/index.htm).



**Table 8.**  
**Summary of ILO Convention 189**

Article	Topic
1,2	Definitions, scope, flexibility clauses
3,4	Human rights, fundamental principles and rights at work (freedom of association and right to collective bargaining, non-discrimination, prohibition of forced labor and ending child labor)
5	Protection from abuse, harassment and violence
6	Terms and conditions of employment, decent working and living conditions
7	Information on terms and conditions of work, written contracts where possible
8	Protection of migrant domestic workers
9	Entitlements of domestic workers who reside in the employer household, identity and travel documents, privacy
10	Hours of work, overtime compensation, periods of daily and weekly rest, paid annual leave, etc.
11	Minimum wage coverage
12	Salary protection, limit on in-kind payment
13,14	Occupational safety and health, social security
15	Protection against abusive practices of employment agencies
16	Access to courts and dispute resolution mechanisms
17	Access to complaint mechanisms and means of ensuring compliance with national laws
18	Implementation of Convention

**Domestic Workers Recommendation 201**, which accompanies Convention 189, establishes much more specific measures to ensure compliance with the provisions of the Convention. In addition, it goes into further detail on the measures that Member States should consider in order to guarantee women migrant workers' rights. For example, it suggests "concluding bilateral, regional or multilateral agreements to provide, for migrant domestic workers covered by such agreements, equality of treatment in respect of **social security**, as well as access to and preservation or portability of social security entitlements" (Paragraph 20. 2). It also encourages the adoption of additional measures to ensure their protection, such as:



- ▶ Establishing a national hotline with interpretation services (21.1. a)
- ▶ Providing for a system of pre-placement visits to households in which migrant domestic workers are to be employed (21.1. b)
- ▶ Developing a network of emergency housing (21.1. c)
- ▶ Raising employers' awareness of their obligations (21.1. d)
- ▶ Securing access of domestic workers to complaint mechanisms and their ability to pursue legal civil and criminal remedies (21.1. e)
- ▶ Providing for a public outreach service to inform domestic workers, in languages understood by them, of their rights, relevant laws and regulations, available complaint mechanisms and legal remedies, concerning both employment and immigration law, as well as legal protection against crimes such as violence, trafficking in persons and deprivation of liberty (21.1. f).

**Table 9.**  
**Summary of ILO Domestic Workers Recommendation 201**

Article	Topic
2	Freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining
3,4	Non-discrimination, medical testing
5	Identification and prohibition of dangerous domestic work for girls/children; protection for adolescent domestic workers
6	Information on terms and conditions of employment, model contract of employment for domestic work
8-13	Hours of work, including overtime, periods of standby, night work, periods of rest, paid annual leave
14-15	Limits on in-kind payment, salary protection
17	Accommodation and food
18	Termination of employment for live-in domestic workers
19, 20	Occupational safety and health, social security
21, 22, 23	Additional protections for migrant domestic workers, private employment agencies
25	Continuing development of competencies and qualifications, including literacy training
	Work life balance needs, right to reconcile work and family responsibilities
	Collect data necessary to support effective policy-making regarding domestic work
26	International cooperation



Importantly, Recommendation 201, like CEDAW GR 26, recognizes that **countries of origin also play a key role as guarantors of the rights of their citizens abroad**. In the case of domestic workers, Recommendation 201 exhorts them to inform workers on their rights prior to departure and to create legal assistance funds, social services, and specialized consular services.



### Stop & Reflect

1. Do you know if your country has ratified the Convention on Migrant Workers and their Families? If not, why do you think it has not?
2. Do you know of any measures your government has taken to guarantee the rights of women migrant workers, as stipulated by CEDAW GR 26?
3. In your country, is there currently a campaign underway to ratify the ILO Convention 189? Currently, what national legislation exists to protect the labor rights of domestic workers?



## 4.5 INCLUDING MIGRANT WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN THE MIGRATION-DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

In order to avoid the instrumentalization of migrants, we must not consider them as victims or “peons of global development” but rather as rights holders and agents of development. This involves the creation of mechanisms through which they can **decide** over development processes, including the content and objectives of interventions themselves, both in destination and origin countries. Likewise, migrants must be recognized as **beneficiaries** of development, which means ensuring that their living and working conditions are included as development concerns in countries of the global North as well.

Governments of origin countries are becoming more aware of the **need to conduct outreach to their citizens abroad** in order to guarantee the protection of their rights, which is extending the notion of citizenship as something that can be exercised beyond national borders. For this to be possible, it is important for migrants to be organized and informed, while also being able to count on the support of their own government institutions while residing abroad.

Toward this end, the following **recommendations** are offered:

- ❑ Promote the **organization of migrant women** in social and civic groups and strengthen existing groups, especially migrant associations, so that women can claim their rights within and from these spaces.
- ❑ Promote the right to **political representation of migrants living abroad in their home country**, with equal access, participation and representation of women and men.
- ❑ Carry out **policy advocacy** so that States modify and standardize their national legislation in accordance with the treaties they have signed, especially those that are relevant to migrant women's rights, such as CEDAW GR 26, the ICRMW, and ILO Convention 189. Create policies and programs that enable migrant women to exercise their rights in origin, transit, and destination countries.
- ❑ Facilitate **civic education** for migrants so they know their rights and come to recognize themselves as rights holders.

Similarly, efforts must be made to ensure that migration policies are gender sensitive. The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), which recently published a Guide on Gender-Sensitive Labour Migration Policies (2009), offers the following recommendations (paraphrased here):

- ❑ In order to assess the need for foreign labor, generate **data on gender** and more detailed information on specific labor market sectors where women are concentrated. Include domestic work and private care-related services so that labor recruitment and admission



## Good Practice #11: Ecuador

### Political Representation of Migrants in their Home Country

The 2008 Constitution of Ecuador made significant strides on topics related to human mobility, by addressing needs of transnational families and rights of its citizens who reside abroad. Among other rights, it advocates for the principle of universal citizenship and the free movement of all its residents. In this way, the Constitution obliges the State to develop actions through the relevant entities that make it possible for Ecuadorians living abroad to exercise their rights, regardless of their migratory status, and to provide assistance for them and their families.



This recognition of the political right of migrants to political representation paved the way for Linda Machuca Moscoso, representative of the Ecuadorian diaspora in the U.S. and Canada, to be able to work with her counterparts in Ecuador to incorporate a gender perspective into the Human Mobility Law in her country, while also working to address problems facing the Ecuadorian immigrant community in the U.S. Among other initiatives, she is promoting the migrant community's exercise of their right to vote and access to higher education distance learning. She also uses her voice to denounce abuse against Ecuadorians living in the U.S. and Canada.

policies can better reflect current demand. Such measures would also help reduce the number of female migrants working in irregular employment situations.

- ❑ Develop permanent and temporary migration channels that offer equal access to women. Non-recognition of the demand for care workers as well as the lack of social value placed on this work means that women generally do not receive many points in the recruitment systems based on the assignment of points according to qualifications. Some measures to be considered for these **point-based systems** are the recognition of women's role as primary caregivers and the relaxation of strict age and work experience thresholds.
- ❑ The validity of a **work visa should not be limited to a specific employer** and migrant workers should be allowed to change their place of employment to reduce dependency on a particular employer and enable workers to escape situations of abuse should they arise.
- ❑ Offer **services to female migrant workers**, such as special assistance with administrative processes, access to integration services, language and skills upgrading courses, and civil and legal services. These services should be sensitive to the reality of the labor sectors in which migrant women work (for example, by opening on Sundays, which tends to be the day of rest for domestic workers).



- ❑ Bilateral labor migration agreements should include two different types of provisions which can benefit female migrant workers: (a) general **good practices** that have a positive impact on women, such as protective provisions in sectors not covered by national labor law, e.g., domestic work; and (b) **gender-specific measures** such as gender impact assessments of the agreements; including gender advisers with expertise on migration at all stages, from creation to implementation of such agreements; and gender sensitivity training for all staff involved in the process.
- ❑ Develop **ethical recruitment codes**, such as government-to-government agreements on recruitment of nurses and other health care professionals in order to avoid the negative effects such as “brain drain” in this sector, which may have particular consequences for women’s health in countries of origin (especially in contexts of high prevalence of HIV, high maternal mortality, etc.).
- ❑ State agencies and non-state organizations in countries of origin should provide **pre-employment and pre-departure orientation** to prospective women labor migrants, possibly through embassies and consulates, taking into account women’s greater vulnerability and risk of suffering sexual abuse while in transit, and of being trafficked or otherwise exploited in destination countries.





## ACTIVITIES

- 4.1 **Moving from the International to National Arena:  
Implementing CEDAW General Recommendation 26**
- 4.2 **Case Study: Defending Migrant Women's Rights  
from the Origin Country**
- 4.3 **Design your own Intervention**



## 4.1 MOVING FROM THE INTERNATIONAL TO NATIONAL ARENA: IMPLEMENTING CEDAW GENERAL RECOMMENDATION 26



**OBJECTIVE:** Get to know the primary instrument for guaranteeing women migrant workers' rights, CEDAW General Recommendation 26. Identify actions to advance its implementation in participants' home countries.



**MATERIALS/PREPARATION:** Flip chart paper and markers, photocopies of CEDAW General Recommendation 26, available on the CD or on the following web page:  
[http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/docs/GR\\_26\\_on\\_women\\_migrant\\_workers\\_en.pdf](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/docs/GR_26_on_women_migrant_workers_en.pdf)



**ESTIMATED TIME:** 1 hour



### FACILITATION

1. Explain: *CEDAW is the second most ratified convention in the world, and as such, it is a powerful instrument to guarantee women's rights. In November 2008, the CEDAW Committee adopted the General Recommendation 26 on women migrant workers. The GR 26 focuses on the relationship between gender and migration, particularly in six areas: work, health, education, residence, justice, and access to information. At the end, it includes Recommendations to Member States, which are divided into seven categories:*
  - a. *Common responsibilities of countries of origin and destination*
  - b. *Responsibilities specific to countries of origin*
  - c. *Responsibilities specific to countries of transit*
  - d. *Responsibilities specific to countries of destination*
  - e. *Bilateral and regional cooperation*
  - f. *Recommendations concerning monitoring and reporting*
  - g. *Ratification or accession to relevant human rights treaties*
2. Divide participants into small groups, preferably homogenous groups according to place of origin or area of work (government/service provider/NGO or origin/transit/destinations, etc.).
3. Hand out copies of CEDAW GR26 and ask them to take half an hour to go over the Recommendations at the end that pertain to their type of country (origin, transit or destination). These begin on page 8.



4. Each group should select a note taker and a presenter who will share the group's ideas with everyone following the exercise. They should select 2 recommendations (the facilitator should try to prompt the groups to choose different recommendations from one another), and then discuss the following:
  - a. *Do you know of any measures, laws or bills that are implementing the suggestions included in the recommendation you have chosen? What kind of measure is it? Who is implementing it?*
  - b. *What new programs or laws could be promoted to implement the recommendations you have chosen?*
5. Emphasize that they should spend more time on part b of the exercise, generating ideas on what kinds of projects could be designed to advance in the implementation of the recommendations.
6. Leave half an hour for groups to present their ideas in a plenary session.



#### KEY LESSON



“While States are entitled to control their borders and regulate migration, they must do so in full compliance with their obligations as parties to the human rights treaties they have ratified or acceded to. That includes the promotion of safe migration procedures and the obligation to respect, protect and fulfill the human rights of women throughout the migration cycle. Those obligations must be undertaken in recognition of the social and economic contributions of women migrant workers to their own countries and countries of destination, including through caregiving and domestic work” (Article 3, CEDAW GR 26).



## 4.2 CASE STUDY: DEFENDING MIGRANT WOMEN'S RIGHTS FROM THE ORIGIN COUNTRY



**OBJECTIVE:** Identify innovative elements and generate one's own ideas on how to defend migrant women's rights transnationally.



**MATERIALS/PREPARATION:** Photocopies of the case study and work sheet



**ESTIMATED TIME:** 45 minutes



**FACILITATION**

1. Familiarize yourself with the case study and questions that follow. You have the option of substituting this good practice with another that appears in this guide, if you prefer.
2. Divide participants into pairs or small groups. If possible, try to keep those working on the same migration corridor together, and include participants from different organizations in each group.
3. Ask the groups to choose a note taker, and read the case together.
4. Explain that the case study will serve as a starting point in order for them to come up with their own ideas on which of migrant women's rights are being violated in participants' home countries and what can be done about it. Ask them to spend the bulk of their time on questions 2 and 3.
5. Emphasize that they should make an effort to consider the transnational dimension of the problem – the “here” and “there” – as well as migrant women's participation in the intervention in defense of their rights. They will have 25 minutes for this part.
6. Groups will have the opportunity to present their ideas in a plenary session. The facilitator should take note of innovative and/or repeated ideas between the groups on flip chart paper or on the board.



### KEY LESSON



The country of origin can and should play an important role protecting the rights of its citizens who reside abroad. Governments and organizations in origin countries are finding ever more innovative ways to remain connected with their migration population, through ministries of migration, the diplomatic system and coordination with civil society, both in origin and destination.



### TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION IN DEFENSE OF ECUADORIAN MOTHERS' RIGHTS IN ITALY

In Italy, a large number of Ecuadorian women who have had children with Italian men were losing custody of their children. Supposedly, this was due to their not being considered “good mothers” by the authorities, and because the judges consistently ruled in favor of the Italian fathers. This problem was exposed in a report entitled “State Abductions” published in the Italian magazine *Panorama*, which drew attention to 30,000 complaints of discriminatory treatment against Ecuadorian women, as evidenced by biased reports of social workers, psychologists who certified mental disorders in the mothers, and judges who deemed them unfit to raise their children based on unsubstantiated reports and without hearing the children’s testimony. The article notes that in many cases, once the Italian fathers obtained custody of the children, they often sent them to State-run schools or intended to give them up for adoption.

In response, the National Secretariat for Migrants in Ecuador (SENAMI) took the following actions. In June 2009, SENAMI met with a group of Ecuadorian mothers in Genoa who had lost or were about to lose custody of their children. During the meeting, they evaluated the work of the Inter-institutional Commission which had pledged to provide legal advice and counseling to the migrant mothers, through alliances with strategic sectors of Italian civil society. One such alliance took the form of an agreement between the Ecuadorian government and the “Movimiento Bambino” Foundation, an Italian non-profit organization that provides legal, social and psychological support in such cases.

It also issued a memorandum of cooperation with the Legal Group of the Union of Italian Women (UDI, in Italian) to provide free legal assistance in the Consulate of Ecuador in Genoa and to conduct training courses for personnel of the Ecuadorian embassy and consulates on Italian laws regarding women and children’s issues (family relations, domestic violence and immigration). With the support of the University of Genoa and various civil society organizations working for women’s rights, Ecuadorian government officials in Italy are conducting further research on this issue.

These collaborations have enabled the mothers to obtain a response to their complaints of what was identified as an unfavorable attitude of judges and courts. It is suspected that they have been acting based on discriminatory and racist reasoning, which is socially discrediting Ecuadorian women by separating them from their children; however, this situation was being ignored by both Italian and Ecuadorian authorities.

In 2010, the Ecuadorian migrant women facing this or similar problems came together to form the Brave Mothers of Ecuador Association, in order to collectively address their legal position in the country. In collaboration with SENAMI and other advisor organizations, they managed to send their cases to the European Court in Strasbourg, a body designed to uphold human rights in Europe.

- ### What might be some first steps to begin carrying out this work?



### 4.3 DESIGN YOUR OWN INTERVENTION



**OBJECTIVE:** Have each participant identify, from their own position (Ministry representative, NGO personnel, association member, etc.) and perspective, what type of project s/he would be able to carry out in order to promote respect for migrant women's labor rights and right to sexual and reproductive health.



**MATERIALS/PREPARATION:** Photocopy of the matrix of proposals for action (following guide 4) and work sheet



**ESTIMATED TIME:** 1 hour



**FACILITATION**

1. Use this activity at the end of the workshop so that participants have a chance to think of how they might put into practice what they have learned in their own work.
2. Divide participants into groups of no more than 3 or 4 people. They can also work in pairs, if they prefer.
3. Explain the objective of the activity and hand out the materials.
4. Ask them to go over the proposals for action, paying particular attention to the ideas in the third column. Explain that they should choose one of the recommendations and/or generate their own intervention idea, and then develop a project outline that meets the criteria on the work sheet. They can do this in broad brush strokes, without going into too much detail. What is important is that they start thinking about how to advance in the guarantee of migrant women's rights, especially labor rights in domestic work and the right to sexual and reproductive health.
5. They can fill out the work sheet or write down their ideas on flip chart paper, depending on the facilitator's preference.
6. Groups will have the opportunity to present their project ideas in a closing plenary session.



**KEY LESSON**.....



There are many points throughout the migration cycle at which to intervene in order to guarantee migrant women's ability to exercise their rights and governments' accountability to upholding those rights. Oftentimes, putting such interventions into practice requires creativity, collaboration among a wide array of actors, and a transnational perspective to consider the program from both origin and destination.



**Look over the matrix of proposed interventions that follows Guide 4 at the end of this manual in order to come up with ideas. Select a proposal from any column (especially the 3rd) – or generate your own idea – in order to develop the outline of your own intervention. Make sure that your project:**

1. Strengthens migrants and their families' ability to exercise their human rights in origin and destination countries
2. Includes a vision of gender equality and empowerment of migrant women
3. Integrates various stakeholders (migrant population, family members, civil society, governments, private sector, etc.)
4. Has both policy and programmatic components

<p><b>Problem</b></p> <p>What is the primary need or problem you will address?</p>	
<p><b>Goal</b></p> <p>Over the long term, what impact will your project have/contribute to achieving?</p>	
<p><b>Specific Objectives</b></p> <p>Over the medium term, what will this project specifically achieve?</p>	





# WORK SHEET

## DESIGN YOUR OWN INTERVENTION



ACTIVITY 4.3

<b>Location/Target Area</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>□ Local or national?</li><li>□ Origin, transit, destination country, or transnational project?</li></ul>	
<b>Activities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>□ What must be done in order to achieve your objectives?</li><li>□ What services, initiatives, campaigns, etc. will we carry out?</li></ul>	
<b>Stakeholders</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>□ Who are the duty bearers/guarantors of rights of this population? (origin, destination or both)</li><li>□ Who will be involved in the implementation of the project?</li></ul>	
<b>Beneficiaries</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>□ Who are the rights holders whose situation we aim to improve?</li><li>□ Who will benefit indirectly?</li></ul>	
<b>Results</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>□ What changes do we hope to produce in the lives of the beneficiaries and/or in the exercise of their rights?</li></ul>	



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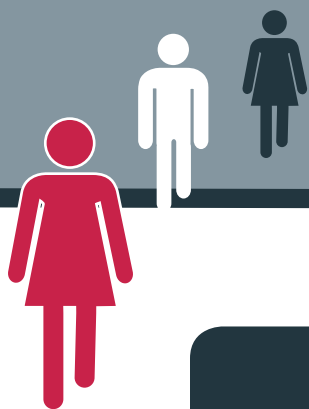
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## PROPOSALS FOR ACTION TO PROMOTE THE MIGRATION- DEVELOPMENT NEXUS FROM A GENDER AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVE

The following table presents a range of potential interventions that is not exhaustive, but aims to guide certain types of actions following these criteria:

1  
Has an impact on the three strategic themes identified in the migration-development nexus from a **gender perspective**.

2  
Intervenes at different levels: 1) **long-term** interventions to bring about structural changes, and 2) **short-term** interventions aimed at reducing gender inequalities. In other words, **strategic interventions** that improve the position of women (long-term) and interventions focused on **practical necessities** that improve women and men's immediate living conditions (short-term). Both types of intervention should be carried out simultaneously. They are not exclusive and will be more successful through the effective combination of both types of actions.

3  
Views development from a **human development** perspective or, in other words, as a process that:  
a) improves the collective capacity to meet human needs; b) increases economic activity as a result of the creation of wealth rather than the accumulation of capital; and c) contributes to a more equal distribution of opportunities and access to resources.

REMITTANCES AND GENDER-SENSITIVE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT	GLOBAL CARE CHAINS	RIGHTS OF MIGRANT WOMEN AND MIGRATION POLICIES
Production of Data		
<p><b>D</b>isaggregate existing data on migrant populations and remittances by sex.</p> <p><b>R</b>esearch migrant women's and women remittance recipients' use of financial services and possible obstacles to access.</p>	<p><b>I</b>mprove the production of statistical data on time use to facilitate analysis of the distribution of paid and unpaid care work.</p> <p><b>C</b>onduct polls and surveys with migrant populations and migrant households in countries of origin to understand the specific situation in terms of time use and distribution of care work.</p>	<p><b>B</b>ased on CEDAW General Recommendation 26 on women migrant workers, identify gaps in data and begin to <b>produce sex-disaggregated information</b> on the migrant population and transnational families in order to identify the specific needs and inequalities that require intervention, prioritize, create a baseline and evaluate progress. Possible topics include: labor markets, justice, health, education and training, information, residence and mobility.</p>
Entrepreneurship of recipient households, migrants, and returned migrants in countries of origin	Interventions in countries of destination and origin	
<p><b>C</b>reate <b>local development plans</b> within which initiatives for recipient households, migrants, and returned migrants can be included. Introduce the migration variable in local development plans. These plans should be guided by the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Responds to local needs</li> <li>□ Takes into account the needs of men and women with the active participation of both</li> <li>□ Carried out using local resources</li> </ul> <p><b>D</b>esign microfinance and <b>microenterprise programs that provide support and accompaniment</b> to women who wish to invest and start a business so that the process has an impact on their position and status (not just their income). See, for example, aidha's Compass Club program (Singapore, guide 2, section 2.5) that offers "education with credit" in order to create synergies and possibilities that actually generate value for migrants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Provide technical assistance to introduce microenterprises into horizontal and vertical value chains.</li> </ul>	<p><b>W</b>ork to integrate the <b>right to care</b> as a development issue in the public agenda.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Create a <b>Commission on Care Reform</b> made up of different actors, governmental and non-governmental, that work on gender and women's issues, care and migration. The following actors could be involved: governments (including at the national, district and/or municipal levels, particularly ministries of migration, labor, women, and social welfare); NGOs, churches and social agencies; grassroots organizations; civil society networks; and universities and research centers.</li> <li>□ Hold seminars, conferences and dialogues among diverse actors about how to create a <b>model of shared responsibility</b> for the provision of care between the state, the market, the family (with responsibility shared between men and women) and non-profit sectors.</li> </ul> <p><b>E</b>stablish <b>universal care policies and services</b>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ In origin countries, pay special attention to households with a person who has migrated, particularly if this is the mother.</li> <li>□ In destination countries, pay specific attention to work-life balance needs of migrant households.</li> </ul>	<p><b>R</b>ights in the care sector</p> <p><b>P</b>romote the <b>regulation of domestic work</b> in order to ensure decent working conditions. Equate the rights and protections for domestic work with other employment sectors in terms of salary, working hours, health insurance, right to organize, protection against arbitrary dismissal, etc. (See, for example, the Domestic Workers Bill of Rights in New York, USA, guide 4, section 4.3.1). In particular, encourage the ratification of ILO Convention 189, disseminate information on the convention, and create dialogue between stakeholders to promote its ratification, etc.</p> <p><b>P</b>romote <b>organization of domestic workers</b> taking into account that the group's characteristics (for example isolated work in different homes) lead to particular difficulties for collective expression. (See, for example, the experience in Ireland of the Domestic Workers Action Group, guide 4, section 4.3.1).</p> <p><b>S</b>ensitize <b>unions</b> on global care chains and the situation of migrant workers in order to take their issues into account when defining labor policies. In particular, emphasize the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ That unions defend the rights of domestic workers</li> <li>□ That specific unions for domestic workers be created</li> <li>□ That the specific needs of migrant domestic workers be taken into account</li> </ul>

<p><b>P</b>arallel to the promotion of microenterprise programs, promote <b>medium-scale investments</b> in cooperatives that have greater capacity to generate employment for women and men.</p> <p><b>I</b>ncorporate <b>non-remittance recipient households</b> in entrepreneurial initiatives based on remittances as a way to avoid entrenching intra-community social inequalities.</p> <p><b>A</b>dopt the following criteria to <b>determine whether an activity is productive</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ <b>Sustainability</b>, considering environmental, social and financial factors.</li> <li>□ <b>Democratic quality</b>: the extent to which the activity promotes collective decision-making processes and the equal sharing of work and benefits.</li> <li>□ <b>Synergy</b>: the activity's ability to create horizontal and vertical linkages (including economic activities and social networks).</li> </ul> <p><b>C</b>onsider <b>reproductive activities</b> as an investment item, for example, cooperative child care.</p> <p><b>P</b>romote the <b>coordination among different actors</b> (migrants and their households, government officials and politicians, international agencies, financial institutions, migrant associations, NGOs, etc.) through public hearings conferences, seminars, etc.</p> <p><b>M</b>ake an effort to design interventions based on existing data, and to generate additional data where lacking.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Creating these services will generate employment opportunities for women, while involving public institutions as guarantors of social provision of care and decent jobs for women.</li> </ul> <p><b>D</b>esign <b>public policies</b> to address critical care issues throughout individuals' life cycle.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ <b>For youth</b>: focus policies on facilitating the transition to adulthood under appropriate conditions, with quality education, adequate job training, job placement, and secure conditions for youth to begin their own families.</li> <li>□ <b>For adults</b>: subsidies to free up time off from work to devote to unpaid care (maternity/paternity leave, nursing time allowance, leave of absence for family care, reduced working hours, etc.).</li> <li>□ <b>For seniors</b>: retirement pensions which can eliminate the dependence of older parents on the material and financial support of their children; subsidies for care.</li> </ul> <tr> <th>Destination countries</th><td> <p><b>Sexual and reproductive rights</b></p> <p><b>R</b>elax the <b>requirements</b> and establish a <b>system of coordination</b> between service providers and the government to ensure that undocumented persons can obtain a health card.</p> <p><b>D</b>ocument every incident in which a migrant person has been denied access to health care. Use this information to <b>detect bureaucratic obstacles</b> and work with the government agency responsible for the oversight of health care to improve the situation. (See the example of the "Health and Family" program in Spain, guide 4, section 4.3.2).</p> <p><b>C</b>reate programs that promote migrants' access to health care through <b>culturally sensitive practices and the use of different languages</b>, such as the training and recruitment of cultural mediators and interpreters, production of IEC materials in multiple languages, patient training in their native language about health practices and how to navigate the health system. (See the "Mothers between two cultures" program of the Association of Health and Family in Spain and the Health Care Unit for Migrants in Malta, guide 4, section 4.3.2).</p> <p><b>T</b>rain <b>health personnel</b> on the cultures and needs of their migrant patients that, because of their medical histories, migration experiences and living and work conditions in destination countries, present a different case than what they have been trained to treat. Promote a culture of respect for all patients. Coordinate with migrant women's organizations in order to design these trainings and improve the services provided.</p> <p><b>C</b>reate <b>assistance funds</b> in order to help patients who do not have enough resources to pay for the health services they need.</p> </td></tr>	Destination countries	<p><b>Sexual and reproductive rights</b></p> <p><b>R</b>elax the <b>requirements</b> and establish a <b>system of coordination</b> between service providers and the government to ensure that undocumented persons can obtain a health card.</p> <p><b>D</b>ocument every incident in which a migrant person has been denied access to health care. Use this information to <b>detect bureaucratic obstacles</b> and work with the government agency responsible for the oversight of health care to improve the situation. 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| **G**uarantee the right of migrant women to **family reunification**, including:   - Children - Mothers and fathers (since they often help with care) - Other family members such as brothers and sisters   **D**evelop **work-life balance policies** that go beyond the boundaries of the nation-state and that take into account the reality of migrant persons with family obligations in their origin countries by:   - Introducing changes in permissions for care, such as, for example, increasing paid leave time for family illness, paternity, etc. - Including visits to the country of origin financed through a contribution fund. |  |

Financing		Social and immigration policies
<p><b>W</b>ork with financial institutions to develop specific <b>services geared towards the needs of migrant women/senders and recipients</b> (for example, savings, credit, and other investment-oriented services).</p> <p><b>C</b>reate a <b>financial infrastructure</b> that is committed to the community, offers affordable rates and flexible operational procedures, and integrates financial and non-financial services such as training, investment advice, etc. Equality should be the guiding principle, not just market efficiency. The remittance received should be considered as income, not just capital, since remittances serve as wages.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Extending vacation time so that traveling to origin countries would be possible.</li> </ul>	
	Countries of Origin	
	<p><b>W</b>ork with governments to implement the provisions of international agreements that refer to caregivers as a matter of shared public responsibility. In the case of Latin America, such agreements include the <b>Consensus of Quito and the Consensus of Brasilia</b>.</p>	<p><b>R</b>eview existing <b>bilateral migration agreements</b> and promote the creation of new agreements with a gender perspective that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Put special emphasis on social security.</li> <li>□ Broaden formal migration channels for migrant care workers and other “feminized” niches.</li> </ul> <p><b>R</b>evise <b>immigration laws</b> from a gender perspective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Ensure that women who have migrated under a family reunification policy have access to an independent immigration status from their partners so they have the option to leave their relationship in case of domestic violence.</li> <li>□ Grant residence permits which are not linked to a specific employer in order to prevent situations of abuse and labor exploitation.</li> </ul>
Development policies in origin countries		
<p><b>P</b>romote proper implementation of <b>gender policies</b> in employment, education, gender-based violence, etc. so that these inequalities are not further reason for women’s migration.</p> <p><b>D</b>esign and implement <b>universal health care, education and social protection systems</b> in order to guarantee as rights the items which are currently primary remittance expenditures; improve the availability and quality of public services for all. .</p> <p><b>S</b>trengthen <b>citizen participation</b>, particularly women’s participation, at the local level, both in origin and destination countries, so they can demand that public institutions fulfill their responsibilities as guarantors of citizens’ human rights and gender equality.</p>		<p><b>R</b>evise <b>social policies in destination countries</b> (for example, violence against women) taking into account the growing presence of migrant women in order to ensure that they do not have adverse effects on them and that their specific needs are taken into account.</p> <p><b>A</b>dvocate at the national level for the ratification and implementation of <b>international instruments</b> that protect and promote the rights of women migrant workers, particularly the ICRMW and CEDAW General Recommendation 26.</p> <p><b>S</b>trengthen capacity of <b>border security personnel and police</b> on trafficking issues and the rights of migrant women, including their role in the protection and guarantee of such rights.</p>



**G**enerate productive activity and related employment to allow for **stable labor force participation and income** for both women and men, so that they can offset the dependence on remittances caused by the lack of opportunities. Design specific interventions to create jobs for women so that they have options beyond labor migration.

**S**upport changes in **structural conditions** that impede or hinder investment (chronic problems in rural areas such as lack of irrigation, roads, energy, etc.), ensuring that there aren't contradictions between local development policies and macroeconomic policies (for example, promoting the cultivation of rice at the local level while importing rice under free trade agreements).

## **Strengthening organizations and migrant women's participation and capacity to claim their rights**

**S**trengthen the **capacity of migrant and women migrant organizations**, consolidating and training them in rights and political advocacy so that they can exercise their rights and represent the interests of their members in political dialogues and other events that have to do with migration and development, bringing in a gender perspective. Enhance their capacity to manage projects based on collective remittances, while strengthening institutions and organizations in countries of origin that can serve as reliable counterparts in managing such projects.

**P**romote **women's political participation** in countries of origin, destination communities, and in representative bodies of migrants abroad so that their needs and interests are taken into account in the definition of public policies, programs and projects.

**C**reate **consultation mechanisms and/or transnational political representation** for migrant persons, men and women, so they can participate, decide and benefit from development in their country of origin.

**D**isseminate **information** in creative ways which are tailored to the characteristics of the target population on migrant rights, particularly those relevant to women. (See, for example, the Good Practice of Costa Rica: Radio Program "People Without Borders" in section 4.3.2). Provide information to potential migrants through various communication channels prior to their departure and during their stay abroad about legislative, labor, social, and health issues, as well as a directory of important contacts.

**I**n origin countries, **organize and engage returned migrant women** in actions promoting their rights, particularly in advocacy and orientation for other potential migrants. (See, for example, the Pourakhi experience in Nepal, guide 4, section 4.2).



## GLOSSARY

**Empowerment:** A basic concept for human development that refers to the process through which people, individually and collectively, become conscious of how power relations operate in their lives and gain the necessary confidence and strength to change inequalities and strengthen their economic, political and social position. Empowerment is described as a process in which individuals gain power, and in which power is understood not in terms of domination (“power over”) but rather as creative power (“power to”), shared power (“power with”) and personal power (“power from within”).

**Feminization of migration:** A term used to describe not only the slight increase in the number of women that migrate but also “the steady increase in the proportion of women that migrate independently in search of employment rather than as ‘dependent relatives’ that travel with their husbands or reunite with them outside of their countries (...) in the past few decades, a large number of women – who now migrate independently, assuming the role of economic providers – have joined the migration flows previously dominated by men.”<sup>23</sup>

**Gender:** While sex refers to the biological characteristics that distinguish us as male or female, the term gender refers to the set of characteristics, values, beliefs, qualities and behaviors that societies assign to men or women. This is why gender is called a social construction; it is an idea built by the people, groups and institutions that make up society. Gender differences are not neutral since they are often constructed in opposition to one another thereby creating power relations. These relations can change over time and vary according to the sociocultural context. Gender also intersects with other identity and power dynamics such as social class, race, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, migratory and citizenship status, etc. Gender relations, then, are constructed (and challenged) at various levels – micro (household, community), meso (labor market, social networks), and macro (international division of labor).

**Gender analysis:** “Study of the existing differences in the conditions, needs, participation rates, access to resources and development, access to decision making power, etc. between men and women due to the roles traditionally assigned to them. Gender analysis necessarily involves studying the forms of organization and functioning of societies and analyzing social relations. Gender analysis should not be limited to the role of women, but instead should include and compare the role of women in relation to men and vice versa. Variables to consider in this regard are: the sexual and gendered division of labor, access and control of resources and benefits, participation in decision-making. Gender analysis should identify: the division of labor between men and women (productive and reproductive work); access to and control over resources and benefits; specific needs and practices (such as access to employment, and strategies such as participation in decision-making at the management level in organizations) of men and women; limitations and opportunities; the organizational capacity of men and women to promote equality.”<sup>24</sup>

**Gender perspective:** A focus on the analysis of identities and gender relations that operate throughout the migration process (among other areas of life). In the area of migration-development, the gender perspective allows us to see and understand not only family power dynamics but also how gender operates in meso and macro processes such as social networks or bilateral agreements. This perspective recognizes the construction of masculinities and the diversity of people whose identities are marked by other characteristics such as their ethnicity or social class, and avoids perpetuating stereotypes or making heteronormative assumptions.

**Gender roles:** Activities, tasks and responsibilities assigned to men and women according to the social construction of gender in a given context.

**Gender stereotype:** A preconceived, exaggerated or oversimplified idea, opinion or image of a social group based on sexual identity. Some examples of stereotypes include that “men are strong and decisive” or that “women

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<sup>23</sup> García et al 2008: 36.

<sup>24</sup> Fernández-Pacheco, Janina. 2002. “Glossary of base terms to understand and analyze the labor market from a gender perspective” ILO. Our translation.



are submissive and emotional.” Gender stereotypes impede the equal enjoyment of rights by men and women and make policies, programs and community development projects reach men and women differently.

**Global care chains:** “Global care chains exist transnationally, and have been established with the aim of sustaining daily life. Within them, households transfer care work from one home to another, based on power axes like gender, ethnicity, social class and place of origin” (Perez Orozco et al 2008: 86). In its simplest form, a chain could be formed as follows: in a destination country, a woman who seeks to balance her working life with the care needs of her family hires a migrant woman to do the housework, while the migrant has to find a way to meet the care needs of her own family, a task that often falls on other female family members either in the origin or destination country.

**Human development:** Vision of development that emphasizes and affirms the comprehensive right of people to enjoy the full range of human rights, including rights to health, mobility, education, freedom of expression, equality, identity, etc. Human development seeks to create the necessary conditions for individuals and groups to develop their potential and lead a creative and productive life according to their needs and interests.

**Inclusive financial democracy:** A vision of economic development promoted by the dominant “remittances for development” paradigm. It consists of promoting the use of formal channels for sending remittances, incorporating non-bank users into the banking system, and encouraging saving and investment of remittances so that they increase the availability of financial resources for the whole community. In this way, it is hoped that everyone will be able to participate in the market, which is considered the ideal pathway to economic development (and not public institutions) according to the development model promoted by the neoliberal, economistic vision that characterizes the dominant model.

**Inequality:** Biological differences alone do not cause inequality. Rather, inequality comes about when society assigns greater value to one gender over the other (normally masculine over feminine). This attitude creates a power imbalance between the genders and prevents both from enjoying the same opportunities for their personal development. Inequalities also occur for reasons of discrimination by skin color, ethnicity, nationality, sexuality, etc.

**Instrumentalization:** A concept used to describe the tendency to use migrant persons as instruments in interventions designed to foment development in origin countries usually by counting on their remittances without necessarily increasing their participation, decision-making power over development, or their ability to benefit from it. For example, if we value migrants only in their role as remittance senders, they end up being used as “peons of global development” instead of becoming its protagonists and beneficiaries. Thus, interventions are not concerned with the living conditions or well-being of migrants in destination countries, nor do they create effective mechanisms through which to consult or involve them in the intervention in countries of origin.

**International sexual division of labor:** Not only is the sexual division of labor used to organize households and national labor markets; it also used as an organizing principle of global production. In recent decades, the prevailing model of economic globalization has led to the internationalization of industrial production chains, as well as the feminization of labor in many export processing zones that were created in developing countries to attract foreign investment. In effect, investors – and political officials looking to attract foreign capital to their countries – often exploit the ‘new international division of labor’ (Froebel et al, 1980) by locating their factories in areas where labor is cheap, exploitable, flexible, and often female. This reproduces the sexual division of labor in the sense that jobs are created “for women” such as electronic parts assembly and the sewing of athletic garments, and jobs “for men”, such as, for example, the operation of heavy machinery. There is also a preference for female labor in agricultural production for export where, according to a landowner in Honduras, “we employ women because they have more delicate hands to turn over the watermelon.”<sup>25</sup> The creation of jobs “for women” has mobilized many women, particularly young women, who previously were unemployed and/or worked in subsistence agriculture. Many women migrate from the interior of their countries and live in

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<sup>25</sup> Visit to melon and watermelon production site, Nacaome, Valle, Honduras.



or near their worksite, where strong control is exerted over their movement, fertility, etc. When they no longer have that job because the factory closed or moved or because they were fired due to illness, age, or pregnancy, many women migrate again sometimes internally or sometimes internationally (see Sassen 1988). Similarly, the concept helps to understand the formation of so-called “global care chains” in which care is still considered women’s work, a household responsibility and not that of the state, even though it requires women’s migration for its provision.

**Migration:** In its broadest sense, migration refers to the movement of people from one place to another, either within their own country (internal migration) or outside of their country (international migration). This manual focuses on international migration, a phenomenon that is divided into the categories of forced migration (displacement of people due to conflict, natural or environmental disasters, development projects, etc.) and voluntary migration (for study, tourism or economic reasons).

**Migration-development nexus:** This term usually refers to the effects and potential of migration – and especially remittances – in the development of countries of origin. The perspectives of human development and gender seek to broaden the concept of this nexus to include analysis of policies and migrants’ rights in destination countries (not just countries of origin), the social organization of care in countries of origin and destination, etc.

**Remittances:** Transfers which migrants send to their families (or other people) commonly in their country of origin. Normally the term refers to monetary remittances – money orders sent through banks, money transfer services such as Western Union or informally – although other types of transfers exist such as social remittances (changes in behavior, ideas, beliefs transferred between people in destination countries and countries of origin) and in-kind remittances (gifts, appliances, etc.).

**Sexual division of labor:** The sex-gender system associates certain work with men and other kinds of work with women. As such, productive work (paid work) is usually assigned to men, while women are considered responsible for reproductive labor (unpaid or underpaid care work). Both men and women engage in community labor (volunteer work), although it is more common for men to be in leadership positions while women play supportive roles.

**Transnational family:** This term refers to the family model that has emerged because of globalization and the migration policies of receiving countries that leave families no option but to split their members in different countries. Despite the time and distance, these families, thanks to advances in technology and communications, manage to stay in constant contact, and to distribute the family functions of economic support and caregiving transnationally. Women play an important role in the coordination of care and the overall management of transnational families, either as the remittance managers, migrant mothers, caretakers of migrants’ children, etc.



# GENDER ON THE MOVE

WORKING ON THE MIGRATION-DEVELOPMENT  
NEXUS FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

