

## **International migration and changes in women's roles in indigenous communities, Oaxaca, Mexico**

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### **Abstract:**

This paper focuses its attention on the analysis of the relationship between changes of women's roles in households with migrant members, given certain socioeconomic conditions and the particular prevailing cultural and economic conditions in a community. Such changes are part of adaptations happening within households, the production family unit and the community as a result of international migration.

Changes in women's roles must be understood through the economic and social functions of remittances, which are: 1) they revitalize home community festivals; 2) they stimulate local economy seasonally by means of the expenditure of circular migrants; 3) they allow meeting family and personal goals; and 4) they contribute with collective remittances to the community projects. Thus, to the heavy burden of the female household heads in traditional societies, new roles are added due to migration. However, women are able to break their ties imposed not only by the household but also by the community and the Mexican Catholic nation. In turn, they can revalue themselves in the traditional rural societies and are producing a social change without a visible social movement.

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