

# DAWN INFORMS

Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era



## At Copenhagen+5 Prepcom, a Sense of Deja Vu

*Celita Eccher, DAWN Regional Coordinator for Latin America, reports on yet another review process bent on rehashing old commitments point by painful point and renewed efforts to relegate NGOs to the sidelines.*

**A**s the Copenhagen+5 PrepCom closed at 5am on May 27 after 11 grueling days and without any progress being made on the base document, all sides felt a sense of frustration and concern and those who had attended the preparatory meetings for Cairo+5 found the situation eerily familiar. Close to the final hour, the plenary decided to jettison the document as a working paper and it was agreed to hold not one but two intersessional meetings, in September 1999 - when governments are expected to submit national reports on implementation - and in February 2000.

The base document was prepared after a week of general debate on the objectives of the World Summit on Social Development (WSSD) and on what could be expected in terms of results and recommendations. The intention was to structure the discussions in three parts: WSSD proposals, a revision and evaluation of implementation, and further initiatives based on the 10 commitments of the Summit. The aim is to prepare a working paper before the Second Preparatory Committee in April 2000 for presentation to the United Nations General Assembly Special Session - Copenhagen+5 - in Geneva in June 2000.

The document showed many flaws including backtracking on the advancements made in Copenhagen particularly in respect to participation by civil society organisations and the lack of reference to the financial fallout provoked by the crisis in Asia. The "Further Initiatives" section of the Copenhagen recommendations was merely reaffirmed and the woeful lack of gender mainstreaming was excused on the grounds that gender issues will be addressed at the Beijing+5 meeting, also slated for next June.

For their part, NGOs in the Women's Caucus and the Development Caucus expressed concern at the omission of the most urgent macro-economic issues and the general thrust which is heavily biased in favour of abandoning the public sector's responsibilities to the private sector. The document does state the need to seek financial means of control, such as the Tobin Tax, but this is weak. Also sadly lacking is any mention of short-term goals and by setting 2015 as the year for results the document hinders effective monitoring of implementation - especially since governments could be said to have displayed a lack of interest in keeping to their commitments.

In terms of development issues, the Group of 77 and China acted as a block against the European Union. For its part, the United States of America acted individually, asking for the

floor only to propose deletions of any reference to private sector responsibility to social development, or to respond to inquiries about the Bretton Woods institutions. The Holy See, meanwhile, intervened to raise questions about development in the Third World.

The plenary session concluded that the document could be accepted on a general basis, but that evaluation would continue on a point by point basis. The principal actors in this discussion were Canada, the G77, USA, EU and Holy See. The G77 made very critical observations, while the EU emphasized gender-related issues. There was general agreement that the document should be treated as a draft to be revised, and a noticeable lack of agreement on the amendments. Several points were raised in relation to Commitment 1 on providing an enabling environment for social development:

- Paragraph 1: The EU suggested that references to "civil society", "women's empowerment" and "gender equity" must be included.

- Paragraph 2, which maintains that globalization and financial crises are responsible for increasing levels of poverty and social inequity, was questioned strongly by the USA, the EU and even the G77. The USA claimed that the private sector could not be charged with any responsibility and sought to reaffirm the principles of financial and trade liberalisation. Many countries called for a definition of the role of the World Bank as it related to social development.

- Paragraph 6 highlighted social responsibilities of the private sector and was supported by G77 but severely criticised by the USA.

- Paragraph 7 refers to the capacity of developing countries to participate within a globalised economy. Some Eastern Europe and G77 countries suggested that countries with economies in transition should be included. The need for industrialisation-related policies was mentioned. *Cont. P 12*

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## DAWN INFORMS

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**D**AWN *Inform*s is published three times a year by Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN) as a networking tool for its members. DAWN is an autonomous inter-regional organisation of the South which acts as a network and catalyst advocating alternative development processes that emphasise the basic survival needs of the world's people, particularly Third World women and their children. Subscriptions: Free to women based in the South. Friends based in the North are asked to make an annual minimum contribution of US\$20.00.

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# STEERING COMMITTEE

## TRANSITIONS...

- At the last Africa regional meeting, Bene Madunagu of Nigeria was appointed the Regional Coordinator for Anglophone Africa. Bene is a longstanding DAWN member (the regional Focal Point for Sexual and Reproductive Rights) and a leading advocate for women's rights, particularly reproductive rights, in Nigeria, the African region, and globally.

- DAWN will miss the intellectual contribution and sharp analysis of Patricia McFadden, the former Anglophone Africa Regional Coordinator. DAWN wishes Patricia well in her efforts to build the feminist movement on the continent.

- Keturah Cecelia Babb, the new Caribbean Regional Coordinator, is a Senior Programme Officer at the Caribbean Policy Development Centre and a former National Representative of the Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action, CAFRA. Currently she is also coordinator of The Women's Forum of Barbados.

- DAWN'S new Communications Officer, Seona Smiles, has now taken up her post. Seona, a journalist and weekly contributor to the Fiji Times, was previously information officer with the University of the South Pacific. She is a member of a Fiji feminist collective, Women's Action for Change, which runs a community theatre.

- Meanwhile, Joan Ross Frankson steps down as Editor of DAWN *Inform*s after eight years and some 20 editions. Joan, a Jamaican, revamped DI in 1992 when the DAWN Secretariat moved from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil to Barbados. Joan is currently the Director of Information at the Women's Environment and Development Organization in New York City. The Steering Committee will greatly miss Joan's knowledge and editorial skills. We thank Joan for her contribution to DAWN communications and congratulate her on her job with WEDO.

- DAWN Research Focal Point for the Political Economy of Globalisation in the Pacific, 'Atu Emberson Bain of Fiji, has been appointed a Senator in the Fiji Parliament following the May election which swept a Labour government into power

- **DAWN NETWORK GOES ELECTRONIC:** Watch this space for details of the DAWN website now under construction and expected to be available soon with regular updates on the organisation's research, analysis, advocacy and resources.

## ...AND OUTREACH

### • DAWN WOMEN WORKING ON TRADE

DAWN is gathering pace in its involvement with trade. The Women's Strategic Planning Seminar on Trade, an initiative of the Centre of Concern (New York) and DAWN-Caribbean, will take place in Grenada, 8-11 December 1999. Key figures in this initiative are: Peggy Antrobus for DAWN and Maria Riley for COC (co-conveners), Mariama Williams, DAWN-Caribbean's lead gender and trade specialist, and DAWN's Research Coordinator for Sustainable Livelihoods, Vivienne Wee, of ENGENDER. In preparation for the Grenada Seminar, a nine-months-long electronic seminar is being run, with virtual seminar rooms on service, agriculture, intellectual property rights, investment, and electronic commerce. The seminars will culminate in the Grenada meeting, where participants will formulate a forward-looking agenda for gender and trade in the coming years.

DAWN is also seeking accreditation to the WTO Ministerial Meeting in Seattle in November, to which a DAWN team, including Mariama Williams and Gigi Francisco will go. The Seattle meeting will set the agenda for global trade negotiations for the so-called Millennium Round. The Millennium round is being strongly opposed by international civil society groups - a statement is being circulated by Public Citizens' Global Trade Watch (mstrand@citizen.org) which already has 800 signatures. The campaign, which DAWN is supporting, aims for 1000 signatures by 15



# NOTES

September. On that day, there will be an International Day of Action against the WTO, with protests, hearings, teach-ins and other events held simultaneously worldwide. Email Ronnie Hall at Friends of the Earth, UK (ronnieh@foe.co.uk) to sign up. Spanish and French translations can be found on [www.onelist.com/shareddir/StopWTORound/](http://www.onelist.com/shareddir/StopWTORound/)

DAWN is working with other NGOs to enhance women's presence at the Seattle Ministerial meeting. Women are seeking the integration of a gender perspective into trade policy; this necessitates the collection of gender assessments of the impact of trade policy on women workers, farmers, entrepreneurs and traders.

## • PR&ST ACTIVITIES

DAWN's research and analysis work on the theme of Political Restructuring and Social Transformation is getting under way in earnest with research papers being commissioned on the four areas of:

Politics and Power; Social Movements, Feminist Movements and the State; Globalisation and the State; and Institutionalisation of Gender; and a series of regional meetings planned to take place in:

- Chiang Mai, Thailand, 8,9,10 October 1999 (for South East Asia/Pacific and South Asia)
- Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 22, 23, 24 October (for Latin America and Caribbean), and
- Cape Town, South Africa, 29-30 November (for Africa).

An inter-regional meeting at which the DAWN platform on PR&ST will be finalised is planned for 27-29 January 2000 in Cape Town.

## • DAWN JOINS SID FOR GD2000

DAWN is now a partner in a Global Dialogue being organised by SID (Society for International Development) within the framework of EXPO 2000 in Hanover, Germany. DAWN has attended two planning meetings, in Rome in April and New York in June, and will go to the third, in Rome in September. The theme of the Global



**MEETING IN MONTEVIDEO**...pictured at the steering committee meeting in April 1999: Back, from left: General Coordinator Claire Slatter, Assistant Coordinator/Administrator Kushma Ram, Research Coordinator for Political Restructuring Vivienne Taylor, Former General Coordinator Peggy Antrobus, Regional Coordinator for Latin America Celita Eccher, and Regional Coordinator for the Caribbean Cecilia Babb. Front, from left: Magaly Pazzello from Brazil, Research Coordinator on Globalisation Gita Sen, Regional Coordinator for South Asia Vanita Nayak Mukherjee, and Pacific Regional Coordinator Yvonne Underhill-Sem.

Dialogue is The Quest for Responsible Governance: International Disorder, Mutual Accountability and Social Justice. Sub-themes are Gender Justice, Governance of People's Livelihoods, and Making Finance Socially Responsible. GD2000 fits with DAWN's PR&ST work, and provides an opportunity to share our final platform.

## • DAWN REPRESENTED ON DAMS COMMISSION

Vivienne Wee, Research Coordinator on Sustainable Livelihoods, is the DAWN representative on the World Commission on Dams. This independent, international commission was established in May 1998 following a consultative process facilitated by the World Bank and IUCN-World Conservation Union. The Commission has been given a two-year mandate to conduct a global review of large dams and to develop internationally-accepted criteria and guidelines for their future construction. By 1997 it was estimated that the world community had built more than 800,000 dams, 45,000 categorised as large. While construction of new dams has declined in North America and to some extent in Europe,

such projects are still regarded by some as a vehicle of sustainable development in other places. Benefits of dams initially dominated decision making but increasing costs, social and environmental issues have raised questions on whether more should be built.

• **PACIFIC DAWN** is co-sponsoring a special September issue of *Tok Blong Pasifik*, the newsletter of the South Pacific Peoples Foundation. The issue will focus on globalisation in the Pacific. Based in British Columbia, the SPPF is Canada's principal organisation working with Pacific Island peoples. Its main programmatic areas are international education and advocacy on issues of concern to the South Pacific region including nuclear testing, the environment and community development. The special issue will include articles on the process of structural reform in the region, the social impacts of structural adjustment policies in Samoa, the environmental and gender implications of new marine-based export industries, and on globalisation's more extreme impacts in Papua New Guinea. For more information contact [sppf@sppf.org](mailto:sppf@sppf.org) 🌺



# CAIRO + 5

## POOR RESULTS DID NOT JUSTIFY COSTLY MEANS

By Lilian Abracinkas

**T**he United Nations International Conference on Population and Development Conference (ICPD) held in Cairo in 1994 changed the paradigm on population issues. From then on, population problems were no longer limited to exclusively demographic issues: The scope was widened to include population growth through actions and measures guaranteeing inalienable respect for people's rights and their necessary, complex and essential relationship with sustainable development. The conference's Action Programme is very rich in proposals for the implementation of programmes ensuring the improvement of the quality of life of human beings and the equitable development of nations. However, both at Cairo and during its assessment five years later, the subjects in the news and those infusing most debates were the same: abortion, sexual rights, young people and adolescents.

Representatives of practically all the countries in the world gathered on June 24 in New York to participate in the PrepCom for Cairo +5. The aim: to achieve a document by consensus reflecting a five year assessment of implementation of commitments made at Cairo and to agree on future actions. This document was then to be approved at a Special Session of the UN General Assembly.

The 79-paragraph document under discussion was Proposals for Key Actions for the Further Implementation of the ICPD Action Programme. It reached the PrepCom with 27 paragraphs on which no consensus had been reached at the March PrepCom or at the ensuing informal May meetings. Five of these

- on the promotion of adolescent sexual and reproductive health - had not even been discussed and eighteen others still needed to be approved by the PrepCom.

This was a discouraging state of affairs fueling fears among many that it would be impossible to obtain a consensus document to put before the Special Assembly. Meanwhile a vocal minority, comprising the delegations of those countries that failed to water down the Programme of Action in Cairo, were no doubt feeling quite satisfied at having so successfully stalled the negotiations. The toughest among them - the Vatican, Argentina, Nicaragua, Sudan, Libya, Syria and Morocco - were ably supported by Senegal, Egypt, Iran and Pakistan. All are members of the Group of 77 with the exception of the Vatican, and none have established any programme or policy recommended by the ICPD Programme of Action. Indeed, in some cases, they have worsened the situation of women by passing retrograde laws.

Things got worse before they got better. The four days allocated for reaching agreements were not sufficient and the PrepCom went into overtime running parallel to the Assembly. After revising the document over and over and still failing to reach consensus in the G77, some 30 countries - almost all Latin American countries and many African and Asian nations - decided to break ranks by preparing alternative proposals to submit to the plenary. These delegations were focused on securing a document reflecting a true assessment of what is being done and how it can be improved; no rupture within the G77 was implied.

The disputed paragraphs included:

- 13(a) on the needs of young people and their involvement in the design, assessment and implementation of plans and programmes. The debate was centered on respect for parent's rights and responsibilities in decisions on actions aimed at young people.
- 23(a) on the inclusion of sex education in school curricula to promote responsible sexuality and protect adolescents from early pregnancies, unsafe abortions and sexually transmitted diseases. The counter proposal by the "tough" countries was that education should be centered on population problems, when appropriate.
- 45(e) on the impact of unsafe abortions on maternal mortality and morbidity. Although this was the language approved at the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995), the obstructionists argued that it was aimed at legalising abortion.

Hours of fruitless discussion were also spent on the inclusion of reproductive health-care for migrant women and emergency contraception in public health services. The recommendation that countries ratify the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) was not adopted either.

The Convention on Children's Rights was also discussed several times. Very little discussion was centered on resources, and even less on sustainable and equitable development models.



In short, the political debate was once again focused on the "hot" topics. Subjects that were expected to cause difficulty were taken up and it became impossible to analyse and assess which were the countries that had fulfilled their commitments, which ones had not and why, and harder still to decide on sanctions against those who had done nothing at all.

So what can we say by way of assessing the outcome of the ICPD five-year review?

\* The final document adopted is not marvellous; it does not include any significant progress but neither does it imply retrogression. The fact that a final document, adopted by the Assembly, was achieved is positive,

\* The role and importance of NGOs set out in the documents was not reflected in the dynamics of these preparatory meetings nor at the General Assembly. NGOs were like uninvited guests - if they could be forgotten and left out, all the better. Each of our gains had to be defended; every space had to be fought for. This is neither just nor right. Women's social organisations were instrumental in both the drafting and the dissemination of the Cairo action plan. They have promoted actions in their countries, they have monitored programmes developed by governments, and they have tried to influence them in an endeavor to incorporate a gender perspective. In many cases, NGOs have been crucial in developing reports to various levels

balance of support for Vatican positions - from nine countries in 1994 to only two, Argentina and Nicaragua at ICPD+5. Of the most vociferous at Cairo, El Salvador was in general support of positions taken by other countries of the region, Honduras contributed with silence and Guatemala, maintaining a low profile, was not as belligerent. There were two main problems that hindered the region: many delegations and official delegates were not familiar with the mechanisms and procedures of the review process, and many were not familiar with the language issues since they were not present in Cairo. That they were able to achieve conciliatory positions given the political, economic and social diversity of Latin America, was indeed praiseworthy.

Finally, if a balance were to be made between costs - transportation, hotels, per diem, translation, secretarial, administrative and diplomatic staff - and benefits, it has to be said that the results did not justify the means. And, in the end, having so hindered this flawed process, perhaps all that the Holy See and its ever-shrinking body of support can take full credit for is having increased the expense. ☀

## *The whole trying, expensive and complicated process requires the United Nations to urgently rethink these review sessions.*

but this does not justify the criteria used or the procedure. The whole trying, expensive and complicated process may mean that the United Nations does not have appropriate ways of assessing the follow-up of its conferences and summit meetings. Perhaps it should only hold regional, technical meetings. The very process of C+5 confirms this. During this time, inputs for the commission on Population and Development to prepare the draft document were made at regional meetings where progress was made, problems and obstacles were analysed and future action was proposed. Placing the analysis in a diplomatic context only means opening up political debate without achieving any major results.

of government on the UN process of assessment. They have proposed amendments to the Population and Development Commission document, checked procedure, and in many cases supported and advised official delegations. Both the States and the UN owe a debt to women's organizations.

\* The role played by the Latin American countries is also worthy of mention. A number of these states - among them Bolivia, Uruguay, Peru, Paraguay and Venezuela - included representatives of women's NGOs. Many others included technical experts in charge of Cairo implementation programmes. What we witnessed was a significant shift in the

[Translated from Spanish to English by Victoria Swarbrick]

*Lilian Abracinskas, a member of the DAWN delegation to Cairo+5, is the Editor of the Latin American Board of the LOLApress, member of Cotidiano*



*Mujer and one of the coordinators of MYSU (Women and Health in Uruguay).*



## NGOS ADDRESS THE PLENARY



*Gita Sen, DAWN Research Coordinator on Political Economy for Globalisation, addressed the UN General Assembly for ICPD+5 on behalf of the Women's Coalition. This is the full text of her presentation:*

"Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates and my friends in the NGO community, I am speaking today on behalf of the Women's Coalition for the ICPD, which brings together over 100 NGOs from across the globe working together to support the implementation of the Cairo Programme of Action and to advance gender equality and sexual and reproductive health and rights. In country after country, in the years since Cairo, we have been coming together to transform population-related policies so that they are more firmly grounded in the human rights of women and girls. Tonight, the Women's Coalition celebrates the overwhelming support from governments for the important advances we have made together in the last few days:

- promoting and protecting the sexual and reproductive health and rights of young people, with respect for their need for privacy and confidentiality and

their ability to make responsible life choices;

- taking major steps to reduce the tragedy of maternal deaths by strengthening women's access to essential obstetric care and, importantly, by making sure that health providers are better trained and equipped to provide safe abortion services;
- identifying ways to prevent and treat HIV/AIDS and to provide access to services without stigma, discrimination, or violence;
- fostering partnerships between governments and civil society with full respect for NGO autonomy;
- and recognizing the urgent need for a more enabling macro-economic environment, accessible health services, and greater economic justice.

Most heartening during these days has been the enthusiasm and seriousness of young voices claiming their rights and challenging us to respond with equal concern and enthusiasm. While we celebrate what we have accomplished together here, much remains to be done in the real world outside these walls. Let us not forget that every minute of every day, a woman dies of mostly preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth; that young people, especially girls, remain vulnerable to violence and sexual abuse; that health care services are far

from adequate in terms of resources, accessibility, scope, and quality. But we believe that working together we can make progress, sooner rather than later.

We know the overwhelming weight of the support we have on our side from governments and agencies. Sadly, a small minority that opposed Cairo in the first place continues to do so. However, one of the most fascinating successes of ICPD implementation has been the extent to which parties initially skeptical of the Cairo approach are now quoting it chapter and verse and will brook no departure from it. The Women's Coalition looks forward to building on the successes of Cairo and Cairo+5 - to advance women's human rights, including our sexual and reproductive rights in the coming years.

Tonight, at the end of these negotiations, we wish to say once again to governments and agencies that the women of the world care - and care deeply - because it is our bodies and our lives that are at stake. The new millennium will be the millennium of women's rights, gender equality, and gender justice. The women of the world are here - in the gallery, and in official delegations - we are with you, we are still watching you, and we will never go away." 🌟

## BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN POLICYMAKING AND REALITY

*At the recent Cairo+5 sessions in New York City, Dina Nfon Priso, DAWN Focal Point for Central Africa, talked with DAWN Informs about getting more women in the regions involved in policymaking at the global level. Following are extracts from her comments.*

"I have to emphasise the weak links between women's groups in Central Africa and what happens here in New York. Very few of us are familiar with United Nations agreements, systems and processes. Only a few of us have been able to take part in the negotiations. We are interested in establishing training in lobbying at the UN and monitoring what our governments are doing towards implementation at home. We also need to improve our dissemination of information. It is easier to implement

the programmes at home when the document is very specific, but when one is seeking a consensus among almost 200 countries the language can become abstract. It is essential to ensure that grassroots women are fully informed so the language must be translated into popular language.

The rerun of the debate on reproductive rights at this review underscores the need to be better prepared for upcoming reviews of the Social Summit and Beijing agreements. We must start to lobby at home, get more women involved in the process at local, national and regional levels, and bring more facts from the field to counter myths. We need to build and strengthen our networks and conduct more joint strategising. There are two main

problems in Central Africa. One is the gap between what the documents are saying and the reality of poor women's lives in the face of structural adjustment policies and globalisation trends. There has been some positive impact on the lives of middle-class women, but for poor grassroots women there has been none. Some policies are not clear in relation to poor women. We need a regional network to make policy-makers more aware. Secondly our democratic processes are weak; we have a number of on-going conflicts - in Congo, Zaire, Rwanda, Chad, Sudan. In DAWN we have to be always conscious of this gap between policy and reality. We work to close that gap by transforming the words into action." 🌟





"In Cairo, the world adopted the notion of the indivisibility of rights. Economic and social rights are no longer on one side and individual, political and civil rights on the other. We should therefore try to move forward by placing emphasis on the more universal aspects of the Programme of Action. This means emphasising human rights and being explicit about the notion of reproductive rights."

*Sonia Correa, WEDO/CRLP Information Caucus, Setting the Tone: The Preamble and Women's Rights, June 24, 1999, United Nations, New York*

## CATHOLIC PRO-CHOICE HISTORY CITED

"The Catholic Church has always housed a pro-choice, as well as a no-choice position on abortion. I cite St. Antoninus, the Archbishop of Florence, who in the 15th century defended a woman's right to abortion if needed to save her life. After that, Archbishop Antoninus was canonized as a saint. In the 17th century, Jesuit Father Sanchez could not find a single Catholic theologian who did not defend women's right to make that life-saving abortion decision. I submit that the Vatican should precede its interventions at the United Nations with a prayer to St. Antoninus, the pro-choice saint of the Catholic Church."

*Daniel C. Maguire, President of the Religious Consultation on Population, Reproductive Health and Ethics, before the Committee of the whole of the United Nations General Assembly Special Session, July 1, 1999.*

## BEIJING+5: KEEP IN TOUCH WITH THE PROCESS DIARY DATES AND CONTACTS

October 26-29, 1999

Asia and Pacific Regional Review, Bangkok, Thailand  
ESCAP (Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific), Women and Development Programme, United Nations Building, Rajadamnern Avenue, Bangkok 10200, Thailand

November 22-27, 1999

Africa Regional Review, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia  
ECA (Economic Commission for Africa), Africa Training and Research Centre on Women, P.O. Box 3001, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

December 15-18

West Asia Regional Review, Beirut, Lebanon  
ESCWA (Economic and Social Commission for West Asia), Women and Development Programme, Amman, Jordan

January 2000

North America and Europe Regional Review, Geneva, Switzerland

ECE (Economic Commission for Europe), Focal Point for Women, Palais de Nations, 1211 Geneva, Switzerland

January/February 2000

Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Review, Lima, Peru

ECLAC (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean), Edificio Naciones Unidas, Casilla 179-D, Santiago, Chile

February 28-March 17, 2000

PrepCom 44th Session of Commission on the Status of Women, New York

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June 5-9, 2000

United Nations General Assembly Special Session on the implementation of the Platform for Action, New York

## RESOURCES

*Asia/Pacific Post Beijing Implementation Monitor* Asian and Pacific Development Centre (APDC) Gender and Development Programme [1998; 260 pages]: Government strategies and women's regional initiatives.

*Beijing!* Anita Anand (ed), Women's Feature Service [1998; 350 pages]: Essays by leading activists, thinkers worldwide.

*Issues and Images of Beijing '95* International Women's Tribune Centre [1996]: Slide-tape set

*Mapping Progress: Assessing Implementation of the Beijing Platform*, Women's Environment and Development Organization [1998, 214 pages]: Survey of 81 countries that have drawn up national action plans.

**For more resources and ordering information contact:** Women, Ink., 777 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017, USA; Tel: (212) 687-8633; Fax: (212) 661-2704; E-mail: wink@womenink.org; Website: www.womenink.org



# WOMEN UNIONISTS SET FUTURE AGENDA

By Magaly Pazello with Sonia Correa

## Women in the 21st Century: trade union leaders in conference...

The impacts of globalisation on women and the labour market was the focus of debate at the Seventh International Confederation of Free Trade Unions' World Women's Conference held in Rio de Janeiro last May. At the conference, some 350 female free trade union leaders from all over the world reached consensus on an agenda for the future. Representatives of the United Nations, the World Bank and the International Labour Organization (ILO) also attended the conference.

The World Women's Conference takes place every four years, prior to ICFTU World Congresses. Brazil became the first developing country to host an ICFTU Women's Conference, winning over Japan and Hungary. This was a major breakthrough for the Brazilian hosts, the Confederation of Labour (CGT), United Worker's Central Union (CUT) and Força Sindical (Union Force).

"The Brazilian crisis is an illustration of what is happening globally," said Marina Silva Cerutti, a local trade unionist. "The huge social inequality clearly underscores the global problem of the development gap between the rich industrialised world and the poor developing world."

The theme of the conference was "Women in the 21st Century: Demanding Our Space and Taking Our Place". The proceedings were structured around three overlapping issues: transformation of the global market through equality and justice; solidarity among women as a dynamic force in the labour union movement and in societies; and occupying our place in the 21st century to mean equality for all.

## A vast landscape...

The conference auditorium was a vast and diverse landscape of ethnic differences, a variety of colors and clothing, of languages and of smiling faces. There were participants from all industrialised countries, from most of Latin America and from Croatia, Burkina Faso, Republic of China, Côte d'Ivoire, Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, Dominica, Republic of Estonia, Gabon, French Polynesia, Republic of Latvia, Mongolia and Nepal. Particularly striking was the inter-generational exchange.

The women in Rio came from countries with democratic traditions and from nations where democracy is only just beginning. Women from those countries with more experience of democracy tended to be younger than those coming from new democracies. While the majority of Asian delegates were over 40, women under 30 counted for 65 percent of the Brazilian representatives. But in some cases, new democracies have fueled strong labour union movements in which women

are playing a critical role. A third of all participants were young unionists. But the majority of leaders who came to Rio were women who had been involved in the union movement for 20 or even 30 years. One of the biggest challenges faced by the older generation is the transmission of experience, knowledge and power to younger women. "It is not enough to look around and notice that young women are present and critically important," said Nancy Riche, the Conference Chair and Chairperson of the ICFTU Women's Committee. "We have to welcome them and remind ourselves how difficult it was for us 30 years ago as we fought to be seen. We must be conscious of that and be prepared to learn and transmit knowledge."

## Transforming the global economy through equality and justice...

The Conference debated the negative impact of IMF and World Bank structural adjustment programmes in developing countries and the exploitative nature of "free trade export zones" such as those established in Asia and Latin America, where the workers, mainly women, labour under exploitative conditions. In Latin America, for example, the maquilas (tax free zone workers) are operating under conditions in violation of international conventions.

The conference recommended that ICFTU should launch a worldwide campaign to pressure the World Bank and IMF to tie loans to enforcement of the ILO conventions requiring the eradication of child and slave labour and gender discrimination and the right to free organisation and workers' collective negotiations.

The debate also addressed critical gender issues including violence against women in the workplace and in the household, sexual harassment, reproductive health, labour-related problems and disrespect for reproductive rights. Access to education and training and the effects of migration on women's lives, particularly domestic and sex workers, were other issues discussed.

The conference concluded with a demand for a complete review of national and global union agendas. Aimed at transforming existing union structures and practices, the new agenda must be informed by an unconditional commitment to gender justice, moving beyond issues strictly related to the labour market to include family related issues, livelihoods and shared responsibilities between men and women. 🌞

*Magaly Pazello, who prepared the text, is IBASE-DAWN Gender Initiative Project Assistant; Sonia Correa, who made revisions, is DAWN Research Coordinator for Social and Reproductive Rights.*

## QUOTE TO NOTE

*"We, the women, know that we will have to fight for social rights, and to use all the means of expression which we have. We always succeed, even though this is not always clear at the time."*

Rigoberta Menchu, Guatemalan Nobel Peace Prize winner 1992 and special guest at the union conference.



# WALK SLOWLY IN THE WIND\* - TOGETHER

*When it comes to women's leadership should we be 'transforming', being 'transformational' or seeking 'transformation' - or a mix of all three? Peggy Antrobus, DAWN founding member and former General Coordinator, reflected on verbs, adjectives and nouns in her keynote address to a UNIFEM Caribbean Transformational Leadership Project advisory group meeting in Barbados last May.*



There are many ways of looking at the process of social change, each perspective leading to different strategies and types of leadership. (The following typology draws on Crowfoot and Chesler, 1984.)

The professional-technical approach is the conventional approach to development and social change and is based on the assumption that only a certain class of people has the intellectual expertise to make decisions for the rest of society.

The political approach acknowledges the existence of different groups, each defined by the uniquely shared interest of its members each with different and often competing interests or goals. These groups may be based on race or ethnicity, class, gender or location and there are usually imbalances of power between them and the dominant group.

The counter-culture approach is based on affirming the culture and values of the society. This approach is suspicious of over-technocratic and over-bureaucratic concepts of progress, which are viewed as opening the way for a marginalisation of local or indigenous knowledge, decreasing initiative, creativity and individuality, and inhibiting the individual from realising his/her full human potential. Since the ideological and policy framework for the state is presently dominated by professional-technical perspectives and in this era of globalisation there seems little chance this approach can achieve socio-economic improvement for the majority, or the more specific goals embodied in the Beijing Platform of Action, it can be argued that some integration of the political and counter-cultural approaches might be valuable. Applying this framework of analysis to UNIFEM's project on transformational leadership we should recognise the limitations of focusing on leadership within the formal institutions of governance, especially when our governments must now adhere to the framework of globalisation underwritten by rulings of the World Trade Organisation.

As far as advocacy around gender issues is concerned we need to recognise that gender is not merely about a sexual division of labour, but more about a structural imbalance of power between the sexes. Women's empowerment is central to any project on transformational leadership. If, therefore, we want to assert women's values and culture we can recognise the relevance of a counter-culture perspective.

There is a tension between UNIFEM's recognition of the fundamental importance of the women's movement and its mandate to work within the systems of governance prescribed by the United Nations. The challenge for UNIFEM is how to operate within the system while making it more accountable to the people whose lives it is supposed to benefit.

In the process of doing this, UNIFEM must draw inspiration from women who have dared to challenge the given; women who have exercised transformational leadership within these very institutions of the UN and national governments. Women who have found ways of combining highly professional-technical approaches with approaches that are deeply political and counter-culture.

I make a distinction between the use of 'transform' (the verb) and 'transformational' (the adjective) to describe leadership. To seek to 'transform' women who wear the title of leader within formal structures is an important objective. But that in itself is not going to bring about 'transformation' (the noun) of structures and institutions which actually benefit from the perpetuation of women's inequality, marginalisation and powerlessness.

The introduction of gender-sensitive training and gender-management systems within the UN agencies has not enabled progressive agencies and governments to stand up to the assault by forces of fundamentalism determined to reverse

the gains women have achieved through the global conferences of the 1990s. Although complementary, good management and leadership are different.

In today's context transformational leadership is most likely to be found among women who are outside the structures of government and therefore better placed to challenge these structures and to hold governments accountable. At the very least women within the structures of government need to recognise the contradictions inherent in programmes of action which purport to promote gender equity, poverty alleviation and an end to violence while governments continue to pursue policies and programmes that take them further from the realisation of those goals.

Women parliamentarians and women working within the structures of the UN can be transformational leaders. But the exercise of this kind of leadership will require more than training. It will require risk-taking, a willingness to lose external power and to resist oppression in all forms and at all levels - from our households to our houses of parliament. To do this women in leadership positions will have to take up the political struggle for women's equality and to do so from a sense of identification and solidarity with women of all sectors, recognising the strengths and constraints of each.

My own hope is that as UNIFEM develops its Transformational Leadership Project in the Caribbean it will try to broaden its objectives beyond the verb 'transform' to include provision for the support of 'transformational leaders'. For in the end it is only through the inclusion of both objectives that this project will take us closer to the transformation of gender relationships inherent in the vision of a world free from inequality based on gender.

So let us continue to walk slowly in the wind, but let us walk together (\*From *Shape and Motion #1 and #2*, poems by Martin Carter of Guyana) 🌅



# PUTTING WOMEN FIRST TO "DISARM THE MARKETS"

*At the ATTAC\* international conference in Paris, France, this past June, Gigi Francisco, DAWN/SEAsia Regional Coordinator, outlined the case for putting women's needs on the front burner of efforts to build global consensus against market dictates.*

**D**AWN would like to congratulate you the participants of this conference - from the south, north, east and west - who have made this gathering another important step in efforts to build an international consensus against the dictatorship of the market. Since our formation in Nairobi in 1985, the DAWN network has cooperated with a number of other groups and social movements and participated in strategic south-north alliances and dialogue with one clear mission - to promote women's issues and gender concerns and to interconnect these with the issues of peoples similarly marginalised by international development, particularly policies and programmes of multilateral institutions.

This, of course, has been easier said than done, for a number of reasons. The first is that despite a number of positive changes in international law, government policy and public opinion on the status of women in society and the need to support women's empowerment and equality, little has changed in relation to women's poverty. In fact, women's poverty has expanded and deepened with the consolidation of the current market dictatorship. There are now new groups of poor women everywhere, created by the increased mobility of capital, expansion of free trade and structural changes in labour and production systems.

Secondly, there are now new risks and vulnerabilities being felt by those who have long survived in conditions of inter-generational poverty. Thirdly, hundreds of thousands of poor women, children and men - former workers, farmers, craft producers - are increasingly being lured by international traffickers, trans-border smugglers and international criminal organisations into conditions of bonded labour, slavery-like work or forced prostitution. Finally, women are also losing employment opportunities as a result of privatisation policies and budget cutbacks implemented by IMF dictate.

Women are not only impoverished by the market; they are also under threat as citizens in various political systems. In some states, the rise of fundamentalist governments has placed drastic limitations on women's liberty, identity, employment and incomes. Moral and cultural sanctions and the social stigma attached to women who chose not to be "loyal" wives and long-suffering mothers, are systematically promoted by governments; chauvinism and conservatism in social institutions and political leadership have re-emerged as a backlash to women's growing demands. One of the great ironies of the day is the Vatican's continuing attack against the reproductive and sexual rights of women even as it presents itself as a champion of the poor in its strong support for debt cancellation. Fundamentalist governments are often in the forefront of anti-imperialist struggles and programmes for economic sovereignty and capital controls, but in reality they are overturning the personal and political rights won by women in the name of attacking western hegemony.

**T**his division between what is public and what is private/personal/sexual is for DAWN one of the major reasons why the world is what it is today. But another parallel world exists, one in which women - as workers, members of indigenous communities, migrants, and farmers - continue to hold hands and take action with men to forge a united front against the dictatorship of the market. And as partners women will also continue to demand gender justice and equal partnership.

We are, for instance, supporting the call of our ATTAC sisters and their constituent mass organisations and social movements, to implement parity for women and men in all decision-making bodies. Together we demand that ATTAC immediately put into effect a 50/50 model of women and men in leadership, decision-making and scientific

analysis so that the gender anomaly within organisations will be shaken at its core. We also demand a commitment by ATTAC to provide economic education to all its mass members and to pay particular attention to women's participation to ensure they are not marginalised from access to these capacity-building efforts. Ordinary members and workers must be provided with a more holistic understanding of global political economy and of macro-economics - fiscal and monetary policies, trade and other international economic agreements. This will allow more effective resistance and help them to secure their rights in the face of economic globalisation and financial markets.

The workshop on women also endorses ATTAC support for the global campaign called Women's March 2000 that will focus on women's poverty and violence against women. We particularly call on organisations and social movements in the south and east to expand the analysis and demands in this campaign and to highlight the specific issues of women in various locations and spaces even as we all link together for a global campaign for all women. Finally the women's workshop is urging all members of ATTAC to support research, analysis, information and communication focused on women's responses and resistance to globalisation, and to incorporate this into its overall analysis and action. ☀

\*ATTAC (Association pour une Taxation des Transactions financières pour l'Aide aux Citoyens) is a network of citizens associations, trade unions and newspapers in seven countries in Europe and Senegal and Quebec. Founded in France in June 1998, this initiative was born out of an editorial entitled "Disarm the markets" published in *Le Monde diplomatique* in December 1997.



# THE DAWN NET

## NEW DAWN RESOURCES

*Gender Equity and Economic Reforms: Engendering Policy Critique and Advocacy of Philippine NGOs*  
Edited by Josefa S. Francisco and Shalimar C. Vitan  
[DAWN/Oxfam-Great Britain, 1999]

In this book, feminists and social activists of different backgrounds and from varied fields of expertise, explore gender issues in macro policies in the context of a constantly changing milieu. It is the culmination of a two-year project coordinated by Gigi Francisco, DAWN/South East Asia Regional Coordinator, which involved a series of roundtable discussions on gender equity and macroeconomics. The critical essays in the book infused the roundtable discussions with an economics-informed analytical perspective and provided conceptual tools for understanding the link between gender and macroeconomic reforms. Economists and non-economists, gender advocates, NGO workers, people's organisations and others will find the

book going beyond such abstract concepts as markets, consumers and aggregates, to the practical ways that economics concerns women, men, households and communities. There is still a dearth of women trained in economic analysis, much less feminists especially honed in development issues. Capacity-building efforts such as this publication and the discussions that preceded it are therefore of great value. As Gita Sen, DAWN Research Coordinator on the theme of Political Economy of Globalisation, says in the preface, "Challenging the results of unfettered globalisation, while necessary, also requires new knowledge and new skills. In a complex social reality, good analysis is a necessary ingredient for both clear understanding and effective action."

**Gender Equity and Economic Reforms is available from Oxfam-Great Britain in Manila, Philippines. email: oukiphil@skyinet.net**

### NGOS RESPOND TO SECRETARY-GENERAL'S REPORT ON THEIR PARTICIPATION AT THE UN

Over 100 non-governmental organisations, have responded with comments on a draft report of the United Nations Secretary-General, Arrangements and Practices for the Interaction of Non-Governmental Organisations in All Activities of the United Nations System (A/53/170). A revised version, still in the process of being finalised, is expected to go before the UN General Assembly when it meets this coming September.

The Conference of Non-Governmental Organisations in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations (CONGO) spearheaded NGO feedback to the document. The initial draft did not include any formal input from the NGO community. However, late last year, the General Assembly took a decision to seek broader views including those of governments and intergovernmental bodies as well as NGOs.

CONGO views the report as an important attempt to document how the UN system works with NGOs from global policy-making at UN headquarters to individual agencies and UN entities operating at national levels, but criticised it as being too descriptive and lacking in forward-looking strategies. It is hoped that the revised draft will include an examination of existing inefficiencies, duplications, and lack of financial resources, which inhibit the interaction of NGOs within the system. The report offers few suggestions on how to build support for NGOs among governments and within the Secretariat, notwithstanding supportive statements from the Secretary-General. To keep in touch with this process and for copies of the latest draft, contact: Rebecca Nichols, CONGO, 777 United Nations Plaza, 12th Floor, New York, NY 10017, USA

*Globalisation: In Search of Alternatives*  
compiled and written by Natasha Primo and Vivienne Taylor  
[DAWN Africa, 1999]

Primo, of the South Africa National Research Foundation, and Taylor, DAWN Research Coordinator on the theme of Political Restructuring and Social Transformation, have developed this manual from the report of the 1994 DAWN/Africa Regional Meeting in Dakar, Senegal - From "There is No Alternative" to "There Must Be An Alternative": DAWN/Africa Debates on Alternative Development Frameworks (DAWN, 1997). The key challenge that faced DAWN in Dakar was how to share the tools of analysis in the region and take the issues raised by women beyond the level of debates to the level of concrete action based on alternatives. It was the desire to challenge the given, to move out of the impasse that there is no alternative, that led to the manual.

Women in particular require economic literacy and more information on some of the issues and concepts that shape their lives through policies and institutions. The manual reflects on some of the key issues and trends that emerged in the debates, puts forward strategies to challenge globalisation, and raises questions for discussion in each section. The introduction provides historical context and facts about Africa's development status. Section Two examines the concept of globalisation and its main critiques; Section Three highlights the main features of Structural Adjustment Programmes, and Section Four asserts the need for people to be seen as the purpose of development and not in service to the economy. It is clearly written and designed, illustrated with cartoons, making it easily accessible to the target audience.

**Copies are available from DAWN Secretariat, The School of Social and Economic Development, The University of the South Pacific, Suva, Fiji.**



## Deja Vu *continued from Page 1*

Most alarming of all was the debate on NGO accreditation, which focused mainly on participation in plenary sessions. The EU repeatedly declared its position in favour of NGO participation, declaring that it would be a huge mistake to disallow them since their participation had been beneficial in the past. The EU cited precedence - in the Year of the Family, NGOs participated in the plenary sessions - and previous cooperation documents, which underscored the importance of government and NGO cooperation. It was also noted that Kofi Annan, UN Secretary-General, in his working paper for the Millennium Forum, had highlighted the need for the support of the civil society if success were to be achieved. Detractors included the Russian Federation, India, and China. A divided G77 - Cuba and Egypt were among those against and Chile among those in favour - worked against the EU's defense of NGO participation. Amongst the G77 opponents, Egypt can be considered a leader, moving as it is to pass a law seriously restricting the activities of NGOs. In any case, even if NGOs are permitted to take part in plenary sessions, the number cannot exceed 200, because there cannot be more NGOs than official delegates present.

Given the situation, NGOs are going to have to work hard to meet the challenges of Geneva 2000. Those relatively few NGOs present - lack of funding was a big problem - agreed to report back to groups that took part in WSSD, lobby government departments, disseminate information via web pages and list servers, make effective linkages with other processes, in particular Beijing + 5, and seek financial and institutional support. ☀

### COPENHAGEN+5: KEEP IN TOUCH WITH THE PROCESS

#### • DIARY DATES

**August 30-September 3, 1999:** Resumed Preparatory Committee meeting, Commission on Social Development, NY  
**February 7-18, 2000:** Final Preparatory Committee Meeting, Commission on Social Development, New York  
**February 28-March 10, 2000:** Intersessional Meeting, Commission on Social Development, New York  
**April 3-14, 2000:** 38th Session, Commission on Social Development, New York  
**June 26-30, 2000:** Copenhagen + 5; UN General Assembly Special Session on the Implementation of the Outcome of the World Summit on Social Development (WSSD), Geneva

#### • CONTACTS

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**Robert Bissio** Control Ciudadano/Social Watch, Casilla de Correo 1539, Montevideo 1100, Uruguay; Tel: 598-2-409-6192; Fax: 598-2-401-9222; E-mail: [socwatch@chasque.apc.org](mailto:socwatch@chasque.apc.org); Website: [www.socwatch.org](http://www.socwatch.org)

#### • RESOURCES

A summary of Principle Commitments of the World Summit for Social Development (20pp). Contact: Stephen King, International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW); Tel: (514) 287-3280, ext. 335; Fax: (514) 287-9702; E-mail: [icswintl@colba.net](mailto:icswintl@colba.net)

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