

# DAWN INFORMS

Quarterly Informative Newsletter — Development Alternatives with Women  
For a New Era

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## Newsletter

Editors: Neuma Aguiar, Thaís Corral  
Art and Format Design: Joabe S. Félix and Vilmar  
G. Santos Tel.: 222-2213  
Print: J. B. Félix  
Translation: Wendy Schaul  
Sponsor: IUPERJ

## Committees in Action — International Relations

The Advisory Council and the Research Coordinators for DAWN'S different regions met at the African Studies Institute of the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, February 23-25. The meeting's objective was to discuss the proposals DAWN's Coordinator for International Relations, Devaki Jain, will take to the South Commission. The Commission was created in 1986 during a meeting of the non-aligned countries with the objective of formulating viable solutions to the current problems in the Southern Hemisphere.

It has been an important accomplishment on DAWN's part to have the support of the South Commission to analyze the impact of development on the Third World from the perspective of gender inequalities.

## DEAR READER,

First of all, happy 8th of March and long live international feminism!

We need two distinct types of cooperation from you. The first has to do with the request that you send more information. News is particularly needed from Asia, the Caribbean, Africa and the Pacific. We need your steady contribution as this newsletter is yours.

The other request is addressed particularly to sympathizers from the North. Each newsletter edition, produced in three languages, is costing the Secretariat almost US\$ 4,000.00. We need financial contributions to continue the effort. Please send donations, in the form of checks, addressed to Sociedade Brasileira de Instrução/IUPERJ and state that it is for the DAWN newsletter. If you prefer a safer way, money may also be deposited in the Farmers Bank in Iowa, USA, account nº 000-069-80 (send the Secretariat information of your deposit). We will provide receipts at your request.

We thank you in advance for whatever type of contribution you may provide.

Neuma Aguiar

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## DAWN Participates in the ANPOCS and CLACSO Meetings

A great number of papers relating to DAWN's two project themes: Crisis in Relation to Women and Women's movements, and Visions, were sent to our headquarters in 1987. This then gave us the chance to participate in two important research encounters held in Brazil: ANPOCS' XI Annual Encounter and CLACSO's XIV General Assembly.

ANPOCS (National Association of Post-Graduate Research in the Social Sciences) Encounter held in September included the study groups: Women in the Labor Force and Women and Politics, where DAWN's participants presented their studies in these two areas.

Zuleika Lopes Cavalcanti presented "The Crisis and Urban Labor Family Arrangements"; a study that shows, after analyzing the data from the Nacional Research of Household Patterns in 1979 and 1983, that the number of families supported by women increased in Brazil. Despite the recession created by the economic crisis, feminine participation in the labor force doubled beginning in 1970.

The major new information that Zuleika's study revealed was that the inclusion of a great number of married women with children into the labor market has made the life cycle obsolete as an explanation of this phenomenon.

The text presented by Cheywa Spindel, "Women and the Economic Crisis of the 80s: New Thoughts on an Old Theme", complement the analysis presented by Zuleika when it explained that the increase in women's participation in the labor force was due to low salaries — men in Brazil generally receive two to ten minimum wages\* and women only zero to one.

Neuma Aguiar and David P. Moraes presented, "Crisis and Development, Work and Gender in a Sugar Cane Plantation", where they analyzed the behaviour of female employment during the 1930 crisis, using case studies made in rural areas in the north of the state of Rio de Janeiro. The data shows that women are contracted when the male labor market is saturated or when there are technological changes making certain jobs less qualified.

The analyses presented in the area of Women's Movements and Visions indicated multiple tendencies. Lucia Avelar

in "Women's Political Participation and the Ideology of Feminine Political Conservatism: Data for New Research" showed that Southern Brazilian women continue to resist taking on a feminist perspective in political matters. Maria Noemi Castilhos and Jussara Reis Pra showed the progress in the women's movements in the south of the country due to the effort to organize group experiences from 1975 to 1987.

The roundtable on Women and Crisis, presented at CLACSO's General Assembly in Recife, November 1987, was, according to Neuma Aguiar — one of the organizers of the event — the most well-attended of the whole meeting. The papers presented illustrated situations relating to the crisis not only in Brazil but in all the other Latin American countries as well. The general phenomenon seems to be that the inclusion of more women into the labor force goes hand in hand with the lowering of salaries.

\*Translator's note: Minimum wage in Brazil is not by the hour but by the month (as of Feb. 1988 the government-decreed minimum wage is equivalent to US\$47.00 — this is per month). Salaries are, therefore, determined by how many minimum wages a person receives for a particular job.

**DAWN's Steering Committee**

- Research Coordinator (Asia) Hameeda Hossain - Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies, Dhaka, Bangladesh
  - Communications Coordinator (Pacific) - Claire Slatter Dept of Politics - South Pacific University - Suva, Fiji
  - Advocacy Coordinator (Caribbean) - Lucille Mair ISER - Univ. of West Indies, Mona, Kingston, 6 Jamaica
  - International Relations Coordinator (Asia) - Devaki Jain. ISST - Tharanga, Rajmahal Vilas Extension, Bangalore 560006, India
  - Publications Coordinator (Latin America) - Lourdes Arizpe - Museo Nac. Culturas Populares - Av. Hidalgo 289, Mexico 04000, DF.
  - General Coordinator (Secretariat) - Neuma Aguiar
- Information Officer: Thais Corral  
IUPERJ - Rua Paulino Fernandes, 32 - Rio de Janeiro - RJ - 22.270 - Botafogo - Brazil  
Phone: (021) 246-1830  
Telex: (021) 37842 DAWN BR

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**Research-Group Coordinators:**

**Food, Energy and Debt Crises in Relation to Women**

**Caribbean:** Peggy Antrobus - Extra Mural Dept. University of West Indies - Pinelands-Barbados

**East Africa:** Maria Nzomo - Dept. of Government University of Nairobi - P.O. Box 30197 - Nairobi - Kenya

**West Africa:** Ayesha Imam - Dept. of Sociology - Ahmadu Bello University - Zaria Nigeria

**South Asia:** Nirmala Banerjee - CSSO, 10 Lake Terrace, Cal 29 Calantha - India - 700029

**Southeast Asia:** Noeleen Heyzer - Asian and Pacific Development Centre - Pesiaran Duta - Kuala Lumpur - Malaysia

**Pacific:** Claire Slatter - Dept. of Politics South Pacific University - 37 Rewa Street Suva - Fiji

**Latin America:** Virginia Vargas - Flora Tristan - Parque Herman Vilarde, 42 Lima - Peru

**Women's Visions and Movements**

**Caribbean:** Rhoda Reddock - Lot 22B Leotaud Lands, Anima - Trinidad and Tobago

**East Africa:** Maria Nzomo - Dept. of Government University of Nairobi - P.O. Box 30197 - Nairobi - Kenya

**West Africa:** Ayesha Imam - Dept. of Sociology Ahmadu Bello University - Zaria - Nigeria

**South Asia:** Hameeda Hossain - 7/C Bailey Road Dhaka - Bangladesh

**Southeast Asia:** Noeleen Heyzer - Asian and Pacific Development Centre - Pesiaran Duta - Kuala Lumpur - Malaysia

**Pacific:** Claire Slatter - Dept. of Politics South Pacific University - 37 Rewa Street - Suva - Fiji

**Latin America** - Cheywa Spindel - IDESP Av. Dr. Amaldo, 1973 - Sao Paulo 01255 - Brazil

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**EDITORIAL**

NEUMA AGUIAR

DAWN has begun a new phase of consolidating regional networking. Since resources are scarce, we contacted existing NGO women's research networks and asked them to provide input on two of DAWN's research themes. Some of the groups contacted were the women's research groups in ANPOCS and the women's condition research group of CLACSO. The Women's Branch Division of CEPAL also helped with technical support and data from its data bank. FLACSO Bolivia helped with the organizing of the La Paz Regional meeting where researchers, feminist activists and policy-oriented persons gathered to draft the Latin American paper.

This paper was presented at the meeting held at the University of Ibadan, in Nigeria. During this meeting the relationship between DAWN and the South Commission was discussed.

The South Commission's first paper will be on the debt crisis and proposes that women should be brought to the center of policy perspectives by weaving gender hierarchies generated at the cultural level with the socio-economic aspects of the crisis. Some of the major findings provided by the researchers point to the fact that women are facing the current crisis in a very different manner than in the thirties. Whereas, in the thirties women's rates of participation in the labor market dropped, in the eighties they rose.

According to the regional rate of development, women's rates of participation are growing faster than those of men. This does not mean, however, that women's situation is improving. The gap between women and men's earnings also increases with the crisis. Women's work at home becomes heavier and men are showing reluctance to share household duties with them. When the activities are addressed to the market at home, women have their traditional gender roles reinforced and their capacity to contact other women restricted.

In some Latin American countries, religious fundamentalism still attempts to restrain women's gains in self-determination over reproduction rights.

Signs of the recession are easily observable throughout all of Latin America. Even though there are oil exporting countries in the region, like

Mexico, Venezuela, Ecuador and Bolivia, the recession has affected both oil exporting and non-exporting countries. Among the first there are signs that more attention is being given to oil export than to the production of food for subsistence. In other countries like Brazil which have engaged in export substitution production of alcohol as fuel, sugar cane fields often replace land meant for food production. The emphasis on food production for export has resulted in the large scale incorporation of women in temporary activities, daily work and production contracts. Women's participation in those activities are often rewarded at a fraction of the minimum salary. Trends towards feminization of the fields are evident in some sugar cane producing areas. In those cases, adult women are also showing a tendency to be the last to leave the rural areas with the young members of households being the first to migrate, followed by adult men.

Participants have provided input on what is happening with women in families. Fertility rates have dropped and there is a family nuclearization, according to rate of urbanization in the areas where the households are located. In some areas there are signs of increased tension and violence against women. In others, where case studies were conducted, there is no sign of increased conflict, but women from popular movements are becoming more and more interested in the feminist movement. Black and Native women who have been proportionally more numerous in the absolute levels of poverty are organizing and their agenda of questions is of great importance to the movement. Working-class women are progressively organizing reflection groups and providing input which may represent major advances towards a wider feminist reach.

DAWN is undertaking major contacts with groups which are involved in feminist popular education, and beginning to incorporate the research findings into their training programs. Tristram, CEAAL, Rede Mulher, La Morada, CEM (Chile and Argentina) are examples of feminist networks whose training activities are most important to DAWN.

Thus there are signs of major advances towards our initial objectives providing research input to the women's movements and to policy-marking agencies sensitive to women's issues.

# AFRICA

## AAWORD Celebrates its First Decade of Existence

Everything started ten years ago when 30 African women decided that it was time to create their own theory and methodology that could explain, taking into account the objective conditions in every country on the continent, how underdevelopment affects women and how programs directed at promoting their present status should be conceived. A seminar on "The Decolonization of Research on African Women" was held in Dakar, Senegal, and ended with the creation of the Association of African Women on Research and Development (AAWORD) that today has more than 450 members and organizes a great number of activities and research throughout the continent.

AAWORD edits a bilingual quarterly magazine called ECHO that includes information of general interest on the Association. They also publish Research Papers, Bibliographies, and, they promise, AAWORD's newspaper will soon be out. Aside from the above they have organized 14 seminars in the last ten years in most of the African countries.

To celebrate their ten years of existence AAWORD, in April, called for a General Assembly on the theme: "Visions

of African Women and Alternatives to the Crisis". The date and place have not yet been confirmed.

A preliminary encounter took place in Dakar in July, 1987, to discuss the major themes to be addressed during the General Assembly. A document was prepared listing the topics that should be researched and studied in each country that will enrich the visions and alternative suggestions for the solution of the crisis.

The topics selected by AAWORD participants were subdivided into areas considered critical for the development of women in the continent.

For example, in agriculture — the main economic resource in most African countries — women make up 60 to 80% of the labor force. However, they lack modern tools, training and access to credit that continues to be controlled by men. In face of this impasse AAWORD researchers suggest the following questions for reflection:

- What is the impact of the agricultural crisis on women?
- In what way have women been affected by the distribution of resources and the fiscal reforms?
- What strategies do women use to survive the crisis? Are there changes in their diet? Are women spending more time preparing food?

Another interesting point refers to the topic of Culture, Religion, Law and

Politics. In many African countries, during the post-colonial period, the State initiated important reforms in family codes, in labor laws that, theoretically, would benefit women. However, many contradictions remain since African cultures, according to AAWORD, continue, in practice, to resist change. The crisis is aggravated, in this sense, and today, in most of the countries on the continent, many of the victories conquered by women have been lost.

Such a controversial topic raises many questions:

- In what way do legislative contradictions and different practices affect women in the various countries?
- What answers are women giving to this?
- In what way does political authoritarianism affect the autonomous women organizations in their struggle?

There are other topics related to health, education, reproductive rights, industrialization and work. There is much news from those areas. Our AAWORD sisters intend to invite colleagues from Asia and Latin America to the seminar with the objective of increasing cooperation between women in the "South-South" sense.

For those wanting more information AAWORD's address is:

B.P. 3304, Dakar,  
Senegal.

## APRN Newsletter

The African Participatory Research Network (APRN), made up of 16 regional coordinators and approximately 100 members with headquarters in Tanzania, has recently published a Newsletter.

Since its creation in December 1982, the network has grown and expanded its objectives. At the moment it is conducting research projects in Tanzania, Zambia and Botswana.

"The Newsletter is an attempt to incentivate horizontal and vertical communication between Network members", explains the editor Fatma Alloo.

The October 1987 issue contains letters, a bibliography, announcements, reports from regional coordinators and interesting articles.

For example, Dermal Mustafá gives an in-depth analysis on the use of participatory methodology in rural areas. According to her, by using techniques such as group discussions, seminars, popular theatre, people are realizing that the most efficient way to define research questions is to involve those directly affected by the problems in the discussions and, thereby, making them define the problems themselves.

Ponna Wgnaraja writes on Participatory Research in South Asia; Amesa Wagana and Mary Shuma on Urban Nutrition: Socio-economic Factors and Conditions in Arusha, Tanzania; and there is an article by Anne Clarke on the tenth anniversary of the popular theatre group Paukwa.

The Newsletter is open to anyone

wishing to contribute. Fatma Alloo, the editor, will furnish all information: P.O. Box 20027, Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania.

## The North South Campaign: Women and the Debt Crisis

The problematic consequences generated by the foreign debt crisis have increased. The Council of Europe with its 22 State members has launched the North South Campaign to promote dialogue between the Northern and Southern hemispheres thereby solidifying the bonds between those working toward greater solidarity.

In Holland a group of women decided to participate in this state-supported campaign reminding us that we need to be present in such programs which search for alternative solutions for the structural problems that are affecting us.

Until now the effort promoted by these Dutch women has concentrated in gathering information and publicizing the objectives of this campaign. The group organized a conference to discuss women and the foreign debt, which will take place on the annually celebrated International Women's Day, March 8th, 1988. They ask for contributions from all. To obtain more information please contact:

Riet Delsing  
Veso, Kromme Nieuwegracht, 10  
3512 HC Utrecht, Holland

## Third World Woman's Network (TWWN)

The TWWN, created in 1985 by a group of 50 women, with headquarters in Washington, DC, promotes the exchange of information between organizations, groups and people from developed and underdeveloped countries concerned with improving the quality of life of Third World Women.

TWWN publishes announcements, reports, research abstracts and current publications related to the development of Third World women. The newsletter also diffuses names of organizations, programs and bulletins that support women in their struggle for equality, peace and human rights.

Everybody can participate in a variety of ways: by becoming a member, by subscribing to the newsletter or by advertising or telling friends and acquaintances about the Network.

For more information contact: Maignet Shifferraw, Editor, TWWN Newsletter, P.O. Box 73648, Washington, DC 20056-3648, USA.

# LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

## IV Latin America Feminist Encounter: News and Challenges

Feminism is no longer the utopia of a minority in Latin America. It has grown and attracted women from the most diverse sectors of society. This was demonstrated when 1,500 women from all the regions of the continent gathered to participate in the IV Latin American Feminist Encounter, held in the city of Taxco 250 kilometers from Mexico City, during October 19-25, 1987.

The major theme was Feminist Politics in Latin America, and brought together professional women and housewives, rural and urban community agents and theologians, old-timers and new feminists.

Among the new events was the "Matrias" Workshop formed by a small group of women that openly gave up their confrontation with the patriarchy. Their dream was to create a land of women. Their short-term plan was to establish an emotional support network among women. Another event that deserves to be singled out is the participation, for the first time, of women from all of the Central American countries in a feminist encounter. Seven Hondurans, 40 Nicaraguans, 15 Guatemalans, 12 Costaricans and 12 Salvadorans. According to Dña Jimenez, a Guatemalan exiled in Costa Rica, "the presence of representatives from all of the Central American countries indicated a fundamental step for feminism in the sense that it has created a space where these women who are committed to the daily battle for survival can express their hidden feminism".

For many Central American leftist militants who live immersed in extremely conflicting social and political realities, the

exchange of ideas with the Nicaraguans was important. Sofia Montenido, editor of Barricada, the official daily newspaper of the FSLN (Sandinista National Liberation Front), synthesises the women's movement in her country: "We began with a patriotic, anti-imperialist and anti-dictatorship consciousness. Later we evolved and began to fight for our own dignity. In the same way that we cannot accept that the USA drop bombs on us, neither can we tolerate that a man beat us. It has become a matter of national dignity."

It was also the first time that the Cubans participated in a Latin American Feminist Encounter of such magnitude. In one of the most popular workshops they left the following message for their *companheiras* (sisters): Machismo continues to be present in most social and intimate relations in Cuba even though many battles in this area have been won. Women play an important part in the work-force, they represent half of all enrollments in educational establishments. And contrary to the rest of the Latin American countries, in Cuba abortion is legal.

Also, for the first time in a feminist encounter, abortion was addressed by women theologians who presented themselves as part of the group "Catholics in Favor of Free Choice". Their battle banner: to show that the prohibition of abortion within the Catholic Church is meant to reinforce patriarchal values given that, from a theological point of view, it has been agreed that life only appears 40 days after conception.

Latin American encounters have become a thermometer indicating the changes that have occurred in the movement during the 80s. A quick analysis of the number of participants

and of the themes addressed expresses this fact. During the first encounter in Bogota, Colombia, 1981, 300 committed feminists discussed the necessity of consolidating the autonomy of the movement. In 1983 in Lima, Peru, a constant number of 300 women discussed the relationship of the movement to the patriarchy and the State. Nuances of the phenomena that was to be more clearly defined during the IV Feminist Encounter in Mexico 1987, had already been observed in 1985 during the Brazilian encounter: about 1,000 women discussed the victories of feminism which in many countries represented a leap from an alternative existence to an institutional one. The keynote of the Mexican encounter was the plurality of visions and the heterogeneity of the participants. A new stage in the Latin American movement that confronts the challenge: how to continue growing without losing the intrinsic essence of feminism?

This question that certainly does not yet have a solid theoretical formulation, incited a major debate "Latin American Feminism and Future Visions" that lasted three hours and attracted approximately 300 participants.

Ana Maria Portugal from Peru observed that it was not enough to maintain feminism as a political movement. It is necessary to establish a relationship with the everyday life of women and their social context: to speak of capitalism is to speak of sexism; to speak of sexual violence is to speak of repression; to speak of structural violence is to speak of something that is shaking all of Latin America, from Nicaragua to Chile. Also, it is not possible to speak of the crisis or foreign debt without speaking of the extreme poverty

## Brazilian Women Fight for a Place in the CONSTITUENCY \*

Brazilian women entered the labor market in large numbers at the beginning of the 70s; other surprising events followed: a decline in the birth rate equivalent to 1.8% per year and an increase in families supported by women, representing, today, 20% of the total in the country.

Researchers differ in their attempts to explain the origins and consequences of these phenomena. Some believe that the general impoverishment of the Brazilian population due to the terrible economic crisis combined with the rural exodus caused by lack of working conditions, are the factors that determine the social transformation over the last decade.

It would not be fair, however, to make a one-sided analysis of the consequence of this crisis on women.

In the same way that the economic situation in which we found ourselves immersed, led us to take on certain roles that hitherto had been attributed to men — such as home support — the contradictions originating from our contact with the realities of the "outside world", so to speak, have made us aware of our need for political representation.

1987 represents a landmark in the Brazilian women's struggle to make their demands known. This phenomenon is apparent not only by the number of women who aspire for political representation but by the number of activities organized by the women's movement. For example, the last elections, held in November 1986, recorded the largest number of women candidates in the history of the Republic.

The work begun in the National Constituent Assembly in February 1987, was the primary focus of the Brazilian women's movement. Beginning in 1985 the National Council on Women's Rights (CNDM) coordinated a campaign throughout the country using the slogan: "Without Women's Representation There is No Constitution". The women's demands were organized and became the Women's Letter to the Constituency, a small booklet that served as the basis for the fights undertaken by the constituents within the Congress and the movement. DAWN accompanied the process offering the movement the use of our small infrastructure on several occasions.

During the period when popular amendments could be sent to the constituency, the movement obtained the 30,000 required signatures and presented two amendments: "Women's Rights" and

"Women's Health". The latter, introduced into the National Congress the controversial abortion issue, still considered tabu in the Brazilian society despite the fact that, according to a recent UN report, over 400,000 women have died due to the terrible conditions in which abortions are performed.

We have entered the fourth and final stage of the writing of the Magna Charta and we have succeeded in preserving 80% of our demands. The laws and the amendments should now be approved by the majority in Congress and only then will they be entered into the new constitution.

It would be precipitous on our part to state that the battle has been won. However, the opportunity showed that a large number of Brazilians are prepared to fight for equality even though we still have very little representation in Congress.

\* Translator's note: Since 1987 Brazil has been in the process of writing a new constitution (the last one was written in 1946). In the Portuguese language *constituente* (which would translate as constituent and constituency) refers, specifically, to the individuals elected to draft the new constitution as well as to the body of individuals who are drafting it. Since there is no direct translation for these two words (as in English they have another meaning) I will use them in the Brazilian sense and underline them.

# LATIN AMERICA

## Feminism and Popular Education

Popular adult education represents a sign of hope in Latin America. This method has helped thousands of women and men, coming from urban and poor rural areas, to recreate their cultural reality and begin to interact, actively, in their socio-economic context.

When this methodology was used with women it became apparent, right from the beginning, that if the question of gender was not raised there was little reason to ask them to reflect upon their social class condition and cultural disintegration; since oppression and gender contradictions are deeply rooted and are related to other forms of subordination.

In their desire to discuss and find alternatives that could resolve this question, the Interamerican Council for Adult Education (CEAAL) called for a workshop in 1982 in which 18 women from the region participated. The proposals that emerged from this event converged with the creation of a support network for the women's popular movement which became established in 1983.

Rocio Rosero, the coordinator, explains that the network was conceived of as a solidarity space where activities and collective projects would be encouraged with the aim of uniting hopes and efforts in the search for equality and peace. The network is also being used as a place to share information and experiences, to encourage deeper analysis and reflection, and to develop initiatives and opportunities for encounters and collective work.

The network is now in its third phase. During the first one (from 1983 to 1984) the priority was to strengthen contacts and encourage discussions with network members, more specifically, with groups, organizations and institutions dedicated to educating women from the popular sectors.

The second phase, during 1984-1985, was affected by the progress in popular education (from a woman's perspective) through a program called "Methodologies of Popular Education Among Women in Latin America". During this phase a diagnosis of the actual situation in Latin America was made during regional workshops in Quito, São Paulo, Buenos Aires and Mexico.

The third phase began in December 1986 and the inherent difficulties of uniting Feminist Theory with Popular Education came to a head — the consequence of the diversity in feminism and the growth of women organization movements in different countries in the region.

According to Rocio Rosero, a solution to the problem is being worked out through encounters and workshops in which women are questioning the theory and methodology of Popular Education

as a whole, in each of the countries where educational practice is being analysed and pedagogical content has been introduced.

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As a result of DAWN's proposal to establish permanent ties with women's movements, an exchange of experiences and methodologies are being initiated with the Women's Network on Popular Education of CEAAL. Exchanges are also being made with "La Morada", in Chile and with Rede Mulher (Woman Network), in Brazil.

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ISIS International of Santiago, Chile, has just published "Growing Together — Women, Feminism and Popular Education" containing articles relating to the experiences in the area of Women's Popular Education in Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, Dominican Republic and Venezuela. ISIS International's address is: Casilla 2067, Correo Central, Santiago, Chile.

## "LA MORADA" and REDE MULHER (Woman Network) — Two Examples of Applied Feminism in Popular Education

The Woman's House, "La Morada", located in Santiago, Chile, is an autonomous, independent feminist institution founded by a feminist collective that since 1983 decided to create an open space for women. The idea was to initiate a process for women in individual and collective self-knowledge and self-esteem, so as to strengthen an autonomous movement for liberation.

"La Morada" 's main activities are organizing workshops with women from the popular movement on the most all-encompassing themes such as: feminine identity, self-consciousness, women and politics, sexuality, physical work, women organizations and history. "La Morada" also produces a weekly radio program on issues related to their workshops.

"La Morada" 's experience should be better known due to the consistency of its proposals. The address is: Bellavista, 0547, Santiago, Chile.

The Woman Network is part of the Women's Popular Education Network of CEAAL with headquarters in Brazil. Its specific objective is to promote the creation of a network of women's groups and organizations from Brazil's popular sectors.

Among its activities in the last years, the Woman Network has strived to put into practice their own methodology, organizing research-action programs and projects, encounters and inter-communication activities with the women from the popular sectors.

The Woman Network, founded in 1980, possesses, today, a rich experience that needs to be shared. The address is: Caixa Postal 1830, 01051 São Paulo, SP, Brazil.

## Our Voices in the Media

DAWN is structured as a Third World Women's Network that brings together academics, activists and women from the popular movements. Its purpose is to work for social transformation from the perspective of alternative views coming from women's life experiences.

The power of mass media communication represents an essential tool for the dissemination of our views. In our headquarters in Rio de Janeiro we have discussed several possibilities for sharing media time so as to reach a greater number of men and women. In March we began our participation in the weekly radio program WOMEN SPEAK, sponsored by the Municipal Bureau of Social Development of the city of Rio de Janeiro.

On an international level we have sent out our message, on various occasions, through the Special Service of Latin American Women (SEMLA) of the Inter Press Service Agency (IPS), a network of journalists who incorporate women's views in their news reports.

The reports produced by SEMLA correspondents are also published in the bi-monthly bulletin "Women", that can be obtained locally by contacting the correspondents of the Service or by writing to the headquarters in San Jose, Costa Rica: SEMLA/IPS Apartado Aereo 70-1002.

The equivalent of SEMLA in Africa and Asia is called Women Feature Service (WFS). It would be very interesting if DAWN's participants, in other countries would contact the SEMLA and WFS correspondents, thereby enlarging the circuit of information on our Network's experiences. The SEMLA and WFS correspondents can be contacted through the IPS Agencies in each country.

FEMPRESS is another women's alternative communication network with a large audience in Latin America. It edits the magazine Women/Fempres using material that is sent by correspondents stationed in almost all of the Latin American countries. The magazine also has a section of newspaper clippings of articles relating to women in different countries and a list of new publications (books, research, documents, etc.). It would be worthwhile to collaborate with them. The address is: Casilla 16-637, Santiago 9, Chile.

of women — the poorest of the poor. It needs to be made very clear that feminism questions an economic model: patriarchal capitalism.

Gina Vargas, DAWN's coordinator of the Womens Movement and Visions Research Team for Latin America, recognized that we grow in numbers but not in alternatives and this provokes a permanent tension in the movement. The movement's fights for abortion, against violence and for the free expression of sexuality have not reached many of the women's groups because feminism is not yet capable of establishing an adequate means of approximation. We annul our practice as feminists in order to adhere to the women's movement. The dual militancy is, at the present, an obsolete practice because feminism has already penetrated almost all of the public spaces which creates differences within the movement. According to her, the solution to the problem resides in the consolidation of an autonomous feminist pole where all the expressions of the movement converge, conscious that we are building a space for women in the most varied sectors of society.

Coty da Silva, from the community agents movement, invited the participants to reflect upon their task: to make clear the direction and present new proposals given the fact that, today, women are mobilized around concrete necessities and basic demands. If feminism does not develop more flexibility in its initial practice it could become restricted to being elite.

Maria Jose de Lima affirmed that feminism creates the possibilities for change that go through the individual. The continuation of discussion groups and of minor reflection are vital if the movement is not to lose its central

objective. She observed that in the actual organization of encounters, problems persist, proof that the numerical growth of the movement did not go hand in hand with a real transformation. During the encounters there continue to exist a division between manual work and individual work. The organizers do the manual work, repeating in public life the models of private life. The participants, on their part, act like guests, incapable of cleaning one ashtray or placing a chair in its place. She believes that in future encounters, it is necessary to develop a greater degree of solidarity that does not reproduce the traditional hierarchical organization but that offers an alternative system in which everybody participates.

One of the main points in the final discussion was the organizational strategies to be used in the next Latin American encounters. The majority of the women adamantly believed that these fulfill a fundamental role if feminism is to grow in the region, but how to respect the needs of all of the women present in a three-day encounter?

"Strictly feminist encounters should be made and then more general ones for all the women", suggested Lucero Gonzales, one of the organizers of the IV Encounter. She was answered by a chorus, uniting the majority of the feminists into one voice, "We are all feminists".

Marta Lamas, a Mexican feminist for over ten years, was less drastic than Lucero but admits that "the IV Encounter made us realize that it is not possible to continue organizing encounters so as to disseminate our ideas or to share our work with other people." It is necessary that the encounters be organized in such a way that a space be

provided for in-depth reflection on a practice.

It was not possible to arrive at a definitive conclusion. What is clear is that the organizational strategy that functioned until Mexico no longer functions. The next Latin American Encounter will be held in Argentina in 1990. This represents a three-year interum instead of two. During this period each country will try to organize encounters on a national and regional level. We await the results.

#### BRIEFS

Since 1980, El Salvador, a country of five million inhabitants, is living a bloody war that is decimating the population.

Faced with this scene of horror many women have decided to join forces and fight for human rights, demanding justice from the authorities in relation to political prisoners and the disappeared and supporting peace proposals.

"COMADRES", as it is popularly known, hopes to be able to count on the "moral and financial" support of women's groups in other countries. The address is: 2ª Ave. Norte y 17ª Calle Oriente N. 1003 (Planta Alta), San Salvador, El Salvador.

#### Specialized Course on Women's Studies

The University of Buenos Aires initiated a Specialized Course on Women's Studies in August 1987. The course "Women and Society: A Psychosocial Focus", directed by the Argentinian feminist and psychologist Gloria Bonder, will be presented for two years and is open to all university graduates.

#### In Defense of Women's Rights and of Life

Due to the political, social and economic difficulties in the Third World many of the victories obtained by women — including the legalized ones are no longer respected in practice.

Many women's groups throughout the world are fighting arduously to revert this trend and to awaken the public and government's attention to the gratuity of this injustice.

The isolation in which the majority of these fighting women live weakens the intensity of their message which is vitally important to society as a whole. This conclusion led a group of women to found a network, called ILSA, to exchange experiences and ideas with people, groups and organizations committed to the defense of women's rights.

ILSA's official launching occurred during the IV Latin American Feminist Encounter. The first initiative will be to put together a directory of all the institutions, government agencies and NGOs that use, systematically, legal elements for the defense of women's rights in their work.

Whoever considers themselves capable of participating in this effort should communicate with Socorro Ramirez, Network Coordinator, Apartado Aereo 077844, Bogota, Colombia.

In the last few months we have received letters from women's groups asking that we express our solidarity with the right to life:

— The Cali Women's Group sent us a dossier with newspaper clippings depicting the atrocities that confront the Colombian people. Everyday people are assassinated for no particular reason and the authorities seem to be incapable of staying this slaughter.

In order to express their disapproval and their fight in favor of life, the Cali Women's Group launched a campaign on November 25 (Latin American Day of Nonviolence Against Women) against the violence that occurred during the whole year of 1987.

Herewith, is the communiqué they sent us: "It is indispensable that campaigns be organized so as to advertise the violence of which we are victims here in Colombia. It is necessary that statements on an international level be sent to the Colombian authorities, demanding efficacy and efficiency in their

actions to combat this terror. Also, we urgently ask that committees be formed that can receive threatened men and women who decide to leave the country, as well as do the above work."

The authors of the communiqué, Dulcinea Cervantes and Yocasta Castro, ask that solidarity initiatives be communicated to them at the following addresses, respectively: Apartado Aereo 5138, Cali, Colombia; and Apartado Aereo 25124, Cali, Colombia.

Another solidarity request came from Pakistan asking for international pressure to stay the execution of Shahida Parveen and Mohammed Sarnar, 25 and 30 years old, respectively. Both were condemned by the Huddod Ordinance Law which proscribes the death sentence to all those who commit adultery. Obviously, women are the most affected.

Khalid Nadvi, one of the promoters of this campaign, asks that we send telegrams and letters to the Pakistani government asking for the lives of these two innocents. The information should be sent to: Mr. Khalid Nadvi, AERC, Box 8403, University of Karachi, Karachi 32, Pakistan.

Noyleen Heyzer Dawn's Crisis Research Team, Coordinator in the Southeast Pacific region, is author and editor of the books we present in our summary of the crisis in this edition of "DAWN INFORMS".

Noellen is a sociologist and coordinates the Women's Program of the Center for Development in Asia and the Pacific, in Kuala Lumpur, Singapore. Her work focuses on the impact that the development process has on women living in the rural and urban areas of Asia and the Pacific.

The books that we present here are extremely useful for all those interested in obtaining information on the effects that the changes, caused by the international division of labor, have on women.

**Missing Women, Development Planning in Asia and the Pacific** by Noeleen Heyzer, Asian and Pacific Development Centre, Kuala Lumpur, 1985.

The book, the result of a five-country project on "Women and Development Planning", underlines the growing concern for including women in the development planning process in the countries of Asia and the Pacific. Women both affect and are affected by development processes. Benefits to and contributions by women cannot be dealt with separately as "women's issues". These issues affect the prospects for efficiency, growth, distribution and social development of the nation as a whole.

**Missing Women**, consisting of studies from Bangladesh, Fiji, Malaysia, the Philippines and Sri Lanka, examines the extent to which women have been included or left out of national development processes. It also discusses factors that have brought about the absence of women in development planning and indicates some specific measures to include women's concerns and perspectives without which the development process, no matter how defined, is likely to encounter difficulties and defects.

**Working Women in South-East Asia: Development, Subordination and Emancipation** by Noeleen Heyzer. Open University Press. 1986.

The book examines the nature of women's lives and work in the South-East Asian nations of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. Noeleen Heyzer analyzes the social, economic and cultural forces which maintain and reproduce the subordination of women and describes the very varied contexts within which the lives of different groups of women are structured. The contexts examined include "traditional" work forms such as rural subsistence farming and the informal sector including domestic services, as well as newer work forms developed with South-East Asia's increasing incorporation in the World Economy - work on rubber plantations, in modern textile factories, and in the massively increased trade in female sexuality. Throughout, the author clarifies how these environments are changing under the impact of agrarian change, urbanization, bureaucratization and industrialization. The book shows to what extent

old forms of women's subordination have been reproduced or transformed, what opportunities the process of development offers for women's emancipation and to what extent women have organized themselves to resist subordination and to create opportunities for the achievement of equality both at national and at individual levels.

**Women Farmers and Rural Change in Asia - Towards Equal Access and Participation** - Edited by Noeleen Heyzer. Asian and Pacific Development Centre - Kuala Lumpur. 1987.

This book examines, in detail, women's experiences and perspectives of large-scale development programmes, rural projects and technological change. On the basis of a one-year research project covering China, India, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Philippines and Thailand, the chapters provide accounts of what is happening to women farmers in the process of rapid change.

"Women farmers and Rural Change" shows how large scale development projects have major transforming effects on the lives of women farmers, whether intended or not and how the dynamics of these projects and programmes have created different opportunities and barriers for different sub-groups of rural women and men in areas of employment income workload, access to new resources (technology, new skills, new knowledge) and to organizations and channels of decision making. Each chapter also identifies some practical interventions to provide decent and secure livelihoods for rural women and men who are relatively vulnerable and powerless and who are often neglected by development projects.

## LETTERS

### ARTS AND CRAFTS

I must thank you most sincerely for sending me your first copy of DAWN INFORMS. I received it in Nairobi where I work as a consultant on Women's Project and Development.

I must commend you for the great work you are doing. We in Kenya work very hard to improve the status of women by generally contributing to improving the standard of living of our communities.

Presently I am setting up a rural training Centre in a District called Baringo where we plan to have seminars for women. There we have over 400 grassroots women's groups whose leaders need a planning workshop.

I am interested in discussing the issue of handicrafts made by Third World Groups, the effects on women and ways and means of improving the situation. Lina Chesaro Tungo. P.O. Box 437. Kabarnet, Kenya. (E.A.)

### WOMEN AND MEDIA

It is very nice indeed to see a newsletter from DAWN. Congratulations.

Well, much is happening up here. We have launched TAMWA officially and on the 29th and 30th we will give a seminar on "Portrayal of Women in the Media in Tanzania, The Use of Language (in this case Kiswahili) in Portraying Women". By March 8th we intend to publish a women's Magazine "Sauti Ya Siti"

(Voice of Woman) Siti was the first woman to come out and use the media form (Singing) to lament on the situation of women in our society in the early part of the century, in Zanzibar.

Recently we carried out a workshop on the use of "Alternative" media by women and for their own empowerment. In Solidarity, Fatma Alloo - P.O. Box 6143, Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania.

### DOCUMENTATION CENTER

The Women's Dialogue Foundation works in the field of health, communication and self management. It conducts research, and assists and educates women.

There are some proposals being developed in 1988, one of these having to do with the creation of a documentation center that would be accessible to women who don't have other forms of resources.

Sara Gomes Acevedo, Fundación Dialogo Mujer. Apartado Aereo 43061. Bogotá - Colombia.

### CONGRATULATIONS

We read and enjoyed the Bulletin DAWN INFORMS, n° 1, Oct.-Dec. We congratulate ourselves for such an interesting and informative publication and we believe that it complies completely with its objective to be a means of communication. VEMEA, Apartado Postal 1912, Cuernavaca Mor. 62000, Mexico.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

The bibliographical references presented below are part of a larger bibliography that is being compiled by DAWN's secretariat and will be published shortly and refer to the papers sent to us by the Network's participants in the projects:

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- The Feminine Employment Situation in the Tobacco Cultivation Area of Corrientes, by Maria S. Foio. Department of Statistics and Research, Institute of Social Service, Corrientes, 1980.

### Women's Movements and Visions

- Women's Movements and Visions - The Women's Session at the International Conference in Nigeria, by Kole Ahmed Shettima. Research of the Institute of African Studies. Ibadan, Nigeria, 1987.

## BLACK WOMEN DEMAND THEIR RIGHT TO REFLECT

Last November the I State Encounter of Black Women was held in Rio de Janeiro with around 300 participants. During three days discussions were held behind closed doors on racial discrimination, violence, birth control, sexism, alternative medicine and on the meaning of the Centennial of the Abolition.

Our MUDAR sister, Lelia Gonzales, a black movement activist, described the encounter as an extraordinary event where it was possible to get a sense of the level of "conscientization" of women at home, in the community and in the country. "It became definitely clear that we have abandoned the posture of bemoaning our position in order to assume a critical attitude", she explained. According to her the significant presence of young women is another comforting fact because it guarantees the continuity of the movement.

A number of activities have been programmed for 1988 at the level of public institutions to commemorate the Centennial of the Abolition. Black women have refused to participate in these events declaring that the abolition is still in the process of becoming a reality and to negate this truth is to not recognize the discrimination that still weighs on their everyday lives. "It is important to remember", commented Regina Coeli dos Santos of SOS Racism, "that more than 50% of black women earn less than

the minimum wage and close to 60% of them are illiterate or semi-illiterate." The commemoration proposal will be substituted by an attitude of reflection, considered a priority at the moment for the black women's movement as it tries to consolidate its identity.

Lelia Gonzales, an anthropologist and deeply aware of the realities facing African women, affirmed that there are many similarities that still unite African women and black Brazilians. "It is possible to state that in both cases the women are capable of a lot of initiative in terms of strategies for survival." In Africa they are powerful merchants, capable of bringing down governments and ministries; in Brazil they are heads of households and community leaders.

Among the main activities programmed to inspire reflection and promote women gatherings is the seminar "The Struggles and Participation of Black Women in 1888 to Today", which will be held in Rio de Janeiro's Planetarium during the second week in May where African and black women from other states will participate.

A National Encounter of Black Women will be given around the 20th of November, date of Zumbi dos Palmares' death — hero of the Brazilian slaves. Other smaller regional encounters will also be organized throughout the year.

### AGENDA

Registration for the II Competition for research projects of the Latin American Program of Formation and Research on Women, will be open until March 12, 1988.

The program offers study scholarships for Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Chile, Argentina, Bolivia, Paraguay and Uruguay. Those interested should have previous experience in the area of research or in their daily work of groups of women in diverse kinds of organization.

One of the requirements for those selected will be to attend a course on theoretical and methodological formation that will be given at a place not yet decided.

The previous course was given in Lima, Peru, October 26 – November 14, 1987. The program was divided into four themes: Feminist Movements and Women's Studies, Debate on Gender Type, Production and Reproduction, Everyday Life, Microsocial Standards and Case Studies.

More information can be obtained by writing to: Programa Latinoamericano de Formación y Investigación sobre la Mujer, Secretaría Ejecutiva da CLACSO, Callao 875, piso 3, 1023 Buenos Aires, Argentina.

### Mythowomen, a Challenge to Myths

Next November at the City Cultural Center in Buenos Aires an interdisciplinary group of 50 women will organize Mythomines II, an exhibition on women and the myths linked to blood.

The project is being sponsored by various Argentinian government agencies, including the Subsecretariat of Women, and advised by a prestigious group of

biomedic researchers. Five subthemes of blood myths will be emphasized: Blood and Heredity, questions the myth of a superior race; Blood and Disease, refers to the myth of the victory of death; Blood and Violence, examines the myth of society conceived as a sick organism; Blood and Women, discusses the myths of the impure woman emphasizing the beliefs and mystifications in different cultures of menstruation, abortion, birth, contraceptives and menopause; Blood and the Devil, relates the myth of masculine superiority to that of women as the devil's creation.

The exhibition, programmed to last three weeks, will include artistic, scientific and literary activities: videos, paintings, sculpture, photography and dance, alternating with roundtable discussions, debates, audio-visuals, readings and book presentations. Mythomines II is the second event of the group that organized A Walk Through Myths, in November, 1986.

Women from other countries are invited to participate either with videos (VHS, NTSC or Pal), texts, drawings, photographic collages or with their own presence. Mythomines emphasizes the need to break the closed circle of myths that during centuries has determined our beliefs and our behaviour. "We are forever being asked to be faithful like Penelope, sinner like Eve, exemplary mother like Andromaca, passionate (silently) unto death like Eco, saintly like Mary, penitent like Magdalene, diabolical like Lilith, rash like Pandora, and so on, ad infinitum."

For additional information or to send proposals write to: Monique Astchul Urquiza, 1835 (1602) Florida, Provincia Buenos Aires, Argentina.

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After concluding that women should participate in the construction of a peace model without inequalities of any sort, some of the members of the International Peace Research Association (IPRA) decided to create a Study Group on Women, Militarization and Disarmament.

The group which is coordinated by the Chilean, Maria Helena Valenzuela, will participate in IPRA's XII General Conference, August 14-19, in Rio de Janeiro. The themes for debate will be militarization, people and women's liberation struggles, peace movements and women's rights, and human rights violations from a woman's perspective.

### Continental Women's Front: A Peace Proposal

The Continental Women's Front (Frente Continental de Mujeres – FCM) believes that political solidarity is also constructed by way of everyday actions. The FCM, founded in 1982, is a group of Latin American women who support the causes for peace.

Women from all sectors are involved: politicians, peasants, researchers, feminists and revolutionaries. The FCM is also related to other groups, organizations or women networks interested in themes related to peace. The economic crisis is one of the most important ones.

The FCM edits a monthly newsletter – and open forum for all women who wish to share their experiences with their sisters on the continent.

The address is: Frente Continental de Mujeres, Doris Tijerino, Apartado Postal 847, Managua, Nicaragua.