

DAWN INFORMS

DAWN ENGAGING IN THE RIO+20 PROCESS

Securing our rights, protecting our gains

The following is adapted from Anita Nayar's speech, DAWN's coordinator for Political Ecology and Sustainability, delivered on behalf of the Women's Major Group at the Rio+20 Intercessional, 15-16 December 2011, United Nations Building New York. In her speech, Anita highlights five calls to action imperative for the re-design and implementation of an engendered sustainable development model for the world's future.

Twenty years ago the global women's movement secured over 172 references and an entire chapter devoted to protecting and expanding women's rights in Agenda 21. Today, we are witnessing a retreat from the gains and promises made toward an engendered sustainable development paradigm. Regrettably, there now are little or no mention of women's conditions in the inter-governmental process leading up to Rio+20.

With a world spiraling into an abyss of seemingly never-ending crisis, the promise of engendered sustainable development becomes more far-fetched. There is now an urgent need to change mindsets and to accept that limitless economic growth does not equate with well-being or sustainability. New indicators and data now suggest that people's well-being is anchored on the creation of more equal societies.¹

FIRST CALL

For governments to reaffirm that the issue of gender is crosscutting in development processes and that gender equality and women's human rights are vital to achieving sustainable development. The renewed commitment of governments may be put to test in its development of the proposed Sustainable Development Goals. In drafting these goals, the world cannot lose sight of the interconnectivity of both processes.

SECOND CALL

For the world's leaders and decision makers to recognize the unequal and unfair burden that women carry in order to sustain collective well-being. For equality to be truly realized, the development of indicators that measure time spent by women on performing unpaid or underpaid work is crucial. By doing so, women's invisible labor and the value of social reproduction are both brought to the fore. Such will ensure that women's work is appropriately accounted for and recognized in macroeconomic policy and decision-making.

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Anita Nayar also represented DAWN in the Asia Pacific Preparatory Meeting for Rio +20 held from 19-20 October 2011. This meeting helped craft the regional statement of the Women's Major Group, which received endorsements from over 40 organizations in the Asia Pacific. The statement can be downloaded at <http://www.dawnnet.org/advocacy-cso.php?id=182>

The inter-governmental negotiation process continues with a series of meetings leading up to the Rio+20 conference. The planned dates and venues are as follows:

- March 19-23 First Informal Informals, UN, New York
- March 26-27 Third Inter-Sessional, UN, New York
- April 23- May 4 Second Informal Informals, UN, New York
- June 13-15 Third (Final) Preparatory Committee Meeting, Rio de Janeiro
- June 16-19 Days of Dialogue on Sustainable Development, Rio de Janeiro
- June 20-22 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio de Janeiro

For more information please see www.unesd2012.org

A parallel People's Summit will also be convened in Rio de Janeiro. The planned dates are as follows:

- Jun 5: World Environment Day – Preparatory mobilization for Rio+20
- Jun 15-16: Activities organized by local social movements
- Jun 17: Opening march of the People's Summit
- Jun 18-22: Self organized activities and the Permanent People's Assembly
- Jun 20: International day of mobilization
- Jun 23: Final message of the People's Summit

For more information, refer to www.rio20.net

Measuring the gender dimensions of well-being, rights and justice

The following is excerpted from the speech delivered by Gigi Francisco, DAWN's General Coordinator, at the Reflection Group Meeting, 17 July 2011 in Manila, Philippines. In her presentation, Gigi outlines DAWN's preliminary contributions toward the debate on Alternative Development Framework & Indicators.

Sustainable development has been central to DAWN discussions since its inception. DAWN strives to support in the development of sustainable policies and actions that facilitate equality, justice and a life-supporting world that benefits both women and men in diverse social groups and societies. A key principle that DAWN subscribes to is the notion that, similar to sustainability, actions toward ensuring well-being demand for a *common but differentiated responsibility* across and within countries.

Using a gendered lens, what follows is an inexhaustive list of possible dimensions and indicators that may be considered in developing indicators to help measure individual/collective well-being, rights and justice.

First, the promotion of individual human rights, which includes women's human rights, is a key principle that DAWN subscribes to. We are aware that internationally agreed rights are imperfect and incomplete, and require to be enriched by philosophical traditions other than western liberalism. We recognize that individual choices and rights are embedded in and constrained by a web of structurally inter-linked conditions (causes and implications), exacerbated by patriarchal practices, norms and cultural beliefs. There too exist few areas where individual rights, including the legal guarantees for women's reproductive rights, have been questioned in relation to a common good or a collective right. Therefore, *cultural transformation in regard to the process of socializing members of the community to principles of non-discrimination, respect for human rights, and more equal gender relations may be considered as a possible indicator.* We further support the proposal to

develop indicators for the realization of human rights based on *maximum available resources*. In addition, we view self-choice and decisions as important personal rights for women and men. Linked to this, we propose developing an indicator that *measures the capacity of women and men to exercise self-choice in marriage, family formation, sexual orientation and reproduction.*

Second, care or sustenance of life is focal to expanding our individual and collective well-being. The issue of care has been touched upon in several DAWN publications, this including the *Development, Crises, and Alternative Visions: Third World Women's Perspectives*, published in 1987, and in *Marketization of Governance*, published in 2000. Care issues are linked to poverty. Care work in many poor societies continues to be a burden mostly borne by women and girls. Initiatives to de-load or unburden women and girls in the short-term must therefore be accompanied in the long-term by a comprehensive feminist vision of a gender-equal share in unpaid domestic or care work. *Measuring time poverty between men and women, across generations*, can support us in examining the need for or progress in the implementation of a comprehensive feminist vision of equal distribution in the private sphere. **Monitoring time-utilization** between work and leisure activities for both can offer insight into time poverty.

Still in relation to care and poverty, we need to continue examining incomes, livelihoods, shelter, all found in other indices. Strengthening indicators that *measure women's equal access to and co-responsibility/control/ownership over communal/community resources such*

as land, garden plots, and shelter, are essential in making women equal partners in society.

Third, interrogating social relationships, as these relate to care and bodily integrity, is also crucial. We need to be able to address the physical security of women and other groups in the community/society by tracking *incidences and/or the prevalence of hate crimes*. We need to also develop an indicator that would *measure the prevalence of family-based violence, most of whose victims are women, children and the aged.*

Fourth, and linked to the environment, we support calls for the institutionalization and implementation of a precautionary principle toward trade, investment and technology development. *All these must be subjected through an assessment that elucidates how the exploitation and appropriation of natural resources contributes to the common good. Their social content, risks and rights implications must be clarified.* We also support calls for further examining the content of growth, and for promoting ecologically sound farming systems and forms of exchanges that promote the tangible and intangible benefits of empathy, solidarity and social responsibility.

Fifth, including indicators that *measure women's political leadership and their active participation* at all levels of governance continues to be a relevant area of study.

Finally we propose for more engagement and further conversation on measuring the psychological aspects of well-being, rights and justice. If we are going to pursue measurements based on subjective indicators, we need to ask ourselves how these may be implemented.

Advocating for a CEDAW general recommendation to strengthen the rights of women in conflict and post-conflict areas

Kumudini Samuel, DAWN's coordinator for Political Restructuring and Social Transformation, represents DAWN in the global initiative Colombo Team that includes IWRAW AP, WILP, GNWP, WMC and WILD for Human Rights initiative of the UC Berkeley Law School. The Colombo Team advocates for a strong General Recommendation to CEDAW on Women in Conflict and Post Conflict Situations. She made an intervention at the CEDAW Committee Day of General Discussion on the new GR in New York on 18 July 2011.

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is currently in the process of elaborating a General Recommendation on Women in Conflict and Post-conflict Situations. On 18 July 2011, the Committee conducted a day of general discussion and presented its concept note to a group of UN agencies and civil society entities. A number of keynote speakers and civil society representatives addressed the Committee making over thirty oral submissions on a range of relevant themes. While the format of the discussion did not allow for interactive participation, it elicited a commitment from the Committee to engage in a process of regional consultation for the elaboration of the general recommendation (GR).

Ms. Pramila Patten, Member of CEDAW and Chair of the Working Group elaborating the General Recommendation presented the scope of the GR and discussed the role of CEDAW in advancing women's human rights in conflict and post-conflict contexts. In response, civil society representatives placed before the Committee some key concerns. Among the key issues brought to the attention of the Committee were:

- The *use of sexual violence as a weapon of war* and the need to increase monitoring and reporting mechanisms for sexual violence, forced prostitution and trafficking, and address impunity and reparations as a part of transitional justice and peacekeeping;
- The *impact of small arms* on women and the increase in domestic and societal violence;
- The *culture and context of impunity* and the need to address its legal framework --ground its framework in human rights in order to extend its scope beyond violence and immediate humanitarian relief to also include numerous mechanisms that

assist women in exercising all their rights entrenched in CEDAW;

- *Forced displacement, migration, trafficking and statelessness* as a consequence of conflict;

- The right to work, the *participation of women* in political and public life;

- *Enhanced demobilization, disarmament and reintegration (DDR) programs*, the gendered needs of ex-combatants, post-conflict militarized states and Security Sector Reform;

- The *special vulnerabilities of conflict* including disability, widowhood and single women heads of households;

- *Lack of female representation* in peace processes and in decision-making during and post-conflict; and

- The *discriminatory use of religion and culture* -- freedom of movement, expression and association for women (including women of different sexual orientation), and the need to ensure sexual and reproductive health and rights.

DAWN called on for the Committee to define obligations of States for conduct and

policies effecting rights extraterritorially highlighting the fact that obligations under the international humanitarian law (IHL) can be strengthened with reference to CEDAW; there is a need to address the lack of clear standards and accountability for humanitarian organizations, external states and international financial institutions that play a role in conflict and post-conflict reconstruction and recovery; and there is a need to redress governments' inability to hold various institutions accountable.

Civil society groups also requested the Committee to provide them with a plan of action and timeline for the drafting process, including planned continuing consultations with them.

The GR is still in a very preliminary stage of elaboration. The promised regional and thematic consultations will soon be held. It is imperative for the women's movement to engage with the committee at a substantive level to ensure that the GR will protect and strengthen the rights of women and girls living in situations of conflict, transition and in post-conflict states.

DAWN together with IWRAW AP, WILP, GNWP and other technical experts from the UC Berkeley Law School (identified as the Colombo Team) have been part of a global initiative to move forward collectively in support of the GR, with rigorous analysis and treatment of the issue through the various CEDAW processes. At a global consultation in Colombo in October 2010, participants discussed and analyzed the following as required critical components of a GR:

- Time, justice, the creation of democratic space and the diversity of women in conflict;
- The relationship between calls to tradition and protection of rights during conflict, transition and post-conflict;
- Women's rights amidst the diversity of conflict settings;
- Lack of standing, diaspora populations and displacement, statelessness and occupation; and
- Defining the obligations of states for conduct and policies effecting rights extraterritorially.

DAWN hopes for a range of discussions of diverse realities and experiences in conflict, transition and post-conflict societies to emerge globally as this will help substantiate and inform the elaboration of the GR, and while strategies are being put in place to support the work of CEDAW.

DAWN oral statement to the CEDAW committee

Full transcript of Kumudini Samuel's speech delivered on the Day of General Discussion on Protection of Women's Human Rights in Conflict & Post-conflict Situations, 18 July 2011, United Nations, New York.



Photo by Michael Loadenthal

Thank you, Madam Chair. I represent the South based feminist network, DAWN - Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era. One of our core areas of work is on political restructuring and social transformation particularly in the context of protracted conflicts and post-conflict transitions. We applaud the CEDAW Committee for this very important and timely deliberation on a General Recommendation to protect women's human rights in conflict and post-conflict contexts. I come from Sri Lanka, a country ravaged by over 30 years of war, and is currently dealing with complex postwar dilemmas, particularly for women, in the absence of a negotiated political solution to its ethnic conflict.

I wish to focus on defining the obligations of States for conduct and policies effecting rights extraterritorially.

First, the new General Recommendation must recognize the diversity of actors responsible for rights violations in conflict and post-conflict settings and find ways to hold such actors responsible, whether they act within their State of origin or extraterritorially. These include States that have a more distant but none-the-less grave impact on conflict,

including troop or arms contributions or bilateral militarization policies. States that play an important role as third parties in peace processes and post-conflict transitions must also be reminded to comply with their obligations under the treaty even where they are acting outside of their sovereign territory.

Second, as with states operating extraterritorially we are concerned about the impacts of international financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank in conflict settings, particularly their lack of transparency in funding, budgetary and investment strategies and the inability of governments to hold them accountable. There is an urgent need to examine how such diverse actors and processes (including multi and bi-lateral trade and aid) can be linked to the obligations of States parties to protect women's human rights under CEDAW.

Third, while the Geneva Conventions address non-State belligerents in the context of internal armed conflict, international humanitarian law is not as encompassing of gender equality as CEDAW. Hence there is a need for CEDAW to address the role of non-State

actors in conflict contexts as they impinge on a wide range of women's human rights.

Finally, we are also concerned about the lack of clear standards and accountability mechanisms for addressing the actions of international organizations, including UN Agencies, humanitarian aid organizations and other bodies that play a role in conflict and post-conflict reconstruction and development.

We therefore urge that States parties be held accountable for inaction and a lack of 'due diligence' with respect to acts committed by private, non-State actors. The scope of rights concerns related to non-State actors must be expanded beyond armed groups and we need clarity on the legal basis for holding these actors to account. CEDAW must find ways to link the actions of such actors to legal obligations of States parties in order to more completely address rights violations in these increasingly globalized settings.

Thank you, Madam Chair and members of the Committee, for including the views of civil society in the process of elaborating this critical general recommendation. We hope for our continued engagement in this process.

Development assistance for health: a political exercise

Adapted from the presentation "Financing for and Governing Global Health" delivered by Françoise Girard, representing the International Women's Health in the DAWN Training Institute held last 9-27 October 2011 in Siem Reap, Cambodia.

How are resources for development assistance for health (DAH) decided upon? Does money go to those countries with the greatest burden of disease? Is the number of life years lost to sickness or illness used as an indicator in the decision-making process? Is it safe to assume that the poorest countries receive the most development assistance for health? Which factors are considered in allocating or distributing development assistance for various health issues in a country? Who decides when child health requires more investment over HIV or the other way around?

Using data produced by the Institute of Health Matrix and Evaluation (IHME, 2010), there are inconsistencies evident in the decision-making process around DAH. Examining the health profile of each country, it was reported that in spite of the relatively low 'burden of disease' carried by some countries, countries like Zambia,

Argentina, Colombia, Ghana, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Uganda and Malawi were among the more fortunate recipients of DAH. In stark contrast to this, countries like the Democratic Republic of Congo, which has a higher 'burden of disease', is reported to receive funding that is not proportional to the country's needs. Interestingly, trends also show that some countries receive bloated budgets for specific health issues.

Marked as hot commodities by more privileged countries, the phenomenon of *donor darling* is most perplexing, unjust and highly politicizes the decision-making process around DAH. The biased distribution of DAH poses great problems for countries in great need and frees countries with the capacity to pay for their own healthcare from certain responsibilities -- not only to their populace as well as the world's poor.

Source: Institute for Health Matrix and Evaluation. Financing Global Health 2010: Development assistance and country spending in economic uncertainty. Seattle, WA: IHME, 2010.



Françoise Girard

Agriculture at risk across the regions

Adapted from the presentation delivered by Norma Maldonado, environmental activist from Guatemala at the DAWN Training Institute held last 9-27 October 2011 in Siem Reap, Cambodia.

Compared to previous decades, governments around the world have failed to pay sufficient attention to agriculture. Each region has its unique set of problems in relation to agriculture. For instance, lands in the North Asian region are losing out to desertification and overgrazing of pastures. In the Pacific and Southeast Asia, flooding linked to rising sea levels have destroyed hectares and hectares of crops, putting lives, livelihoods and food security at risk. In the Caribbean region, agriculture is avoided like the plague by some of its constituents owing to its historical links to slavery. African countries on the other hand have opted to focus more on mining than agriculture, while countries in Latin America have opened itself up to the use of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) and chemical-based fumigation.

Many people are unaware of the side effects brought about by GMOs or commercial seeds. To many people, it is a quick solution in enhancing the

quality of food, but this too has serious consequences. GMOs have been found to cause infertility and illnesses such as prostate cancer and breast cancer. Some reports claim that companies manufacturing commercial seeds are also into the pharmaceutical business. This implies that the very same companies that produce commercial seeds manufacture medicines that help cure illnesses linked to their products. Ironically, the food that is supposed to provide people with sustenance and the produce that people consume nowadays may at times, do more harm than good.

In many countries, it was reported that crops with the best quality are often those that are exported. Poorer quality produce is left for the consumption of the population of countries where these products originally come from.

There are many more examples that depict distorted and unethical arrangements and business practice in agriculture. These pose great risks to the

survival of humanity and the adoption of permaculture -- or the development of self-sufficient and sustainable agricultural systems -- is now long overdue. Small-scale farming, agro-ecology and boycotting genetically modified commercial seeds in growing agricultural crops are small steps that may be taken in redressing an agricultural base in deep trouble.



Norma Maldonado

DAWN TRAINING INSTITUTE 2011



The fourth global DAWN Training Institute (DTI) was held in Siem Reap, Cambodia from 9 to 27 October 2011. Twenty-seven young women activists from Latin America, Asia, Pacific, Caribbean, and Africa attended this three-week training. The programme draws on DAWN's Southern feminist analysis which inter-links issues under the four themes of Political Economy of Globalisation (PEG), Political Ecology and Sustainability (PEAS), Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), and Political Restructuring and Social Transformation (PRST).



"We have armed ourselves with new thinking and ideologies and it's time to think what we can do and what we can act on when we have these things when we go back to our home"
-Wang Jue (China)



"On behalf of the DAWN team and the secretariat, thank you so much for your active participation in the learning process as well as for your openness and cooperative spirit which you have contributed to the success of the DTI 2011"
-Zo Randriamaro,
DAWN Training Coordinator

"I will remember what Zo told us- we could change history if we want to but we shouldn't be victims of history"
-Rosa Vilchez Caceres (Peru)



"All the topics that were chosen for the debates were very relevant and the kind of topics were not just a yes or no position, which forces us to think about different arguments"
- Roshni Nuggehalli (India)



"It was very useful for me to go through the exercise, and see how many issues were inter-linked with each other"
- Tonya Haynes (Barbados)



"During the group work it was interesting to see the similarities between our inter-linkages despite the different areas we work with"
-Shiela Mulli (Kenya)



"We were able to build our skills on how to deliver the content we've been learning so far in a structured manner and a creative one"
- Filomena Tuivanualevu (Fiji)



Cairo@20 Strategy Meeting, Mexico City

Cai Yiping, DAWN's Executive Committee member, reports on a strategy meeting for Cairo+20, convened by the IWHC, RESURJ and DAWN on 3-5 December 2011, Mexico City.

Last 3 - 5 December 2011, the International Women's Health Coalition (IWHC), Realizing Sexual and Reproductive Justice (RESURJ), and Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN) convened the Cairo @ 20 Strategy Meeting in Mexico City. Gathering 30 feminist activists working on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), the inter-generational meeting produced a shared vision of SRHR and developed a strategic work plan to advance the SRHR agenda in significant international fora, such as the Rio+20 in 2012, Cairo+20 in 2014 and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Review in 2015.

The meeting tackled three key issues: comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services; sexual and reproductive rights; and adolescents and youth. Under each issue, an exercise mapping the key stakeholders and intergovernmental and NGO processes in SRHR was conducted, and strategies for targeted engagement with each actor (i.e. civil society, government and donors) discussed.

During the meeting, the participants also reaffirmed the centrality of implementing a comprehensive SRHR "package" towards achieving the right to health and the Cairo Goal of Universal Access to Reproductive Health. Such a comprehensive package will need to include maternal health, safe abortion, family planning, STIs and HIV, comprehensive sexuality education and the protection of human rights.

The meeting reiterated the need for strengthening political commitment, overcoming financial and legal obstacles, and transforming weak health systems, adverse social and economic conditions, violence and discrimination. All of these were perceived to impede women from accessing the necessary health services and information that allow them to make informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive lives.

During the meeting, the rallying call entitled "**Our Rights, Our Lives: Women's Call to Action towards Cairo+20**" was developed. Supported by many SRHR activists, the contents of the call demand for immediate and sustained action, political will, and accountability over the following:

- the implementation of universal and equitable access to quality, comprehensive and integrated sexual and reproductive health services that includes counselling and provides information to women and adolescent girls in ways that respect their human

rights and diversity;

- the roll-out of programs that empower women, particularly adolescent girls and young women, such as a comprehensive sexuality education that introduces and allows women to familiarize themselves with their bodies and themselves, gain bodily integrity;

- the protection and promotion of reproductive rights as human rights, and lobbying for the international adoption of sexual rights as human rights; and

- the facilitation of young women's leadership roles at all levels and types of decision-making on sexual and reproductive rights and health, and ensuring the meaningful participation of women's organizations in the design of health and development programs.

To read and endorse "Our Rights, Our Lives: Women's Call to Action towards Cairo+20" on the DAWN website, click [HERE](#).



2nd Asia capacity building workshop on human rights & economic justice, Manila

In collaboration with the Center of Concern, the Agribusiness Action Initiative and the Asian Farmer's Association, DAWN convened 18 activists working in rural areas and the agricultural sector for the capacity building workshop A Bottom-Up Approach to Righting Financial Regulation held last 5-6 December 2011 in the Philippines. The workshop spun off from an earlier initiative that produced the Kuala Lumpur Guidelines, which linked the issue of human rights with advocacy work on trade, investment, financial rules and regulation.

With increased understanding of the growth of private sector investment

in agriculture and food systems in the region, principally in the Mekong sub-region, the workshop was largely attended by delegates from the Mekong sub-region with some representatives from Indonesia and the Philippines. The workshop primarily aimed to: 1) build the capacity of its participants to develop nationwide financial and investment regulation proposals that facilitate human rights and development; 2) establish clear links between financial regulation and selected issues undertaken by human rights, grassroots and peasant/rural-based movements; and 3) identify global issues, such as transnational agribusiness firms,

coaching participants on how to mobilize globally and launch effective advocacy strategies.

The workshop represented a first step in generating Asia-wide conversations around the linkage of financial regulation and human rights. The workshop resulted in the collective identification of urgent themes for research and global advocacy building. These are:

- 1) Financing for production and the plight of farmers in the real economy

- conduct a region-wide mapping of the impacts of financial regulation on both women and men farmers;

- understand the financial regulation framework for the region as designed by the ASEAN; and

- organize institutional capacity building trainings and workshops on financial regulation for CSOs.

- 2) Food price speculation and the farmer in the real economy

- strengthen women and men farmer cooperatives and eliminate the need for brokers;

- support capacity building initiatives for women and men farmers; and

- make loan available for women and men farmers to facilitate their (financial) capacity, and boost the farming sector as a whole.

- 3) Public finance and budgeting for agriculture

- in Lao PDR, obtain funding for water conservation activities in partnership with the community to establish seed and domestic animal banking system and reforestation;

- provide regular orientation programs to poor farmers (women and men) on government programs and services;

- enhance existing government mechanisms that promote CSO participation; and

- provide a platform for sharing best practices on sustainable agricultural practices, linking small farmers to the market, enhancing the value chain, and integrating human rights in government agri- programs and services.



The commentary by Marina Durano, DAWN's Coordinator for Political Economy of Globalization, on the World Bank's World Development Report (WDR) 2012: Gender Equality and Development was published by the Bretton Woods Update in its November/December 2011 issue.

In her commentary, Durano raised that the WDR 2012 "does not mention whether gender equality considerations will inform a reformulation of Bank assessment tools used to determine lending allocation, such as the Country Policy and Institutional Assessment, in order to ensure that Bank policies and their macroeconomic policy advice support the gender equality aspirations set out in the WDR".

In her examination of the implications paper that outlines the WDR 2012's recommendations, Durano also asserted that the "implications paper does not explain how the Bank will work along with other institutions promoting gender equality, such as the UN Human Rights Council." Cognizant of the Bank's superior funding, this becomes a serious concern as the Bank is observed to have greater influence on developing country government policies, over the UN Human Rights Council.

Marina Durano's comments are reported in the Bretton Woods Update (November/December 2011) article, "Bank's Gender WDR: Too little, too late?" which is available for download [HERE](#).

To read more about the Kuala Lumpur Guidelines in the article -- Introduction to the KL Guidelines: Demystifying the Legal Language of Human Rights & Linking This to Economic Policy, by Aldo Caliarì on the DAWN website, click [HERE](#).

Intellectuals and Intellect Workers: The Role of the Educator in Today's Fierce World

The following is excerpted from the keynote speech of Gita Sen, DAWN's founding and Executive Committee member, delivered at the ICAE VIII World Assembly, held last 15-16 June 2011 in Malmö, Sweden. In her speech, Gita shares the scholarly life of an educator by the name of Paul Baran, suggesting that it is in the courage to question the "normalized" and delve into the "unknown" where we can successfully face the challenges posed by today's fierce world.

As someone who has been involved in education practically all my life, I'm very aware of how easy it is to fall into a dichotomy of those who know and those who need to know -- us versus them. The value of ICAE's commitment in breaking those kinds of boundaries is something that over the years, ICAE has been bringing to the discussion of not only adult learning but learning in general. Breaking away from these boundaries is not an easy task. Apart from our own engrained tendencies, becoming a lifelong learner means venturing into unknown territory, where certainties are shaky. Lifelong learning, therefore, is challenging because it involves engaging with those shaky certainties, those dark corners that push us beyond where our comfort zones lie.

As the title of my presentation suggests, we now find ourselves in a fierce world that is dominated by the reconfiguration of economic, political and military might, coupled with uncertainties linked to the financial and economic crisis, climate change, food security etc. As history has shown, these types of rearrangements are not new. We ask ourselves, is our sense of crisis today worse than the 1950s when we were sitting in the middle of Cold War rhetoric and the aftermath of the atomic bomb? I'm not so sure. If any, what is for certain is that the serious challenges we face require for deepening our ways of interrogation -- a type of interrogation that goes beyond what many of us have been employing so far.

This brings me to the role of the intellectual. Almost 50 years ago, a gentleman by the name of Paul Baran made the distinction between intellect workers and intellectuals. A Stanford University professor who wrote a short essay called "The Commitment of the Intellectual" in 1961, Baran also wrote essays about the political economy of backwardness. Baran was, and Gunder Frank sort of saw him that way, a sort of precursor of the Dependencia School in Latin America.

By the time that Baran was writing



his essay in 1961, he felt overwhelmingly frustrated with his fellow economists in Stanford and what he called the intellect workers -- defined by Baran as those who believe in the narrowness of one disciplinary expertise as opposed to searching for a more holistic and integrated approach to understanding the world. He got fed up with the persistent rationalization and justification of the social order that surrounded him in 1961. He grew tired of what he called the practice of "ethical neutrality" in research that kept intellect workers from making value judgments in the name of rigor and objectivity. He argued that we have more intellect workers in today's world thanks to the divide between mental and manual labor with which we have been living throughout the 20th century.

Following Baran, the fierce new world requires for the educator to be an intellectual, not an intellect worker. We need the educator to cross boundaries, to recognize, as many of us do, that values do not drop from the sky, but are built into society. We know that the truth is difficult to ascertain. The scientist, the educator has to be persistent in his/her search for the truth, and in challenging what is constructed as truth where needed.

Baran was a Marxist, but he was a humanist above all. The tradition of humanism, of reason and the possibility of moving beyond the crisis that we are

confront with, requires a level of courage, of integrity and ability that rests not in big places but quite often in small ones. There are many perennial questions. And while the answers keep changing, the stance of the intellectual, the true educator is also perennial. The true educator is grounded on openness and humanism, has the willingness to cross boundaries, and is able to take a stand on the basis of the best current knowledge available.

Educators will need to take a stand. Ecology's Precautionary Principle and the Do No Harm Principle applied in public health must not completely restrict us from searching for answers and most importantly, taking the stand of the voiceless. The role of the educator is to interrogate what has been normalized as the advocates in gender justice have been doing for a long time, and, more importantly, to leave behind the hubris of the educator.

Discomfort is a great tool for self-learning. It is in exactly at the moment wherein we are uncomfortable when we should ask ourselves, "What is there for me to learn in this?" It's a challenge that has to be met anew in each generation, in each historical moment.

This moment is ours to be true intellectuals and educators!

Gita Sen's keynote speech in the ICAE VIII World Assembly is available for viewing [HERE](#).

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Securing our rights, protecting our gains

Women have historically borne the brunt of economic crises. In the absence of or failing social insurance systems, women's unpaid and undervalued labor acts have consistently served as stabilizers from deep economic shocks. The multiple burdens carried by women have serious consequences on women's health and must be redressed appropriately.

THIRD CALL

Create and implement a universal social protection floor³ that will entail basic social security, health care and comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services. This is critical especially for women living in poverty who are undertaking precarious reproductive work and in many places, are deprived of their bodily, reproductive and sexual rights. The world simply must respond to the demands of the "99%" and pursue policies that favor human rights and social provisioning over profit.

A human rights-based approach to policy making is therefore essential. Such would also monitor, regulate and hold corporations accountable for their ecologically and socially unsustainable practices. This means protecting small farmers from financial speculation and land grabbing (including those for large scale agrofuel plantations); banning technologies such as geo-engineering and GMOs, and subjecting all new technologies to comprehensive assessments that elucidate their environmental health implications; phasing out nuclear energy and in place of this, seeking fresh and up-scaled financial resources to provide essential energy access to women in developing countries, shifting the world to an era of renewable energy.

FOURTH CALL

Bring to a halt the process of privatization and commodification of people's commons and protect women's rights to land, water, energy and other resources, including food, health, education and employment. This will be to the benefit of all humankind.

Finally, a disturbing return to neo-Malthusian arguments linking population with the food and climate crises is observed. Based on two examples drawn from contributions to the Zero Draft for Rio+20, some UN agencies have claimed that the "early stabilization of world population would make a crucial contribution to realizing sustainable development."⁴ Demographers on the other hand have written that "slowing population growth makes many environmental problems easier to solve and development easier to achieve."⁵ These arguments represent a serious regression from and misinterpretation of the Rio, Cairo and Beijing agendas.

FIFTH CALL

Recover previous global consensus that "the major cause of the continued deterioration of the global environment is the unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, particularly in industrialized countries, which are a matter of grave concern and aggravate poverty and imbalances."⁶ Policy responses to population in Rio+20 must align with the Cairo principles of not instrumentalizing women's bodies, rather prioritizing women's and girls' sexual and reproductive rights and health in the context of fulfilling their sustainable livelihoods, meeting basic needs, protecting their rights, and creating an enabling environment for their empowerment, leadership and political participation.

Sources:

¹ Pickett and Wilkinson webpage

² Social Watch webpage

³ Social protection floor: for a fair and inclusive globalisation from the Social Protection Advisory Group chaired by USG Michelle Bachelet.

⁴ Joint Submission by UNFPA and the Population Division

⁵ The Laxenburg Declaration on Population and Sustainable Development

⁶ Agenda 21

DAWN IN ADVOCACY SPACES

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- **Oct 9 to 27 – DAWN Training Institute 4th Global Edition**, Siem Reap, Cambodia
- **Oct 19 to 20** – Anita Nayar at the **Asian and Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting** organised by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in collaboration with the UN Environment Program and the Asian Development Bank, Seoul, South Korea.
- **Oct 24** – Marina Durano delivers speech on “Improved gender responsive monitoring and evaluation indicators for more effective accountability” at the **KIGEPE and UNDP Symposium Promoting Gender Equality, Aid Effective and Sustainable Development**, Seoul, South Korea

NOVEMBER 2011

- **Nov 3** – Anita Nayar delivers speech on “Perspectives on Major Stakeholders-

Women” in the **Indian National Consortium**, New Delhi, India

DECEMBER 2011

- **Dec 3 to 5 – “Cairo @ 20 Strategy Meeting”** convened by Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN), International Women’s Health Coalition (IWHC), and Realizing Sexual and Reproductive Justice (RESURJ), Mexico City
- **Dec 5 & 6** – Gigi Francisco in “**A Bottom-up Approach to Financial Regulation: Capacity Building Workshop for Asia**” organized by DAWN with the Center for Concern, Agribusiness Action Initiative (AAI-Asia), and AFA, Manila, Philippines
- **Dec 9 & 10** – Gita Sen delivers plenary address at the “**ICPD Beyond 2014 Civil Society Stakeholder Group Consultation**” Istanbul, Turkey
- **Dec 15 & 16** – Anita Nayar at the

2nd Intersessional Meeting of Rio +20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, UN Secretariat, New York USA

JANUARY 2012

- **Jan 9 & 10** – Kumudini Samuel at the **UN Women South Asia Regional Meeting on Women, Peace, and Security**, New Delhi, India
- **Jan 24 to 29** – Gigi Francisco and Nicole Bidegain at the **Rio+20 Thematic World Social Forum**, Porto Alegre, Brazil; Gigi delivers speech in the Reflection Group
- **Jan 19** – Anita Nayar in the “Global Governance: Shifts and Turns” panel at the **Heinrich Böll Foundation Gender Equity and Sustainable Development Conference**, Washington D.C. USA



DAWN INFORMS is published by Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN), a network of feminist scholars and activists from the economic South, engaged in feminist research and analysis of the global environment, and working for economic and gender justice, and democratic and sustainable development. A limited number of copies are printed for free distribution to women in the South. The electronic version is nonetheless available at www.dawnnet.org. Enjoy reading!

PUBLISHED JAN 2012

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