

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

*The following is excerpted from Gigi Francisco's speech, DAWN General Coordinator, delivered 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 demands 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.