

# DAWN INFORMS

Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era

GREETINGS  
FROM

DAWN

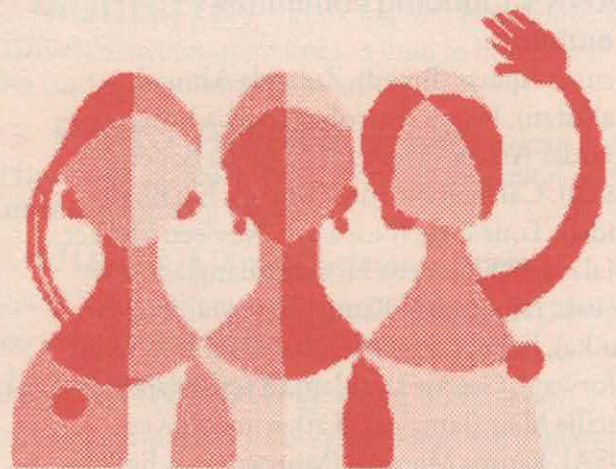
AT

20 años

DAWN's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations culminate this month with a gathering in Cape Town, South Africa, to meet with friends old and new and to push the debates that DAWN has vigorously joined during the past two decades in new directions.

It is a time to mark both new beginnings for DAWN and to reflect on the women's movement, and future challenges. DAWN's new General Coordinator, Bene Madunagu, will take over from Claire Slatter, who has coordinated DAWN from Fiji for almost eight years, and the Secretariat will move to Nigeria. DAWN will move forward in a new four-year programme cycle, 2004-2008, which will further focus its work more pointedly on interlinking its four main themes: Political Economy of Globalisation, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, Political Restructuring and Social Transformation, and Sustainable Livelihoods and Environmental Justice. Interlinkages work aims to bring gender issues, specifically women's sexual and reproductive rights issues, centrally into both the development analysis and advocacy agendas of the growing global movements for economic justice, democracy and human rights. A new book bringing together DAWN's interlinkages analysis is currently in process, and will be 'previewed' during the Anniversary celebrations. The DAWN Training Institute, which graduated 28 young feminists from its inaugural offering last year in Bangalore, will be a regular ongoing event dedicated to strengthening feminist capacity for global and regional advocacy work for gender justice and to building a new generation of South feminist leaders. A group of DTI graduates are attending the Anniversary and participating in the inter-generational dialogue. Other events on the programme provide opportunity to reflect on challenges for the feminist movement, in shifting the terms or parameters of the debate on rights and economic justice, gender justice and erotic justice, and in making the women's/feminist movement a more effective political actor.

DAWN warmly welcomes all who join us in the celebration of our 20th Anniversary and looks forward to strengthening our bonds and further developing our valued partnerships.



development alternatives  
with **WOMEN** for a new era

This issue of *DAWN Informs* looks back -- and forwards -- at issues and processes with which DAWN has been engaged over the past 20 years, reviewing some of the analyses and strategies and counting some of the gains of the women's movement. The issue contains extracts from a selection of DAWN's keynote papers and publications, following activities up to the present moment, with a glimpse at the future.



# Following the DAWN

## Beginning in 1984 Bangalore

In August of 1984, Devaki Jain chaired a meeting in Bangalore, India, at which a group of feminists reflected on what they had learned of women's experience of 'development' through their work as researchers and activists in the UN Decade for Women, 1975-85, and prepared for the end of decade UN Conference on Women in Nairobi.

"[*Development, Crises, and Alternative Visions* Sen and Grown 1987] is a classic in the field of Women and Development (WID) and in the feminist literature." Moghadam, in Stromquist (1998) *Women in the Third World, an Encyclopaedia of Contemporary Issues*.

## To Nairobi 1985

The resulting platform document prepared for the 1985 Nairobi NGO Forum reflected the collective wisdom of the group and strongly critiqued the growth model of development. It analysed the linkages between systemic crises of debt, food/famine, energy/fuel, and militarism/political and cultural conservatives and their impacts, including rising poverty, deteriorating social services, environmental degradation, food insecurity and religious fundamentalism. Published as *Development, Crises, and Alternative Visions: Third World Women's Perspectives* by Gita Sen and Caren Grown, it became a DAWN best-seller.

## DAWN's founding committee members:

Neuma Aguiar (Brazil), Zubeida Ahmad (Pakistan), Peggy Antrobus (Barbados), Lourdes Arizpe (Mexico), Nirmala Banerjee (India), Carmen Barroso (Brazil), Ela Bhatt (India), Tone Bleie (Norway), Noeleen Heyzer (Malaysia), Hameeda Hossain (Bangladesh), Devaki Jain (India), Kumari Jayawardene (Sri Lanka), Isabel Largaia (Cuba), Ragnhild Lund (Norway), Geertje Lycklama (Netherlands), Lucille Mair (Jamaica), Katharine McKee (USA), Fatima Mernissi (Morocco), Achola Pala Okeyo (Kenya), Marie-Angelique Savane (Senegal), Gita Sen (India), Claire Slatter (Fiji).

"[In *Development, Crises, and Alternative Visions*] DAWN called for an approach to women's development that recognises the importance of global and gender inequities." Connelly et al (2003) *Theoretical Perspectives on Gender and Development*: Canadian International Development Agency commenting on the way the 'Women in Development' approach was challenged and replaced with 'Gender and Development.'

## Rio 1992

The UNCED Earth Summit and Global Forum, Rio de Janeiro, June 1992, at which DAWN held a panel on Debt and Trade, drafted a Declaration by Women, and brought into debate the burden on women of the devastating and diverse consequences of Structural Adjustment Policies. DAWN launched a booklet, *Environment and Development: Grass Roots Women's Perspective*, by Rosina Wiltshire.

## Cairo 1994

At the International Conference on Population and Development, DAWN launched a platform analysis, *Population and Reproductive Rights: Feminist Perspectives from the South*, by Sonia Correa, and was amongst those who initiated a Women's Declaration on Population Policies.

"[*Population and Reproductive Rights* is] a stimulating and fascinating book in both content and origins...DAWN's forward-looking strategies hinge on the indivisibility of health, including reproductive health, and basic human rights." *New World* (UK) Janet Blackman of the University of Hull.



# journey to the future

## 1999 Seattle

The World Trade Organisation Ministerial Meeting in Seattle was the site of DAWN activism in trade, linking reproduction and production in an enlarged perspective and launching its first WTO discussion paper *Free Trade or Fair Trade* by Mariama Williams. DAWN Caribbean and Centre of Concern held a post-Seattle meeting that resulted in the International Gender and Trade Network.

## 2000 +5 Reviews

Women were 'reaping the whirlwind' in the +5 processes, at which the mood and tone of negotiations were harsher than expected from women's perspective, but "we survived" Beijing+5 in New York even made some gains. At WSSD+5 in Geneva DAWN simultaneously launched its global analysis, *Marketisation of Governance* by Vivienne Taylor, with a video. At ICPD+5, DAWN launched *Implementing ICPD: Moving Forward in the Eye of the Storm*, by Sonia Correa.

## Beijing 1995

UN Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, where DAWN launched *Markers on the Way: the DAWN Debates on Alternative Development*, coordinated by Gita Sen. "An unabated crisis of basic livelihoods, food and income insecurity, unemployment, environmental degradation, and class/caste/racial/gender violence characterises the lives of many. There has been a growing marginalisation and re-privatisation of public services that are essential to the reproduction of human beings. This takes the form of reduced entitlements of resources and legitimacy, increasing burdens on women, and new forms of triage of the vulnerable within and among countries.

"The important feminist network of DAWN, through Vivienne Taylor, has recently conceptualised its analysis of the social consequences of globalisation through 'marketisation of the State'." From *Sociology of Development: Women and Gender in Developing Countries - Engendering Development Theory and Policy*.

**2000 Monterrey** Financing for Development, where DAWN's involvement helped lead to the formation of the Cartagena Feminist Initiative.

**2001 Porto Alegre** 1st World Social Forum, DAWN has been active in WSF since its inception and serves on the International Council.

**2001 Durban** World Conference Against Racism Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance where DAN held a panel event.

**2002 Johannesburg** World Summit on Sustainable Development where DAWN tracked the shift in focus from Agenda 21

**2003 Geneva** World Summit on the Information Society where DAWN is working to redress the absence of gender.

**2003 Back to Bangalore** for the DAWN inaugural young feminist Training Institute

**2004 +10 ICPD and Beijing processes and DAWN Anniversary, Cape Town**

## 1995 Copenhagen

At the World Social Summit in March 1995, DAWN produced a platform booklet *Challenging the Given: DAWN's Perspectives on Social Development*, which listed a series of strong recommendations to... "reclaim society by constructing new models of social advancement and new processes which respond to people's needs. The eradication of poverty and reduction of social inequalities depend on restructuring existing economic, social and political arrangements. For the Summit to even begin the process of healing the economic and social shocks...requires serious attention to the institutional frameworks, arrangements for human management, which in turn requires attention to the role of international law and its enforcement."

"The great value of this book [*Population and Reproductive Rights*] is that it allows women from the North and the South a chance to become acquainted with the thinking that DAWN is doing in this very important area, and to identify areas for research and activity that will benefit women the world over... a strong step has been taken to emphasise women's right to development in the discourse on population." Sheila Malloy of 'Women for a Just and Healthy Planet', Canada, in *Convergence*, Volume XXIX, Number 3, 1996.



DAWN began in 1984 when a group of feminists met in Bangalore at the invitation of Devaki Jain to prepare for the UN Conference in Nairobi to mark the end of the Decade for Women, 1975-1985, and produced a critique of the growth model of development, *Development, Crisis and Alternative Visions*. DAWN subsequently invested in the UN conferences of the 1990s and the five and ten year review processes, to help secure gains for women.

## AFTER NAIROBI CAME RIO

*DAWN Informs* 1992/2 was devoted to DAWN in Rio de Janeiro for the Global Forum '92 run in conjunction with the UNCED Earth Summit. DAWN held a panel on Debt and Trade on 5 June that stated strongly the devastating and diverse consequences of Structural Adjustment Policies on human and natural environments of the South, the major burden of which falls on women.

**D**AWN drafted a Declaration by Women based on Women's Action Agenda 21, DAWN analysis, and other views of women that was adopted by a special meeting of women at the Global Forum on 10 June. "The importance of events in Rio should not be judged on whether the documents signed by governments will make a difference to the environmental crisis. Their real value lies in their ability to raise consciousness on the links between the environmental crisis and the dominant development model. The failure of the Summit to recognise this relationship limits its usefulness.... The major differences were not between North and South governments or even governments and NGOS. In the final analysis it lay between those who believe that the environmental crisis can be solved by technological 'fixes' and those who believe the situation requires alternative approaches to development which are people-centred, equitable, more ethical, and sustainable." **Peggy Antrobus.**

### STEPPING STONES

In 1995, through successive *DAWN Informs* issues, DAWN began charting the process from Cairo to Copenhagen and on to Beijing. A linking document, *Stepping Stones from Copenhagen to Beijing*, was developed by a group of women's organisations including DAWN. "Two opposing forces in the global population and development debate — population controlists and those who would disempower women and deny their right to choose — are two rocks in the sea of population and development that we, as women from the South, are attempting to cross." **Gita Sen.** DAWN saw women's attempts to define positions were fraught with difficult conceptual and political choices and dilemmas:

- How to be effective in criticism of existing programmes without falling into the game of fundamentalist patriarchs who also criticise family planning programmes.
- How to affirm women's reproductive rights without falling into the Bretton Woods definitions of development priorities and methods, while affirming and supporting the right to development without down-playing women's reproductive health and rights concerns.
- The problem of fundamentalist patriarch attempts to wrap themselves in the mantle of cultural sovereignty and anti-imperialism.

"The WSSD debates were always going to be hard because of the macro-economic issues directly addressed by its agenda and because of its timing. Its late inclusion in the UN calendar of events for the 1990s squeezed it between Cairo and Beijing making it hard for women's organisations to catch up with the agenda both at national and international levels. The same difficulty was encountered by the larger NGO community and, surprising as it may seem, among States themselves... it remains critical, therefore, to view WSSD agreements as a departing point and not a point of arrival.

The gender agenda for the 21<sup>st</sup> century has often been used as a battlefield for the positions taken by major actors on macroeconomic issues, national prerogatives and cultural diversity, which has put the conceptual and political achievements accumulated by the international women's movement since Mexico in 1975 at enormous risk." **Sonia Correa.**



# Cairo, Copenhagen, Beijing and beyond...

Both the Beijing+10 and ICPD+10 reviews are currently in process. DAWN's involvement with them from the initial conferences are reflected in the following brief excerpts.

## DAWN on the Road to Cairo

*DAWN Informs* 1993/1 issue was dedicated to preparations for the International Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo, 5-13 September 1994, for which Sonia Correa produced a platform document, *Population and Reproductive Rights*. She sounded a now-familiar warning: "As feminist perspectives of reproductive rights have undergone refinement and diversification, so too have some of the major actors in the population establishment been reconsidering their traditional frameworks. In doing so, they have taken into consideration those aspects of the feminist analysis they find digestible. And so, as ICPD-3 approaches, there is a real danger that legitimate concerns will be used by those with negative attitudes towards contraception to make their case. It has been tried before."

"The complexity of the issues involved and the dangerous consequences which would result from reinforced population control-oriented policies, together present a special challenge to the women's movement in the preparatory stages of ICPD."

Sonia Correa and Peggy Antrobus were amongst those who initiated a Women's Declaration on Population Policies, that was taken up by the International Women's Health Coalition and the Women, Environment and Development Organisation on behalf of the alliance of women as a substantive lobby document at ICPD.

DAWN was active in the PrepComs leading to the conference, tackling the Vatican and the brackets in the main document and running panels. The Road to Cairo was a feature of *DAWN Informs* 1994/3 issue produced in time for the conference, which made clear the DAWN framework: "DAWN views reproductive health as inextricably intertwined with women's human rights. Therefore, DAWN's framework for women's reproductive rights and health incorporates attention to women's economically productive and cultural roles in addition to their biological reproductive functions...DAWN's comprehensive reproductive rights and health policy would guarantee women access to housing, education, employment, property rights and legal equality in all spheres. It would also secure women's freedom from physical abuse, harassment, genital mutilation and all forms of gender-based violence. Our insistence on a holistic analysis reveals DAWN's bias

toward comprehensive health services as a key component of our proposal for social policies and infrastructure designed to meet people's (especially women's) basic needs. In Southern countries, DAWN recognises an alarming trend away from state responsibility for basic needs, in which market forces are increasingly employed to mobilise and distribute health resources that should be widely available to the public. Based on structural adjustment policies, this tendency toward privatising the health sector isolates it from other basic services (which in many cases are also being privatised), and limits even further poor women's access to health care."

The editorial on New Approaches v. Old Dogmas said: "The issues at the upcoming ICPD go far beyond those of contraceptives, abortion, population control or even reproductive health....at stake is nothing less than women's rights and the quality of women's lives. The most fundamental aspect of women's struggles — our right to bodily integrity — is being undermined by a small group of states directed by the Vatican, and the majority of governments appear to offer little resistance to this tyranny of the minority."

DAWN used as its starting point for a Southern perspective the silence of progressives willing to debate about debt, trade and sustainable livelihood, but rarely about the need for safe and effective contraception, abortion or other reproductive health services. DAWN argued that sustainable development required addressing all inequalities. Its strategies included pulling the population debate away from the argument about the relationships between population growth and the environment without addressing women's reproductive rights; moving the 'development is the best contraceptive' argument far beyond the mantra of female education and women's status to one of transforming gender relations and significantly altering the content and character of family planning programmes; and continuing to emphasise the importance of an enabling environment in international and national macro-economic policies.




## WORLD SUMMIT ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

DAWN *Informs* 1994/2 issue had a focus on preparations for the World Summit on Social Development held in Copenhagen, 7-14 March 1995. In an environment of encouraging rhetoric, DAWN worked to network on linking regional events to build a platform for 'engendering social development'.

"A gender perspective means not only recognising that women suffer the worst when human development is inadequate, in terms of all the themes of the forthcoming Social Summit: poverty, unemployment, and social disintegration. A gender perspective also means recognising that women stand at the crossroads between production and reproduction, between economic activity and the care of human beings, and therefore between economic growth and human development. Implications: the importance of recognising women as the potential political actors with the strongest stake in human-centred development; and the need to engender human development in a way that has not happened up to this point, by integrating a gender perspective at the highest policy levels and strengthening women so as to enable them to hold accountable economic and political policies and systems; uncovering, researching, supporting, and strengthening the economic alternatives that women have themselves been creating as well as those others which link economic activity and human development in humane and fulfilling ways." Gita Sen.

The platform statement, *Challenging the Given*, was presented in the Second PrepCom Plenary by Peggy Antrobus and published in the final *DAWN Informs* issue of 1994. It identified the basic contradiction between the aims of the Social Summit and the current growth model. "The eradication of poverty and unemployment, or the achievement of social integration, cannot be addressed without a fundamental shift in the thinking and direction of the global political economy and its management.... We need to reclaim society by constructing new models of social advancement and new processes which respond to peoples' needs." DAWN's proposals

included a programme of debt alleviation, a Code of Financial Conduct and another for national, multinational and transnational corporations to ensure social responsibility and workers' rights, a poverty alleviation fund, a global compact for demilitarisation, an emergency fund to protect low-income countries from negative trade shocks, and a global gender-equity social development fund financed by taxing international capital flows. "By highlighting the most pressing issues — unemployment, poverty and social integration — the Summit is locating itself simultaneously in all the root causes that have been traced. But for the summit to heal, or even begin the process of healing, these deep distresses require far reaching and difficult turns in the direction, both economic and political, that the world is taking. It also requires serious attention to the institutional frameworks, arrangements for human management, which in turn requires attention to the role of international law and its reinforcement.... The women's movement is here as always identifying itself with injustice and oppression. We want action to reconstruct institutions — economic, social, political and cultural — as vehicles for the expression of the aspirations of the poor and the needy. And we want it now, with a redistribution of power and resources."

*DAWN Informs* 1995/2, was produced for the final PrepCom in January 1995 and leading to the Copenhagen Summit, in which the platform statement was reinforced: "Reclaim society...construct new models of social advancement and new processes that respond to people's needs. Reclaim the State...design mechanisms that represent the interests of the poor, especially women. Reclaim the markets...remodel them to safeguard and enhance the productive, trading and consuming activities of the poor, especially women. An agenda for more equitable gender and social relations required eradicating the power structures that maintain women's subordination... that maintain discriminatory institutions and practices and justify inequality." 



# MARKERS ON THE WAY

**D**AWN produced a platform document for the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, September 1995 — *Markers on the Way: the DAWN Debates on Alternative Development*, written by Gita Sen. It represented DAWN's contribution to the debates and discussions on economic issues at the conference.

The document examined new features of global and national political economies, including the central issue of the speed and range of the globalisation of the economy, politics and culture; the related transformations in global trade and finance that had rendered global and national monetary systems volatile and difficult to manage; the uneven processes of globalisation that were reshaping traditional economic and political alignments among countries; the undermining of the role of the state as an economic agent guiding economic activity while retaining its repressive capacity; the increase of other forms of violence and the growing subterranean economy based on narcotics, weapons and money laundering that had altered the political culture of a number of countries; the resurgence of patriarchal forces globally and locally; and the globalisation of culture made possible through new communications technology.

... "In the 1970s there was no gender in the debates; perhaps understandably so since the field of 'women in development' was minuscule, and the international women's movement was still a fledgling. This is not true in the 1990s. Discussions of human-centred development in the 1990s have no excuse to, and cannot afford to repeat the mistake of the 1970s. It will be too costly for women, and too costly for human development.

"A gender perspective is crucial if the paradigm of human development is to break out of its current impasse. A gender perspective means not only recognising, as many in policy circles are now willing to do, that women suffer the worst when human development is inadequate. A gender perspective means recognising that women stand at the crossroads between economic activity and the care of human beings, and therefore between economic growth and human development. They are the workers in both spheres - those most responsible, and therefore with most at stake, those who suffer the most when the two work at cross-purposes, and those most sensitive to the need for better integration between the two.

"Fundamentally a focus on human development as the goal of economic and social processes should reaffirm the centrality of people realising their potential to be creative, useful and fulfilled members of society: the acquisition of material wealth is a means to that end, not an end in itself.

"Growth needs to be managed and qualified so that it contributes to human development.

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"Of particular importance, if we are to challenge the forces of globalisation effectively, is to rethink our ability to work not only at local, national or regional levels but also globally. Such action is critical, because it is difficult if not impossible to challenge global actors if we are unwilling to act globally ourselves."

**"Beijing was another bead in the rosary of international events ranging from Rio (1992: Environment) to Istanbul (upcoming 1996: Human Settlements), passing through Vienna (1993: Human Rights), Cairo (1994: Population and Development) and Copenhagen (March 1995: Social Development)."**  
**Sonia Correa.**






A month after the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, September 1995, on the festival of Diwali, Gita Sen wrote in *DAWN Informs* 1995/4:

“Like Diwali, Beijing seemed to have a million things going on at the same time — sounds, great flashes of light, excitement, hope and joyousness. Like Diwali too, barely hidden behind the screen of light and sound, Beijing was about grief and wasted lives, abuse and exploitation. No sensitive person can watch Diwali without seeing the faces of children, most of them little girls, whose lives are blighted by endless days of dangerous labour making firecrackers — lungs and small fingers burning from deadly chemicals. So, also, behind the brave words and high hopes, behind the resolutions and the defiance of Beijing, were the blighted lives and oppression of the world’s women, young and old.”

DAWN reports rated Beijing as a success in maintaining ICPD language and protecting concepts of reproductive and sexual health and rights, and went beyond the Cairo document on the treatment of unsafe abortion as a health concern. There were positive results in the areas of recognition of race and ethnicity as causes of discrimination and factors of inequality; on valuation of non-paid work; on some definitions dealing with armed conflicts; and on some decisions concerning macroeconomic issues. A major achievement was the reference to culture, religion and national sovereignty that strongly supported women’s human rights. But the hard issues of economic justice remained.

“The most unequivocal leap forward was the number of women in official delegations. Even more significant was the efficiency and coordinating capacity of NGO representatives involved in efforts to explain issues, dilute tensions and organise lobbying efforts.... And it is no exaggeration to state that it was we feminists who rescued the Fourth World Conference on Women from the chronic ills in which it was immersed during the first quarter of 1995.” Sonia Correa. 

## Continuing on from Cairo Through the +5 reviews and into the Cairo+10 process

The ICPD +5 review process was difficult. *DAWN Informs* 1999/1: “Reviews should be made by implementers and not by diplomats. Diplomats’ expertise is to negotiate policy documents, not to evaluate how the recommendations contained in such documents are or are not being implemented.” Observer at the difficult Commission on Population and Development (CPD) PrepCom for ICPD +5, which DAWN warned could turn into a ‘back to the future’ event.

“The whole trying, expensive and complicated process requires the UN to urgently rethink these review sessions.” Lilian Abracinskas.

Sonia Correa produced *Implementing ICPD: Moving Forward in the Eye of the Storm*, a study of the patchy progress in putting the policy into action. This DAWN study found that ICPD was weathering the storm, despite country and regional imbalances.

DAWN addressed the UN General Assembly for ICPD +5 on behalf of the Women’s Coalition, celebrating the support from governments for important advances made during the meeting, but not forgetting that “every minute of every day, a woman dies of mostly preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth; that young people, especially girls, remain vulnerable to violence and sexual abuse; that health care services are far from adequate in terms of resources, accessibility, scope, and quality. The women of the world are here — in the gallery, and in official delegations — we are with you, we are still watching you, and we will never go away.” (*DAWN Informs* 1999/2)

“In Cairo, the world adopted the notion of the indivisibility of rights. Economic and social rights are no longer on one side and individual, political and civil rights on the other. We should therefore try to move forward by placing emphasis on the more universal aspects of the Programme of Action. This means emphasising human rights and being explicit about the notion of reproductive rights.” From a briefing by the WEDO/CRLP Information Caucus, 25 June 1999.

DAWN evaluated the Cairo +5 process in *Weighing Up Cairo: Evidence from women of the South*, adding further information and updates to what had been published earlier in *Moving Forward in the Eye of the Storm*. In the introduction, Sonia Correa said a critical constraint to implementing the ICPD Programme of Action was that the

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# GENDER JUSTICE AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Excerpt from a paper on the five year reviews of the UN Conferences of the 1990s produced by Gita Sen and Sonia Correa for Unifem and released in time for Beijing+5 and WSSD+5. (*DAWN Informs* April 2000)

On the one hand, complex yet poorly understood and even more poorly regulated processes of globalisation appear as the new form of a free market juggernaut. This juggernaut obscures all possible alternatives to a global capitalist order that is driven by deep and growing inequalities of wealth and income, and in which rising numbers of impoverished people are being marginalised from access to secure livelihoods. On the other hand, at least one set of reactions to these processes of globalisation includes the strengthening of national, religion-based, ethnic or other identities through the assertion of 'traditional' gender roles and systems of authority and control.

The irony for women is that the supporters and promoters of a globalised world economy are often also the ones who support the breaking of traditional patriarchal orders. The challenge for women is how to assert the need for both economic justice and gender justice in an increasingly globalised world in which at the same time, we witness the proliferation of diverse forms of moral conservatism that target women's self-determination.

**Sowing the wind:** The global UN conferences of the 1990s proved fertile ground for the blooming of these tensions and conflicts. During the 90s the moral conservative forces systematically used their political influence to oppose the women's rights agenda in international arenas. Feminist coalitions attempted to bridge the divide that opposing countries and groups were trying to create between economic justice and gender justice.

**Reaping the whirlwind:** In the +5 processes, the mood and tone of negotiations were certainly harsher than expected from women's and NGO perspectives. Progress in negotiations was slow and often stalemated. Language already agreed in Cairo and Beijing was reopened. The G77 group of countries insisted on speaking with one voice on all issues, unlike in Cairo and Beijing, possibly because of looming WTO and finance for development meetings.

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overall economic and social situation of countries studied had not improved since 1994. "Besides openly contradicting the equity premises of the ICPD programme, the persistence of extreme poverty and inequality is detrimental to women's health and tends to increase gender imbalance more generally." (*DAWN Informs* February 2001)

*DAWN Informs* November 2002 included the first "Stop Press" item. Dated 18 December, it told of the encouraging success in the 5<sup>th</sup> Asian and Pacific Population Conference, 11-14 December 2002, Bangkok. The quiet announcement that Asian and Pacific countries had presented a united front to approve a document that reaffirms the ICPD Plan of Action, isolating the United States and relegating its reservations on sections that it alleges promote abortion and under-age sex to a

footnote, did not reflect the energy, effort and strategising that feminists put in behind-scenes.

In Africa, Bene Madunagu made strong interventions in the first regional consultation on abortion held in Addis Ababa in March 2003 to have the protocol on the rights of women in Africa to supplement the African Charter on Human Rights. In July 2003 it was adopted as a supplementary protocol to the 1981 African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights. (*DAWN Informs* September 2003).

United States opposition to ICPD in Bangkok helped mobilise Latin American-Caribbean countries at the ECLAC ICPD + 10 meeting 10-13 March 2004 in Santiago, Chile, which reaffirmed ICPD and ICPD + 5. Nothing of what the US wanted was included, and the US delegation again chose not to join the consensus. (*DAWN Informs* March 2004) 🌻



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Part of the reason could have been that many delegations, especially from the South, were drawn from the staff of country missions to UN headquarters in New York and they were not always clear about what exactly was being proposed by the forces opposing women's rights or what it implied. A deeper question this raises is to do with the premises on which the UN is conducting +5 reviews.


"Implementation can and ought to be discussed and evaluated by implementors — it should not be handled by those who have had little to do with implementation. The review of implementation should certainly not be open to those who opposed the primary agreements or sections of the agreement.... Thus the Vatican had no business participating in a review of implementation in which it played no role, and which it certainly opposed. Women's organisations....unless they work hard to ensure the quality of delegations, run the risk of having gender justice traded off against South-North issues."

In the end, all Gita Sen could say about the Beijing +5 UNGASS, 5-9 June 2000 in New York was "I suppose the most important thing is that we survived." (DAWN Informs November 2000)

Bene Madunagu and Gita Sen continued the debate with a paper (DAWN Informs November 2001) that urged NGOs to recognise that women's struggles for gender justice, economic justice and participatory democracy are central, and may be key, to the energy, strategic thinking and innovative wisdom in this era of globalisation and fundamentalism.

"The conferences of the 1990s were the first significant global occasions when 'women's issues' came forward from the margins of women-only conferences to the mainstream agenda. The agreements were fraught with controversy, although no more so than many other global issues. What was

striking about them was the extent to which a small minority of religious fundamentalists and their allies could hold the negotiations to ransom through their attempts to reverse the Cairo and Beijing agreements during the +5 reviews....Despite these unfavourable conditions, both the Cairo +5 and Beijing +5 reviews ended with the gains of Cairo and Beijing intact, and with further progress on some key fronts.... political progress must be credited to the strategic capacity of global feminist networks to navigate between fundamentalism and the Northern economic agenda."

DAWN has taken its concern through to the current +10 review processes, speaking strongly on a panel at the Association of Women in Development 9<sup>th</sup> International Forum in Mexico, 3-6 October 2002 (DAWN Informs November 2002). Sonia Correa spoke of the gains achieved through the UN conferences. "But from 1995 negotiations at the UN became increasingly problematic as a result of the reaction of conservative forces, some of which have been brutal... The current global political climate clearly places the women's agenda at risk at the United Nations level and this should caution us against another UN negotiation on gender issues in the short term." DAWN spoke even more strongly in DAWN Informs April 2003, with a front page statement saying No to Negotiations for Beijing +10 and Cairo +10. "The first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century confronts us with the extreme social conservatism, aggressive unilateralism, and support for militarism of the Bush administration, and the worsening of fundamentalist trends elsewhere as well. In such a context, it is very important to protect the gains made for women's human rights through careful and considered action. It is especially important not to place these gains at risk through promoting or agreeing to formats or mechanisms for regional or international meetings that are likely to be problematic." 

"In the end, I suppose the most important thing about Beijing +5 is that we survived. And the Beijing Platform for Action survived as well. Despite a concerted attack b`y the anti-women's rights brigade, the document was not watered down, and some instances we actually made some gains." Gita Sen, who was part of the DAWN group involved in the Beijing +5 NGO Working Session, 2-3 June 2000, and the UNGASS, 5-9 June 2000 in New York. The focus of DAWN's Beijing +5 effort was on economic issues.



**Trade, AIDS, Public Health and Human Rights:** DAWN produced a special supplement in August 2001 to cover the intensifying struggle between pharmaceutical giants, Southern states and civil society organisations over the right to pursue national public health policies which meet people's needs; and related rights issues arising from the recent UN Conference on HIV/AIDS. The issue drew together information on WTO agreements that were affecting distribution of medicines because of patent rights, global action, and some of the national successes. DAWN was active in letter campaigns to put lives before profits.

## Sexual Rights:

### Much has been said, much remains to be resolved

by Sonia Correa in *DAWN Informs* April 2003 from a lecture presentation in the Sexuality, Health and Gender Seminar, Department of Social Sciences, Public Health School, Columbia University, October 2002. A brief excerpt:

In the course of the past decade, discourse on sexuality has taken a new detour: we have started to speak of sexual rights. The main expression of this new trend is the troubled saga that evolved at the level of the United Nations, starting with the debate on systematic rape in conflict situations that took place in the Human Rights Conference of Vienna in 1993. In my own view, this endless struggle is just the tip of an iceberg whose composition, meaning and implications have yet to be fully analysed and understood.

The UN debates must be analysed in light of the rapid process of change that has become known as globalisation: its impacts on economies, States, societies and particularly the destabilisation of institutional patriarchal structures, gender systems and family formations.

The UN debates were originally set in motion by rather conventional approaches to global public health concerns, particularly family planning and the HIV-AIDS pandemic. But they were clearly transformed under the political impact of a range of "sexual subjects" who have gained access to the public sphere and discourses in the past three decades. At the same time, the UN political dynamics in relation to sexuality cannot be fully understood if we do not take into account politics of ethnic and national identities and various forms

of fundamentalism, which also include a search for reassurance in times of deep economic and political uncertainty and risk. It is also crucial to remember that these forces had been targeting women's rights, sexualities, condoms, contraceptives — as a means to attack "Western values" — long before September 11<sup>th</sup> (DAWN 1984). Another aspect to be underlined is that in UN negotiations, gender and sexuality issues have been systematically interwoven (or have been traded-off) with economics.

Nevertheless, complex and difficult as these "sexual battles" have been, they evolved a clear consensus that human rights constitute an appropriate ethical foundation for addressing sexuality within the broader agenda of development. Paragraph 96 of the Beijing Platform of Action became the icon of this new era.

The need for this conceptual breakthrough becomes increasingly relevant in light of the current global scenario. On the one hand, the runaway world of global capitalism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century favours a market-consumer frame to legitimise entitlements to sexual diversity. On the other hand, it is clearly intensifying the structural factors at work behind complex threats to human security that derive from sexual violence, oppression and discrimination. Such threats as the call for war, as we well know, affect a majority of persons and groups who will benefit little from a market-consumer approach to sexual rights. 🌞

## DAWN Health Sector Reform Project

DAWN's project on Health Sector Reform, Maternal Mortality and Abortion: A Global Policy Research Effort, led by Sonia Correa, aimed at better understanding the ways in which health reform processes are affecting national responses to maternal mortality and post-abortion care and was inspired by the approaching ICPD 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Excerpts from the first section, on Latin America, were published in *DAWN Informs* September 2003. Within the DAWN analytical frame, health sector reform was explored as a critical juncture between macroeconomic trends (fiscal stringency, SAPs, etc.), processes of state transformation, and sexual and reproductive health issues, as components of a renewed citizenship and part of the human rights agenda. 🌞



DAWN has consistently expressed concern in the current political conjuncture of aggressive fundamentalism and militarism about the possibility of setbacks to the gains made for women's human rights in the conferences of the 1990s, including the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing International Conference on Women. It is amongst organisations that have opposed international and regional intergovernmental meetings that involve or could lead to official negotiations and re-opening texts. DAWN has, however, supported an assessment process of the implementation of the action programmes. It has therefore been involved in the ICPD + 10 and Beijing + 10 processes in an effort to keep the activities focussed on assessment.

## Beijing+10 in Latin America

*Latin American participants from the DAWN Training Institute formed a team to the IX ECLAC Beijing + 10 meeting, and the associated feminist forum, strategy meeting and youth caucus, held in Mexico City, 7-12 June 2004. This is a brief extract from the reports of Angela Collet, Fiorella Benavente Minaya, Joana Chagas, Marita Pareja, Samantha Buglione, and Alejandra Scampini.*

The Forum's task was to assess from a feminist perspective the implementation of the Beijing POA in the region and identification of the main obstacles. Amongst issues that arose was that while governments were fighting violence against women, new forms of violence were emerging with fundamentalist and conservative forces affecting women in the streets and at work, as well as in the home. Health was a major issue: the need to evaluate the effect of basic health packages that undermined a comprehensive approach and that failed to allow women to exercise sexual and reproductive rights. Another major issue was the need to analyse the effectiveness of institutional mechanisms to achieve gender equity and equality because of the assessment that they were becoming weaker, including through lack of resources. In a well-received address, Gina Vargas outlined areas that needed nurturing in the process towards Beijing + 10 and beyond. She reminded women that the body is a political space, but to recognise this there had to be democratic change: the defence of a secular state and building of a secular culture to fight fundamentalist and conservative forces. There was also a need for a new democratic political culture that demanded development of democracy at all levels, and women's movements had to influence the ways and mechanisms through which democracy developed.

The Youth Caucus task was to develop a declaration for the Forum and the official conference. The DAWN team identified some missing aspects in the draft declaration, such as diversity, disparities, racism, globalisation and unemployment. They attempted to have a wider vision of poverty and inclusion of disparities based on gender, race and ethnicity and religion, and groups of women that are often discriminated against, such as rural, black and indigenous women and sex workers incorporated into the document. The final declaration was oriented towards recognition of sexual and reproductive rights.

A feminist strategy meeting preceded the main conference which emphasised protection of the Beijing POA, the need for an autonomous feminist agenda, and for an intersectional perspective. The DAWN team identified areas of concern that included the need to clarify what feminists wanted from the process, the need to consolidate secular states, and a broader vision on poverty, gender, ethnicity, location, and more attention to diversity.

They reported that the civil society declaration and a huge presence of civil society in the main conference made it clear to official delegations that they were going to continue to work for change and improvement. The declaration began by saying "we are once again in ECLAC because we believe in democracy and its institutions, that the mechanisms that guarantee human rights are fundamental for a democratic system. Civil society played an important role, clearly influencing the Mexico Consensus. The United States retained some reservations on sexual and reproductive rights, referring to abortion and the 'ABC' approach to HIV/AIDS. 🌺

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part of this strategy of preventing new (less progressive) goals and renegotiation, and focusing on shortfalls in the implementation of the Beijing PFA that already exist. The conference also reinforced a relatively new youth movement determined to forge an autonomous identity and establish mechanisms for engaging substantively rather than tokenistically with the wider women's NGO movement at conferences such as this. The youth contingent was coordinated by the Network of Asia Pacific Youth (NAPY) and the Youth Declaration built on its previous work. 🌺



**D**AWN South East Asia Regional Coordinator, Gigi Francisco, and Sharon Bhagwan Rolls representing DAWN Pacific, were at the High Level Inter-governmental Meeting to Review the Beijing PFA in Bangkok, 7-10 September 2004.

## B+10 in Asia-Pacific

More than 300 women from 47 Asia Pacific governments and from non-government groups reaffirmed commitment to the Beijing PFA. The High Level Meeting concluded that full implementation was impeded by gaps, most notably the weak and low level of women's participation in decision-making that tended to marginalise women's supposed lead role in gender mainstreaming. There was also lack of regional cooperation and partnership initiatives in combating the increase of HIV/AIDS and trafficking, and in protecting women migrant workers' human rights. The statement recognised the importance of ensuring linkages and cross-fertilisation between the concerned outcomes of various global conferences, including ICPD, CEDAW, UN Security Council and the Millennium Declaration.

Significantly, the draft statement and communiqué from the meeting carried the perspectives of around 700 women who had participated in the Asia Pacific NGO Forum on Beijing+10 in July in Bangkok. Women from the NGOs reiterated their concerns on the diversion of funds intended for women's services into terrorism, which was happening in many countries in the region. The statement will be the Asia Pacific's contribution to the global review of the implementation of the BPFA at the UN Commission on the Status of Women 49<sup>th</sup> Session in March 2005 in New York.

The meeting noted the common problem of limited resources, and therefore limited

capacity of women's ministries/women's national machineries in the pursuit of gender equality. This was a critical concern highlighted during the 9<sup>th</sup> Triennial and 2<sup>nd</sup> Ministerial Meeting for Women convened by the Pacific Women's Bureau of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community in Fiji 16-19 August 2004. DAWN General Coordinator, Claire Slatter, DTI participant Tara Chetty and Roshni Sami represented DAWN at this meeting, in which 20 Pacific island countries and territories adopted Regional Charters — the revised Pacific Platform For Action — which set the scene for strengthening the Pacific presence in the UN ESCAP meeting. This was a strongly positive outcome from the Pacific meeting, despite some struggles with religious/cultural conservatism and a lack of formal reaffirmation of the BPFA. The lack of capacity of women's offices and national machineries showed up in the meeting process, which resulted in a 'living document' which gave some delegates a sense of unease that it could be too easily subject to change. Women migrant workers was also identified as an emerging issue in the Pacific region.

The issues and recommendations of the earlier Asia Pacific NGO Forum on Beijing+10, held 30 June-3 July in Bangkok, that fed in to the High Level Meeting. They were compiled into the 'Purple Book' that was submitted to UNESCAP and shared with other women's groups and networks in preparation for the event.

Workshops evaluated progress on the 12 key areas of the Beijing PFA, and others critically examined the tools and strategies of global women's advocacy. Women's groups that had organised the Feminist Dialogues prior to the 2004 World Social Forum, which included DAWN, held a session on Feminist Strategies in Sites of Resistance with representatives including DAWN South East Asia Regional Coordinator, Gigi Francisco. They examined the role and place of the feminist movement within the women's movement, an issue relevant to the conference itself. A call was made for strategic feminist action rather than reactive action to deal with the global threats of militarism, terrorism, imperialism, religious fundamentalism, neoliberalism and conservative backlash.

Roshni Sami represented DAWN Pacific and gave a panel presentation on gender and environment, with a focus on the effects of climate change on Pacific livelihoods and the lingering consequences of nuclear testing in the Pacific, particularly on women's health.

The meeting reaffirmed commitment to the Beijing PFA and recognised successes so far, but also challenges such as uneven implementation, backlash against equality and shifts in the macro environment which have systematically eroded women's status.

The significance of the Forum Statement rather than a traditional Forum Declaration is

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**D**AWN's vision was articulated in its first platform document — the little blue book which is still a best seller: *Development, Crisis and Alternative Visions - Third World Women's Perspectives*, by Gita Sen and Caren Grown. What appears on P80-81 is the basis of the Vision which is still used in DAWN materials and from time to time, with permission, by other organisations.

"We want a world where inequality based on class, gender and race is absent from every country and from relationships among countries; where basic needs become basic rights and where poverty and all forms of violence are eliminated. We want a world where the massive resources now used in the production of the means of destruction will be diverted to areas where they will help to relieve oppression both within and outside the home; a world where all institutions are open to participatory democratic processes, where women share in determining priorities and making decisions. This political environment will provide enabling social conditions that respect women's and men's physical integrity and the security of their persons in every dimension of their lives."

## WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT CRISIS


**D**AWN *Informs*, April/June 1988 (No.3) contained an article on women and the development crisis in India from an analysis presented by Gita Sen, Devaki Jain and Nirmala Banerjee at a DAWN meeting at Ibadan University, 23-25 February 1988, in which they said that India presented economic and political aspects that revealed a greater development than the norm (in other Third World countries). "It is self-sufficient in food and oil, it has considerable domestic industrial park and a reduced number of multinational corporations. There is an established democracy that performs an important role in the non-aligned movement. However, contradictions persist that especially affect women because the industrial progress did not eliminate cultural traditions which have as the final consequence a high index of female mortality, higher than that which affects the male population. Both in the fields and the cities women continue to be responsible for the majority of domestic work."

The article also mentioned a growing number of female-headed households, use of imported technology that eliminated non-specialised labour jobs that many women sought, expenditure on family planning without considering women's needs for programmes to give acceptable levels of basic health, and ecological questions such as deforestation and dam building that affect the quality of women's lives.

DAWN was heard on the radio in 1988, participating in a 20-minute radio programme every Friday on Capital Radio, while the Spanish version of *Development Crises and Alternative Visions* was published. 

## FROM BRAZIL TO THE CARIBBEAN

*DAWN Informs*, Vol.2, No.1, December 1991 came out in the brown and orange design scheme that has featured in most *DAWN Informs* publications, with some variations, ever since. This issue noted the transfer of DAWN Secretariat from Brazil to the Caribbean on 1 November 1990, when Peggy Antrobus took over as General Coordinator. The issue was devoted to the development of a new conceptual framework, recognising that the world of 1991 was very different from that of DAWN's emergence in 1984. The two parallel debates about development in the 1990s were identified as the relative merits of market-oriented versus state-managed macro-policies, and concern with the deepening crisis of global recession, environmental degradation, rising violence and poverty. While at first glance the agendas of the different proponents in the debate appeared less polarised than a decade earlier, there were many reasons to suspect that the questions raised by DAWN had not entered the development mainstream. A new interest in women, NGOs and people-centred development appeared purely instrumental to the supply-side economic agenda which undermines the very basis of peoples' livelihoods.

DAWN's second inter-regional meeting was held in Barbados in May 1991 (the first was in Rio de Janeiro in 1990), and began linking the research themes of environment, reproductive rights and population, and alternative economic frameworks into a common conceptual framework. 



DAWN African debates on alternative development frameworks which fed into the preparations for Beijing resulted in a DAWN publication, *From 'There is No Alternative' to 'There Must Be an Alternative'* in 1997. It contained papers from the African Regional Meeting held in Dakar, Senegal, 11-13 November 1994, which had provided a forum for a range of Africans to engage in critical debate on issues of fundamental concern to women.

## THERE MUST BE AN ALTERNATIVE

The Africa debates emphasised the commonality and power of the global economic and political processes that set the context for diverse national and regional experiences, and that often constrain the possibilities for alternative strategies and actions.

“Women are not passively absorbing SAPs. They are resisting through networking. In Zimbabwe networking is seen in clubs where groups of four to 12 members give in contributions and get it back three or 12 months later. Women are joining those clubs more and more. Networking is also exemplified by women who are bonding in child care, or sharing their burdens when cross-bordering and in the field of nutrition through home gardens. The failure of women’s resistance struggle has been identified as a lag in longtime organisation, so that women cannot articulate and defend their interests at state level. In seeking an alternative economic framework we should organise ourselves to have access to power.

DAWN Africa then engaged in the Political Restructuring and Social Transformation analysis and contributed a publication of papers from a regional meeting held in Cape Town in November 1999. *Cracks in the Edifice: Critical African Feminist Perspectives on Women and Governance*, edited by Vivienne Taylor with Anne Mager and Paula Cardoso was published in 2000.

“We need to find strategic ways to promote a gender perspective on the process and nature of political restructuring and social transformation, globally and specifically in all our national regional contexts. Central to this are the links made between our research findings and the review of national governments’ commitments made at Copenhagen (WSSD) in 1995. ... We don’t only want to promote an alternative, we want to expose the contradictions within the existing systems and the hypocrisy that exists within the institutions of governance that operate at different levels.” Vivienne Taylor. 🌹

## DAWN AGAINST POVERTY

March 8, International Women’s Day 1995

DAWN launched a campaign against poverty with a chain letter of women’s lives, to be read in Beijing. It began with a poem from Mahfoudha Alley Hamid of Tanzania about SAPs:

*“Diseases engulf us, medicines are out of reach*

*Schools have no books for teachers to teach*

*How can we contribute when we are not rich*

*Where can I get food, I am confused*

*SAPs has made sure that I can’t afford.”*

“Women suffer the worst effects of economic policies driven by powerful forces inside and outside our countries.... In a world where women are 70% of the world’s poor and are increasingly impoverished, women’s lives need to be valued.” Peggy Antrobus

“As we prepare to enter a new millennium we are faced with the increasing desperation of those who are told that things are improving when the evidence of their senses — hunger, violence and despair — tell them otherwise. The challenge of globalisation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century will be a challenge to re-imagine our common humanity. It will require bold initiatives, political courage, and sustained effort on the part of all those who still believe, at the close of a century of brutal wars and unspeakable horrors and as we face the consequences of our own quest for control over natural forces, that what will see us through is the ethical recognition that as a species, we will survive or sink together.” From *Globalisation in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Challenges for Civil Society*, the University of Amsterdam Development Lecture delivered by Gita Sen, 20 June 1997.



# PR&ST

**D**AWN's Political Restructuring and Social Transformation platform began developing from 1997 with a challenging schedule of regional and inter-regional meetings and publications heading towards the UN Special Session of the General Assembly on the World Summit on Social Development +5 in Geneva in June 2000. Vivienne Taylor laid the basis in a presentation at the South Asia Regional Workshop in April 1997 (*DAWN Informs* 1998/2). "A central issue is the capacity of states to develop and manage policies and programmes to promote human development through institutions and structures that are so bureaucratic and rigid that they no longer serve the needs and interests of the majority and that are particularly anti-women."

"In the context of the globalisation of the 1990s, what has been even more significant than concern with growth through the market is the increasing erosion of the capacity of states to govern... the debate has shifted from issues of distribution to those of efficiency and management."

"Another issue is...the manner in which patterns of patriarchy are embedded in state institutions and derive from traditional cultural forms but are not exclusive to these. The result is an explicit or implicit compact of male power that permeates every sphere of women's lives and has given rise to what some feminists call the 'masculinity of the state'. Construction of a masculine society and state has significant impact on the type of space available for women's engagement in political processes.

"Spaces are opening up for the women's movement to develop new strategic alliances in its push for political empowerment and transformation. But to become a coherent force for change, the women's movement has to undertake a critical review of its own diverse relationships with the state and its institutions.

"Two major challenges confront development advocates within the gender field. One is finding ways to ensure that the complex, differentiated and varied relationships women and organisations have with the state and civil society promote a recasting of the politic sphere — public and private — and a realignment of movements and organisations. Another is the restructuring of systems that are oppressive and that perpetuate national domination, discrimination, and economic exploitation."

Vivienne Taylor identified cracks in the edifice of some global and regional decision-making structures that may offer women spaces to negotiate in a paper presented at the regional meeting in Chiang Mai, 8-11 October 1999 (*DAWN Informs*, November 1999). "National development goals and processes are being replaced by new forms of managerialism and 'marketisation'. The rolling back of the state in the

form of deregulation from public interests to regulation and re-regulation in terms of private interests should be a major cause for concern."

Women were urged to interrogate their engagement with the state, including the construction of gendered citizenship, gender and state-based violence through the violent nature of the economy and the economic nature of violence, and how to strategically use the political spaces that open up for women. The PR&ST research process was directed at reclaiming women's place in the development process through an analysis that identified the 'lived' experiences of women in the political and social arena and translating them in a way that helps make sense of the macro context

DAWN/REPESM launched the Spanish edition of the report on the PR&ST Latin America regional meeting held in April 1999, *Reestructura Política y Transformación Social*. Soon after, the August 1998 South Asia workshop papers edited by Vanita Mukherjee were published as *Beyond the Malestream: Feminist Perspectives on Political Restructuring and Social Transformation*, and then the 1999 South and South East Asia meeting proceedings as *Signposts to the Summit: Towards WSSD+5. In the Shadow of the Patriarchs: Feminist critical essays from South East Asia*, edited by Gigi Francisco, was published in 2000 (*DAWN Informs*, February 2001).

In *DAWN Informs* 1999/2, Celita Eccher reported on the weary 5am end to the Copenhagen World Summit on Social Development +5 Prepcom on 27 May 1999, after 11 gruelling days that left people with a sense of frustration, concern, and a sense of familiarity as the plenary jettisoned the document as a working paper and agreed to hold not one but two intersessional meetings before WSSD+5. At the second prepcom, in New York in April 2000, DAWN and WEDO shared the five minutes given to the Women's Caucus in the plenary. Gigi Francisco gave an 11-point list of recommendations pointing out the

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DAWN INFORMS



*DAWN Informs* 1998/1: DAWN shared the concern that “**Women Pay the Price as Asian Tigers, IMF, Bail Out of the Crisis**” in South East Asia and reported on a roundtable convened in the Philippines by DAWN and Asian Pacific Development Centre Gender and Development Programme, 12-14 April 1998. Women as household managers were bearing the burden of inflation, recession and public sector cost-cutting; hundreds of thousands of women working in industries spawned by the Asian miracle were losing their jobs and migrant workers becoming scapegoats of racist policies; and patriarchal notions of women’s loyalty, subservience and servitude were being widely invoked by governments, business and some conservative public sectors, a dimension of the male-defined approach to the financial crisis and economic development.

Later in the year, *DAWN Informs* 1998/2, Gita Sen perceived cracks in the neo-liberal consensus as the Asian financial crisis upheaval spread. “Despite the euphoria of the moment, mainstream critics still don’t question the inherent inequalities, environmental crises, and ethical dilemmas of the global order; they merely seek to retain the status quo with a few more controls and a little more inclusion of the marginalised. Meanwhile the arguments from women advocates in favour of recognising the care of human beings in economic analysis are almost completely absent in the current debates.”

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appalling lack of recognition of the feminisation of poverty and included a call to halt structural adjustment programmes that led to the micro-management of national economies by multilateral institutions. (*DAWN Informs* April 2000).

*DAWN Informs* April 2000 gave a spread of the voices from the regional and inter-regional meetings that fed into DAWN’s global analysis, *Marketisation of Governance: Critical Feminist Perspectives from the South* by Vivienne Taylor, that was launched on 25 June 2000 in Geneva. A documentary film of the same title, produced for DAWN by WAYANG of Malaysia was launched simultaneously.

“The rapidity and scale of change, permeable borders, the emergence of profound inequalities in both North and South and the apparent inability of state machinery to manage or influence the direction of change to benefit the poorest characterise the current phase of globalisation. The state is under threat and some argue that it is being reorganised to serve market interests, evidenced by the increasing influence of international financial and trade institutions such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and World Trade Organisation.

“Women of the South have been the losers in the trade-offs that have taken place in the WTO and the economic systems of governance at global level.

## Women’s Agency for Gender Justice: experiences of African women.

In a paper presented at the Geneva Graduate Institute of Development Studies annual gender colloquium, **Bene Madunagu** linked gender, globalisation and HIV/AIDS, with particular concern about the movement of refugees and labour.

“Free trade...has brought the dumping of weapons to Africa, providing the tools for settling communal and ethnic conflicts by going to war. The large number of displaced people and refugees resulting from conflict situations are mostly women and children. Another reason for the increased spread of HIV/AIDS in Africa is because girls and women get raped by both warriors and peace-keeping forces. Other gains of globalisation are seen in the opportunities that women and girls have to travel beyond local, regional and international boundaries. Many of these travellers are poor, with little or no education or legal literacy and are vulnerable as cheap labour in the globalised world. How can travelling of unskilled persons become gains when their labour gets exploited and their bodies violated?” (*DAWN Informs* May 2002)

As women reclaim governance and ensure that states act in the interests of their citizens they realise that the whole terrain is a shifting site of struggle. But as they engage in this process it is necessary to ensure that the objectives of the collective struggles are not diffused and weakened. We reassert that the state is not a monolithic structure, that governance systems can be changed so that the dream of attaining personal liberation as well as national and international liberation can be achieved.” Vivienne Taylor, *DAWN Informs* November 2000. 🌸





## Reconnecting, Moving Forward

In seven months post-Beijing, DAWN got on to email as well as fax and began a process of reflection on past achievements and planning for the challenges ahead that culminated in a meeting in Fiji, 5-7 April 1996. *DAWN Informs* 1996/1 was devoted to the debates of the meeting because "many of the issues are general ones shared by many of the networks and organisations which travelled the road to Beijing these past five years and, like DAWN, are now involved in exercises aimed at clearing the mists that have made the road ahead less clear."

"The only criteria which I perceive as ethical and valuable to struggle for the continuity of any organisation would be its clear will and ability to fundamentally change when and if necessary." Sonia Correa.

DAWN reframed its mission statement as: "To provide a forum for feminists from the economic South for research and analysis of the global environment as it affects the livelihoods of people. DAWN is particularly concerned to generate processes which can support the mobilisation of women as a powerful force within civil society, to change gender relations, challenge globalisation and transform the state."

## BUILDING ON THE THEMES

In 1997, DAWN continued building on its research themes, now divided into four areas of sexual and reproductive rights, the political economy of globalisation, sustainable livelihoods and political restructuring and social transformation. Three platform documents had been produced between 1991 and 1995: *Environment and Development: Grassroots Women's Perspectives* by Rosina Wiltshire, produced for the UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1992; *Population and Reproductive Rights: Feminist Perspectives from the South*, by Sonia Correa in collaboration with Rebecca Reichmann, for the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, 1994; and *Markers on the Way*, by Gita Sen, for the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, 1995.

The DAWN platforms developed from a research process that involved hundreds of women worldwide. Because of its broad and democratic nature, the DAWN process made a significant contribution to the development discourse surrounding the UN global conferences of the 1990s.

### WALKING SLOWLY IN THE WIND - TOGETHER

Peggy Antrobus took her title from the poetry of Martin Carter of Guyana for a paper on considering whether, when it came to women's leadership, we should be 'transforming', being 'transformational' or seeking 'transformation.' She gave the keynote address at a UNIFEM-Caribbean Transformational Leadership Project advisory group meeting in Barbados in May 1999.

"As far as advocacy around gender issues is concerned we need to recognise that gender is not merely about sexual division of labour, but more about structural imbalance of power between the sexes. Women's empowerment is central to any project on transformational leadership. If, therefore, we want to assert women's values and culture we can recognise the relevance of a counter-culture perspective. There is a tension between UNIFEM's recognition of the fundamental importance of the women's movement and its mandate to work within the systems of governance prescribed by the United Nations. The challenge for UNIFEM is how to operate within the system while making it more accountable to the people whose lives it is supposed to benefit. In the process of doing this, UNIFEM must draw inspiration from women who have dared to challenge the given, women who have exercised transformational leadership within these very institutions of the UN and national governments.

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

In today's context transformational leadership is most likely to be found among women who are outside the structures of government and therefore better placed to challenge these structures and to hold governments accountable. Women parliamentarians and women working within the structures of the UN can be transformational leaders, but the exercise of this kind of leadership will require more than training. It will require risk-taking, a willingness to lose external power and to resist oppression in all forms and at all levels — from our households to our houses of parliament. To do this women in leadership positions will have to take up the political struggle for women's equality and do so from a sense of identification and solidarity with women of all sectors, recognising the strengths and constraints of each."



# \$ Financing for Development

**D**AWN was amongst the few women's organisations that in 2000 had already engaged in the Financing for Development process (*DAWN Informs* February 2001) that led to the UN International Conference in Monterrey, Mexico, 18-22 March 2002. FfD was spurred into being after WSSD + 5 and NGO pressure at the Seattle WTO Ministerial meeting that forced unprecedented collaboration between the UN and world finance and trade institutions to find better ways to finance development and implement the agreed action plans of major UN conferences of the decade. DAWN was specifically concerned about the trend towards privatisation of social goods and from an interest in seeing a currency transaction tax or Tobin tax introduced and its income mobilised for development.

**M**ariama Williams attended the NGO Hearing 5-9 November 2000 in New York and spoke on mobilising international resources for development — foreign direct investment and other private flows, and trade. She said the existing institutional framework for trade and foreign direct investment had not led to development or a significant reduction in poverty. The number of people in poverty was growing, and much retrogression had occurred during the era of economic globalisation.

“Attention needs to be paid to the nature of the systemic process governing the intervention of the multilateral financial institutions and the flow of capital, and the institutions be held accountable, their mandates revised and replaced. If in fact we are to believe in the pronouncements of the World Summit for Social Development, the Beijing Platform of Action, and a host of international agreements, as well as the implicit and explicit acknowledgement of the IMF, WB and WTO that they were wrong and the system has problems — then there is an economic, political and moral imperative to move forward differently. This requires a comprehensive assessment of the trade and financial system and reconnection with certain base values already laid down in the international system, primary of which is the Universal declaration of Human Rights, and assorted rights conventions.”

DAWN was amongst women's groups that worked together to engender the FfD process throughout the prepcoms and regional meetings.

*DAWN Informs* November 2001 noted the establishment of the Cartagena Feminist Initiative, formed at a DAWN/REPEN seminar on FfD held in Cartagena de Indias 15-17 July 2001 to take forward the Latin American gender perspective in the FfD process.

Excerpts from their papers at the 3<sup>rd</sup> FfD PrepCom 15-19 October 2001 in New York were reported by Alejandra Scampini. “Women do not have to be treated as a vulnerable group, despite the predominance of discrimination. Women constitute a majority of the population, and within this group, poverty predominates.”

The World Social Forum was an arena for DAWN to put its perspectives on FfD, including the call for a tax on financial transactions at global or national level that could be dedicated to eradicating poverty and supporting public health care systems. There were growing concerns, particularly from the Cartagena Feminist Initiative as well as DAWN, about what kind of development was being financed.

“The basic tone of the FfD process is to make the best of things to keep everyone on board, to regard FfD as a first step and be satisfied, especially as it is the first time that the private sector, government and civil society were brought together to discuss finance.” Sonia Correa.

**D**espite efforts to stay with the negotiations and to encourage more women's voices, DAWN was disappointed with FfD and labelled reports from the conference “Muzzled in Monterrey - no consensus with civil society” (*DAWN Informs* May 2002). Sonia Correa said we could look ahead only with cautious optimism. “The motivation to eradicate poverty is clearly present but the gains of the conference have been very little. Monterrey breathed new life into the post-Washington Consensus and this model must now prove itself under a strengthened United Nations. The debate continues, the challenge remains.” 🌻



## Development Studies/Development Economics: moving forward from TINA

was discussed in DAWN Informs March 2002 in extracts from a paper on 'The need to rethink development economics' by Gita Sen for the UNRISD conference 28 September 2001.

"Rethinking is not resuscitation. Too much breast-beating at this stage about the all too well known sins of commission and omission of neoliberalism and the Washington Consensus or, more broadly, of neoclassical economics, may divert attention from the actual weaknesses of development economics on the one hand, and on the other, the critical issues ahead that urgently call for understanding and action. "So much intellectual energy has been spent on combating the TINA (There Is No Alternative) syndrome with respect to Structural Adjustment Programmes and financial liberalisation that, with a few exceptions, our analysis has not adequately recognised the changes in both the regimes of accumulation and the modes of regulations that underpin the neoliberal thrust. Understanding these changes as the basis of neoliberalism does not mean falling into the TINA trap: instead it should help to more precisely locate what is possible... I believe that one of the weaknesses of development economics arises precisely from its inability to integrate the richer understanding based on development studies more broadly. At the same that traditional development economics was reeling from the onslaught of the neoliberals, our analysis and understanding of participatory approaches to rural development, the importance of sustainable livelihoods and the need for a new gendered analysis of development (to name only a few) have been growing and flourishing... Perhaps it is time to think again about a definition of development that means equitable improvements in the quality of life, genuine democratisation, and the guarantee of full human rights for all."

## AROUND THE WTO TABLES

DAWN set off to the Seattle Ministerial meeting of the World Trade Organisation from 29 November to 3 December 1999 with a WTO myth-busting discussion paper and a DAWN Informs issue (November 1999) that linked reproduction and production in an enlarged perspective to challenge the importance given to the market by gender-blind neo-liberalist thinking.

"Nowhere has the idea of linking been more controversial than in the current NGO debates and advocacy on 'trade linkages' around the WTO. The controversy revolved around the question of whether WTO policies ought to encompass other social issues, such as environment, labour, gender, and human rights. The positions and arguments of both states and civil society appear to gravitate around two perceptible NGO objectives — fair trade and/or equitable trade.

It is within the continuing debates on trade links with social concerns that women's groups from both North and South have been able to find venues for surfacing gender issues in trade. While the interrogation of other aspects of trade has advanced, there remains the need for women to continue articulating gender-specific complexities, ambiguities and dilemmas. As DAWN has made clear from its inception, we can begin this interrogation from our experiences of how previous multilateral institutions have made life more miserable for poor Southern women, not just because economic options have been minimised, but because our empowerment needs as women and as citizens of the South have been disregarded." Gigi Francisco

"The challenge that is presented to policymakers is unravelling the nature of the relationships between

globalisation, macroeconomic policy, development and poverty with a gendered lens." Marina Fe B. Durano.

Mariama Williams produced the first DAWN discussion paper on the WTO: *Free Trade or Fair Trade?* It explained that DAWN was entering the debate on the multilateral trade system as part of its advocacy for fair and just global economic relations, responsible governance, poverty eradication, gender justice and sustainable and equitable development.

Post-Seattle DAWN Caribbean and the Centre of Concern organised a meeting in Grenada in December 1999 that resulted in the International Gender and Trade Network. Gigi Francisco was amongst the speakers: "Seattle was a moment that NGOs, public citizens' groups and Southern governments can claim was theirs. For three days, the representatives of the countries of the world quivered under the scrutiny of civil society groups and social movements....If only for a moment, the South used its numbers and its collective voice to block negotiations, except on those items they believed promoted their interests....The WTO,

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however, remains a formidable global institution and one in which countries are framed in a highly unbalanced relationship.”

Peggy Antrobus on the foundations of IGTN: “DAWN co-sponsored the seminar that led to the establishment of the International Gender and Trade Network as the result of a long-term working relationship between myself and the head of the Washington-based Centre of Concern Women’s Programme, Maria Riley, that had begun at the mid-Decade Women’s Conference in Copenhagen in 1980. In the late 1980s Maria was one of the founders of AltWID, Alternative Women in Development. AltWID was inspired by DAWN, and in a sense its launching was a response to DAWN’s insistence that North American women should do their own research on the impact of economic policies on women in their own country. These were the Reagan years and Alt-WID’s first publication, *Reaganomics: Women and Poverty* in the US drew on DAWN’s framework of analysis. After the Beijing Conference Maria discussed her idea of an initiative to work on gender issues in relation to the emerging trade agendas, as at that time there were no women’s networks working on the issue. Proof of this was when Maria approached the Ford Foundation for funding, she was greeted as someone they had been waiting for!”

*DAWN Discussion Paper II* was published for the 4<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting in Doha, Qatar, 9-13 November 2001, with a front-page article on Imbalances, Inequities and the WTO Mantra, that said the widely-touted benefits of liberalisation had been few or non-existent for many of the members of the WTO. “Trade liberalisation and a new round of trade agreements are not panaceas; they will not cure what ails the economies of developing countries.” The paper attempted to expose some of the host of myths and misconceptions about the impacts of the implementation process of agreements on agriculture, services, intellectual property rights and trade-related investment measures on the day-to-day lives of women, children and men in the countries of the global South.

“We don’t want more benevolent capitalists or even dead capitalists or even more terrorists who will lead in the downfall of capitalists; we want a more democratic distribution of resources and women’s rightful share of political power and visions.” Gigi Francisco.

After Seattle, security and access to the WTO meetings tightened severely. *DAWN Informs* November 2001 reported that delegations in Doha faced arm-twisting, word-twisting, and that NGOs had such difficulty in accessing the meeting that a group of protesters with tape over their mouths picketed the venue with signs that said “no voice in the WTO.”

Mariama Williams warned in *DAWN Informs* March 2002: “The International Monetary Fund, World Bank and World Trade Organisation are increasingly coordinating policies on trade liberalisation. Supporters of market liberalisation who claim that such policies will lead to higher economic growth have scant evidence upon which to base this claim.”

DAWN worked with other civil society groups to strategise for the Cancun Ministerial, scheduled for September 2003 and was represented at a meeting of more than 40 organisations that called on governments to reject the launch of negotiations on a multilateral agreement on investment. (*DAWN Informs* April 2003).

A revised Discussion paper on WTO by Mariama Williams was published in preparation for the 5<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting in Cancun, Mexico, 10-14 September 2003. The questions DAWN had asked in 1999 about the impacts of trade and trade-related policies on the lives of poor women and men in the South, on poverty eradication, gender empowerment and sustainable and equitable development, were still relevant.

There was another *DAWN Informs* ‘stop press’ moment (September 2003) when Gigi Francisco sent news of the collapse of talks at the Cancun Ministerial. Cancun was a “momentary but significant victory” when the ministerial talks collapsed. “When developing countries come to the negotiating table well-prepared with their positions and counter-proposals as they did in Cancun, then we begin to see the dynamic of real and not farcical negotiations... The US threat of using bilateral trade agreements in order to get what it wants has now terrorised some countries and even NGOs. What we should not forget is that these terror tactics have all along been part of WTO dynamic through all sorts of arm-twisting and pressure applied to political leaders in the South. Equally important is the sad reality that multilateral institutions by and large have not been able to stop this monster called unilateralism. ... This is not to say that we should simply give up on multilateralism and pluralism.” Gigi Francisco, *DAWN Informs* March 2004. 🌻



# THE GENDER MAINSTREAMING DEBATE

*Gigi Francisco was on the DAWN team for the WTO Ministerial Meeting in Cancun and this article is based on a brief presentation at a forum on "Doha, development and distribution: do we have a viable trade agenda for development?", 18 March 2002. The perils of gender mainstreaming mechanisms remained relevant at Cancun.*

In response to the activism of women's movements world-wide, the buzzword in international conferences since the 1990's has been to "engender" policies and programs through gender analysis and mainstreaming. There are two ways in which this continues to be officially interpreted. The first is to integrate textual references to the principles of gender equality and equity, usually in the preambular section of agreements and declarations while the key policy thrusts and elements remain gender blind. The second is to ensure that the implementing programmes, processes and mechanisms are inclusive of women's participation and responsive to poor women's needs only in so far as to encourage and sustain their involvement without any real policy impact.

The call for gender analysis and mainstreaming also reverberates on the trade front – within WTO and other trade fora. Official efforts to engender trade rules and reforms in general, whether at the global or regional levels, have so far resulted in two near universal outcomes. Either gender analysis and mainstreaming end up softening the impact of de-stabilising trade liberalisation policies through targeted social safety nets, or they lead to interventions that make poor women more efficient contributors to - and women in politics more effective policymakers for - the systematic expansion and deepening of trade liberalisation reforms. Very often, these are inter-linked objectives.

Such interpretations and outcomes emerge out of a narrow, instrumentalist and managerialist understanding of gender by governments and multilateral bodies. For them it is a simple matter of women getting their share of benefits from, while uncritically participating in, policies and programmes just like the men.


This prevalent official interpretation and implementation of gender analysis and mainstreaming subverts the real meaning of what a gender perspective is, and enables a "gender agenda" to be co-opted and squarely fitted into the dominant neoliberalist regime for trade, development and governance.

A critical gender perspective applied to trade, development and governance cannot but fundamentally challenge paradigms and models that continue to promote in an inter-linked fashion the following trends: (1) invisibility of social reproduction in the economy, (2) re-creation and consolidation of processes of accumulation that result in massive poverty for certain groups of people the world over, and (3) instrumentalisation of democracy and human rights.

A set of rules for trade, development and governance that insists on the centrality of market forces above persons, communities, and governments; promotes the rights of the business sector over those of people, communities and states; and continues to overlook the structural, institutional and cultural barriers to women's self autonomy, is immediately and fundamentally in discord with the visions and politics of gender transformation.

To embark on gender mainstreaming in such a context is at once artificial and leads to the transmutation of "gender", something we are now witnessing in many places. The alternative is to re-claim "gender" and re-position it as a source of sound analysis and sharp critique of the mainstream's politics, perspectives, documents, rules and programs.

A gender analysis of the impact on poor women's workload and social conditions of rapid liberalisation in the agricultural and manufacturing sectors provides us with enough evidence for demanding that the WTO immediately act on more than 100 cases of implementation issues lodged by developing countries, before it goes on with its business as usual.

Such a gender analysis and critique inter-connect women's organisations and networks to a broader range of civil society groups and social movements that continue to challenge and resist unfair and undemocratic WTO rules and processes, and to explore alternative trade, development and governance arrangements. This – and not the mainstream - is the genuine place of gender, if it is to be a truly transformatory project and process. 



# RETHINKING GENDER MAINSTREAMING

From Mariama Williams, Research Coordinator for the Political Economy of Globalisation (Trade)

*Mariama Williams, of DAWN and the International Gender and Trade Network, was invited to speak at an ECOSOC Roundtable Discussion on Mainstreaming Gender Perspectives into Sectoral Policies and Studies, 6-7 July 2004 in New York. This is a brief excerpt from her address:*

First, there is a serious need for a re-visioning and re-thinking gender mainstreaming. Second, the macro-deficit that plagues gender mainstreaming and which threatens to undermine continued progress on this front needs to be dealt with in a proactive manner. Thirdly, in light of the concerns raised in points one and two, there is urgent need for a transformational approach to the institutional and operational framework for gender mainstreaming within the UN and related system.

## I. The vision and intentionality of Gender Mainstreaming

A key problem with current approaches to gender mainstreaming is loss of the primary imperative and the driving force underlying gender mainstreaming. Gender mainstreaming must be a central cornerstone of the process of development, poverty eradication, environmental protection policies, good governance and democracy. However, increasingly gender mainstreaming is becoming instrumentalised as a programmatic goal, or a simply mechanical tool to be applied in some cases and not in others.

In the context of the UN, at the national level and among NGOs/CSOs, there is urgent need to revisit the concepts and framework of gender mainstreaming. We seemingly have also lost touch with gender as a category of analysis that focuses on the relationship of power between women and men in terms of access to and ownership of resources and power. At least two major reasons contribute to this situation. First, under investment in keeping abreast of on-going analytical and policy oriented thinking that aims at developing and strengthening categories critical to gender mainstreaming in areas such as feminist economics which has been exploring issues of gender macroeconomics and international economics as well as sectoral areas. Second, there is the matter of the persistent and growing macro deficit situation in gender mainstreaming.


## II. Macro deficits of contemporary approaches to Gender Mainstreaming

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It is undeniable that financial and trade considerations set the agenda and conditions the environment in which gender mainstreaming and other related processes take place. For example, macroeconomic policy predetermines an over emphasis on growth which reinforces an integrationist approach to gender mainstreaming, constantly shifting that process back into the WID stream instead of the more transformational GAD stream. Macro level of globalization, trade liberalization and the emerging coherence between international financial and trade institutions greatly impinges on the policy space at the national level. But there is no policy interaction at institutional level with regard to gender mainstreaming. Within the context of the macro framework there is the sense that these are hard areas that have nothing whatsoever to do with gender. Gender equality and gender mainstreaming are therefore relegated to softer areas that must work to complement and to offset the necessary adjustment cost of macro planning decisions and outcomes. So, for example, it is perfectly acceptable to examine areas of food distribution between men and women but gender has no place in discussion about agricultural liberalization or tariff reductions. Yet both of these have significant implication for food security/self sufficiency and sustainable livelihoods of boys, girls, women and men.

The present approach to macroeconomics has tended to enforce and reinforce a simplistic anti poverty agenda, which though important and necessary is not sufficient as a goal of gender mainstreaming. Gender equality must be reaffirmed as an end in itself and not simply a means to an end, when it is convenient. This requires attention to structural policy including specific attention to institutional factors

## III. Towards a transformative approach to gender mainstreaming

This means coming to grips with the challenging issues of redistribution of power, both at the institutional level but also in national level policy making as well as in the global political economy. These issues point towards a need for a shift from the current drift back to an integrationist approach to gender that simply tries to fit women and gender concerns into existing strategies and priorities towards the more transformative approach. Therefore there is great scope for re-tuning models, re-thinking the rules, priorities, goals and the distribution of resources. 



**D**AWN was active in the World Social Forum from its inception, pushing for more space for women and joining with the Feminist Articulation of the Mercosur to change the first agenda to include feminist speakers in the main forum panels, a move supported by the Brazilian organising committee. (*DAWN Informs* November 2000). DAWN now has two representatives on the WSF International Council.

*DAWN Informs* February 2001 featured front page coverage of the event, 25-30 January 2001 in Porto Alegre, Brazil, DAWN's panel on the Marketisation of Governance, and participation in another on Transparency and Accountability: Gender Budgets. There were more than 400 workshop events and about 7000 delegates.

World Social Forum 2002 grew in strength, credibility, and size, attracting 80,000 participants including a DAWN team that focussed on Financing for Development and trade issue events. DAWN carried the call for a tax on global financial transactions, with Gigi Francisco supporting other social movements advocating that revenue from any Tobin Tax, global or national, be dedicated to eradicating poverty and achieving social development goals. Sonia Correa presented a paper that evaluated Latin America country experiences with financial transaction taxes, including one used to fund a public health system. (*DAWN Informs* March 2002) The first DAWN WSF Supplement was produced, in three languages, giving a genderscape of globalisation and fundamentalism.

"Our foremost concern (in Porto Alegre 2001) was the absence of women and lack of a robust gender perspective in the analyses of globalisation that developed in the 2001 debates....no consistent scrutiny of the potential impacts of the Bush administration...missing emphasis on the universality and indivisibility of human rights as the contemporary ethical framework for addressing the inequalities and harmful effects of globalisation...and absence of in-depth discussions on the meaning and scope of fundamentalism and its intrinsic correlation with current economic trends. Porto Alegre 2002 cannot ignore these intertwined dimensions." The supplement also carried a strong article on advancing women's agency and reframing social contracts.

IBASE Director, Candido Grzybowski, responded in *DAWN Informs* May 2002: "Women are a 'minority' created by ourselves within civil society. This is a major problem that is engendered, developed and maintained within the culture of civil society itself.... 'Another world is possible' is the Forum's motto. From women's perspective, the task is much vaster than it looks. Undoubtedly, we are disturbing the dominant

# World Social Forum

thought mode of those who act like they are the unique owners of the truth. However, we should also ask ourselves if we are disturbing ourselves as well, our machismo, our racism, our intolerance. WSF is especially to establish dialogues within diversity. This gives the Forum its originality and strength to build global citizenships across the planet. But the road is long and has many a hurdle. I hope that women make us yet more radical, by continuing to do what they have been doing: calling our fouls and disturbing us."

Again DAWN produced a special supplement for WSF 2003, held in Porto Alegre 23-28 January, which had a focus on abortion as a political issue. "DAWN believes the global politics of abortion must be fully debated, firstly because nothing indicates that the Bush administration or other powerful forces against abortion will give up easily on the conservative moral position. This will certainly play out in the various global negotiations. Secondly, but no less importantly, access to legal and safe abortion is a non-negotiable dimension of sexual equality. The claim that abortion should be decriminalised belongs to the women's human rights agenda... Thirdly, abortion must be seen as a crucial element in the contemporary debate on democracy, and because it obliges us to properly reassess the relations between religion and the state."

The supplement also supported a protest against the US "global gag rule", a supposedly anti-abortion restriction on NGOs outside the US to prevent them receiving US family planning funding, being extended to HIV/AIDS funding, thereby disqualifying a large number of organisations from delivering integrated HIV prevention services.

DAWN participants at WSF spoke on human rights and AIDS and saw the need for a much broader coalition of forces that unite women's human rights, health, HIV/AIDS and economic justice groups.



*From previous page*

Gigi Francisco represented DAWN at the Asian Social Forum held in Hyderabad, India, 2-7 January 2003, where she spoke on the double-edged sword of imperial impunity: "One side is neo-liberal globalisation that cuts a deep wedge into our people's livelihoods, social reproduction, environmental integrity, democratic institutions and national sovereignty. On the other side is militarisation, with its crippling war, violence and intolerance..." (*DAWN Informs* April 2003).

At the African Social Forum, Addis Ababa, 5-9 January 2003, Bene Madunagu was instrumental in engendering the resolutions and keeping gender as a central issue of concern in the plenary sessions.

The 2004 World Social Forum was held outside Brazil for the first time, and DAWN sent a strong team to Mumbai, 16-21 January, with a supplement that supported its WSF seminar on the Many Faces of Fundamentalism. In a lead article on religious fundamentalism and secular politics, Sonia Correa said we were challenged to deal with another manifestation of 'fundamentalism' that revealed itself in our own political field: integrational standpoints which can be observed in the sphere of identity, communitarian and cultural revivalist politics. Although the motivation of these forces and of their contemporaneous political expressions is not religious, in many cases they reproduce thought and stir fundamentalist precepts by openly rejecting dialogue and denying the recognition of alternatives and respect for differences that are fundamental principles of democratic politics, and most importantly proposing an agenda that is strongly attached to notions of purity and impurity.

Fatou Sow described some of the positions and debates of fundamentalisms, including religious fundamentalism: "While fundamentalists of different faiths may be antagonists, they have common characteristics of exclusivism, anti-pluralism and intolerance. Fundamentalists in various traditions teach that there was a perfect moment that they strive to recover, even if it never really existed. They protest at the secularisation of society and seek to undo societal changes, replacing them with purified religious institutions and ethics. Islamic fundamentalism is driven by western economic and cultural penetration of the Islamic world during colonialism. It has continued and grown because fundamentalists often see the non-colonial governments as a change of masters, from westerners to westernised Muslims. In most Muslim African

countries, Islam was used as an identity to resist the colonial power. "Muslim women often feel trapped when the issue of religion comes up, dealing with negative and oppressive aspects of what they are supposed to be and also the negative images that other feminists have of Muslims. There is not one type of Muslim woman; they differ according to their countries, culture, language and other influences; the Sharia laws are interpreted differently within these influences and resolve issues in different ways. The Muslim world is not one world, but exists in different places."

*DAWN Informs* March 2004 covered our involvement in WSF events. Vanita Nayak Mukherjee spoke on the rise of Hindu fascism in India: challenges for feminist politics. "The brand of fundamentalism often referred as Hindu Fundamentalism is of a Fascist variety... The defining feature of the Gujerat Genocide in March 2002 that left 2000 dead and more than 150,000 homeless was the brutal and horrific violence against women and children.... In any communal conflicts or ethnic cleansing, women's bodies become the vehicle for dishonouring the community and symbolise a patriarchal reassertion of and material control over "the Other" men's women, targeted to plunder the so-called community lineage and purity.... Gujerat has fundamentally changed our everyday ways of thinking and categorising the world. The liberal and secular political spaces are being rapidly overtaken, leaving us in two states: a state of paralysis and confusion about what we can do, where to begin and how to move ahead; and of constantly revisiting movements, including the feminist movement, for exploring ways to play a constructive role in combating fascism."

Marina Durano spoke on challenging the 'free market' fundamental: "The primacy of markets can be considered one of the fundamental arguments of the neoliberal economic project. What we need to remind the neoliberal practitioners is that the market is not as free as they think it can be, that is, that markets are bound by the institutions that create them... Markets are bound by institutions that we create. There is no 'natural order' to markets. They are created. Hence, markets can be recreated."

An important happening for feminists in Mumbai was the holding of a pre-WSF Feminist Dialogues event, a two-day strategising meeting to build solidarity, planned by a core group that included DAWN. "For me the important thing is that the space for feminist dialogues that was carved out by the Latin American women last year became more of a 'reality' in Mumbai." Gigi Francisco. 🌻



**WCAR** UN World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, 31 August - 7 September 2001, Durban, South Africa.


**D**AWN worked with the Women's International Coalition for Economic Justice from March 2001 (*DAWN Informs* February 2001) to prepare for WCAR. Yvonne Underhill-Sem reported that manoeuvrings by governments to avoid historical and contemporary complicity with racism in its broadest sense, and the scramble for position of 'ultimate victimhood' failed to capture that poor women of the South were generally left with weak voices: they were still disembodied as a political group while simultaneously being the bodies used as stepping stones to "progress". The wordplay and conciliatory attention to civil society at the global level did little to improve their lot. For many of them, not only was their position at the bottom of the hierarchy compounded by poverty, gender, race, culture and/or religion, but also their life was far too short to reap any benefits of international conventions. Women activists who were carrying these concerns to WCAR and beyond understood the importance of introducing new concepts to help people rethink different degrees of 'rights'. The concept of 'intersectionality' was one such attempt. (*DAWN Informs* August 2001).

Bene Madunagu described in *DAWN Informs* November 2001 the final all-night meeting of the WCAR NGO Forum at which she laboured to produce a form of consensus. She suggested the women's movement needed to change strategy, that there was enough 'language' in earlier documents and it was merely being recycled, at risk of being watered down. The main conference, Cecilia Millan reported, encountered many hindrances and ended abruptly with a document that was not really what women wanted. The major achievement had been to generate publicity on a theme rarely discussed in international arenas, and development of legal texts and action plans for international treaties. "There are surely many challenges from now on, but the first will be to demonstrate that the only valid fundamentalism is the one that recognises people

**WORLD SUMMIT ON THE INFORMATION SOCIETY**

**M**agaly Pazello led DAWN into the World Summit on the Information Society process and spoke on a panel at the AWID Forum, Mexico 3-6 October 2002 on the absence of gender perspective, the speed of information/communications technology and issues relating to WTO. (*DAWN Informs* November 2002).

She continues to follow the process through Geneva, 10-12 December 2003, where the Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action was approved, to the second part of the summit in Tunis in November 2005, during which period the POA can still be modified.

Anita Gurumurthy was DAWN representative at Geneva and gave a paper on a panel organised by the Gender Caucus. "Indisputably, the new economy is thriving on the destruction of knowledge and livelihoods of the South.... The use of ICTs in realising human development goals is constrained by the larger socio-economic context, which itself is rooted in neoliberal policies... The geographical politics of the global economy accentuates inequities at national levels... A disastrous consequence of the unavailability of resources to finance ICT for Development initiatives is the transfer of costs to the end-user. The flip-side is the construction and deployment of e-governance as a tool of efficiency rather than of public service... Gender mainstreaming approaches to ICT for Development initiatives undermine the political task of women's empowerment... It is not enough to make women managers of community-owned technological assets.... At WSIS, negotiations between governments, as over anything that implicates global justice, will result in the adoption of the lowest common denominator. Hope lies in the proclivity of ICTs for political change and it is in this that women from the South can take heart." (*DAWN Informs* March 2004) 



# WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

DAWN's work in its sustainable livelihoods theme fed into the Rio+10 process leading up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg 26 August-4 September 2002. In *DAWN Informs* May 2002, Ewa Charkiewicz reflected the concern on the lack of progress in changing consumption and production patterns. "The underlying drivers of unsustainable production and consumption require thinking through, in particular how a global economic system and profit-making capacities of corporations are based on the control over speed (acceleration) of production and consumption, on externalising social and environmental costs, and on generating symbolic and material obsolescence (constantly replacing old products, ideas and symbols by new ones). Companies currently make profits and compete with each other by speeding up consumption and production through symbolic and material product obsolescence.

Another area of concern was human and environmental health: "In less than 100 years, humans and wildlife have been exposed to new and previously unknown quantities and mixtures of chemicals and to xenobiotics. There are now over 100,000 substances that were previously unknown throughout the millions of years of evolution of life on earth. Each person carries a load of such chemicals in his or her body...New technologies and new chemicals are speeding up and changing the terms of reproduction, e.g. genetically modified organisms and new techno-growth, which ultimately makes women and nature redundant.

At the second WSSD PrepCom in New York in January/February 2002, the NGO group presented a paper on governance of transnational corporations, seeking a binding framework covering corporate duties and obligations, citizen and community rights, support of socially and environmentally responsible government initiatives, and liability and implementation mechanisms. A new social contract should be based on pillars that include... a focus on protecting reproduction, including sharing of the costs and time burden by men and a living income or wage; a focus on environmental reproduction, the regenerative capacity of the environment; participatory accountable and transparent democracy at all levels; and the integration of the precautionary principle into all areas of governance — 'foremost do no harm.

DAWN produced a supplement for the Summit that reflected NGO concern about the Draft Plan of Implementation, especially the absence of women and gender. Ewa Charkiewicz spoke on behalf of the Women's Caucus, and said that the discussion on sustainable development had been re-crafted into debating trade and hedging positions for the new WTO ministerial. The debate was not about sustainable development but about who controls developing countries' markets and who gets a larger piece of the global cake. 🌸

**D**AWN has entered the SIDS (Small Islands Developing States) process for the 10-year review of the Barbados Programme of Action, led by Joan Grant-Cummings and Yvonne Underhill-Sem. A strong team of feminists working with the civil society caucus were able to get a recommendation to study the gender impact of the BPOA introduced at the inter-regional prepcom, January 2004. 🌸

## MAJOR DISTRACTION GIMMICKS

*Peggy Antrobus examined how the Millennium Development Goals (which she described as Major Distraction Gimmicks) could be made to work to promote women's equality and empowerment in the CARICOM region in a presentation at the UNDP Caribbean Regional MDGs Conference held in Barbados, 7-9 July 2003. An extract from the paper was published in DAWN Informs, September 2003.*

I first heard of the MDGs in the outraged response of the global feminist community when the hard-won goal of women's sexual and reproductive rights was excluded from the list. This is even more inexcusable given that women's sexual and reproductive rights is a crucial target and/or indicator of progress under at least 4 goals - goal #3 (women's equality and empowerment), goal #4 child mortality, goal #5 (maternal health) and goal #6 (combating HIV/AIDS).

The deliberate exclusion of this fundamental indicator of women's human rights and empowerment from the MDGs symbolises both the lack of sincerity on the part of the majority of those who voted on them, and the struggle that lies ahead for anyone who seriously seeks equality, equity and empowerment for women.

In fact, a major problem of the MDGs is their abstraction from the social, political and economic context in which they are to be implemented — the 'political economy' of the MDGs.





DAWN made two strong statements in *DAWN Informs* of April 2003:

**DAWN SAYS NO TO NEGOTIATIONS FOR BEIJING+10 AND CAIRO+10**

**T**he current political conjuncture of aggressive fundamentalism and militarism presents serious risks to women's human rights world-wide. DAWN (Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era) like a number of other organizations, is concerned about the possibility of setbacks to the gains made for women's human rights during and in relation to the UN conferences of the 1990s. Contrary to the relatively open environment for such advances that existed during the 1990s, the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century confronts us with the extreme social conservatism, aggressive unilateralism, and support for militarism of the Bush administration, and the worsening of fundamentalist trends elsewhere as well. In such a context, it is very important to protect the gains made for women's human rights through careful and considered action. It is especially important not to place these gains at risk through promoting or agreeing to formats or mechanisms for regional or international meetings that are likely to be problematic.

**W**e believe, in this context, it is imperative that there NOT be any international or regional inter-governmental meetings that in any way involve or may lead to official negotiations - not any UNGASS or Ministerial or other High Level meetings that by their very form automatically become negotiations. Not only would such negotiations be an unproductive use of scarce financial and human resources, but they are certain to put a severe burden on governments and the NGO community to defend the gains of the 1990s and to prevent rollback.

**FOR THE SAKE OF OUR HARD WON GAINS, NO OFFICIAL NEGOTIATIONS OF ANY KIND!**

***DAWN's Call to Resist the War against Iraq***


**DAWN** pays tribute to the millions of people who have gone out into the streets to demonstrate their stand for peace, most recently those who turned out on 15 and 16 February 2003 in over 600 cities worldwide, including Adelaide, Amsterdam, Melbourne, Sydney, Berlin, London, Rome, Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur and Penang, Lahore and 20 other Pakistan cities, Manila, New York, Philadelphia, Rio de Janeiro, San Francisco, Sao Paulo, Suva, and Warsaw.

**DAWN** shares the understanding that any war against Iraq is not about weapons of mass destruction or any of the other stated rationales, but about imperial greed and the abuse of human rights and power.

**DAWN** calls upon all women and men

- in all war-mongering countries to continue holding their representatives fully accountable, including through campaigns pledging not to vote for individual politicians and political parties that have sought to justify and support unilateralism and preemptive attack instead of genuine multilateralism and the rule of law; and
- worldwide, to insist on the disarmament of all States and a total ban on arms sales.
- To resist patriarchal intolerance and all types of reactionary backlash against citizens rights, especially women's reproductive and sexual rights, as these are linked to militarism and fundamentalism.

We want a world where equity, equality, diversity and genuine peace reign.

**DAWN** condemns all leaders and governments that brutalize citizens, violate human rights, disregard international law, and use violence and destructive weapons as a currency of power. This condemnation extends to the Iraqi Government and Saddam Hussein, and even more so to the leaders of the United States, United Kingdom, Australia and others in the so-called Coalition of the Willing, who aided and abetted Saddam in the past and now propose to ignore majority public opinion to launch an unjustifiable war against the Iraqi people. We say "*No to war, even as a last resort!*" 



# INTERLINKING

## - THE DAWN PROJECT

The inter-linking of analyses of DAWN's inter-related themes has been an ongoing project within DAWN since the 1990s.

Deepening the analysis of women's agency as an emancipatory project requiring the support of global civil society is a key aim of DAWN's project of inter-linking its analyses under the four themes of Political Economy of Globalisation, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, Sustainable Livelihoods and Environmental Justice, and Political Restructuring and Social Transformation.

"Women's agency means...women acting as autonomous subjects...entailing gains in personal freedom for women and destabilisation of gender systems. The expansion in women's agency, especially in the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as a result of changing production and consumption systems, the breakdown of the feudal family and the impacts of feminism, among other things, has seen fierce cultural and religious backlashes expressed in various forms of fundamentalism. Far from being 'understandable' responses to the loss of jobs, lack of security, or destruction of national cultures (a popular left analysis), the rise of various forms of fundamentalism has really been a response to the steady growth of women's agency. A defining feature of fundamentalism, whether based on religions, market, or culture/tradition/ethnicity ideologies, is its explicit denial of gender equality, expressed most starkly in controls on women's sexuality and reproductive rights. This must be clearly understood and taken on board by progressive organisations within the anti-globalisation movement if we are to effectively counter, on the one hand, the political leverage gained since September 11 by forces virulently opposed to Western economic hegemony and hostile to the universalisation of 'western' values of equality, human rights and democracy, and withstand, on the other hand, reactionary states opposed to anti-globalisation movements and other legitimate democratic expressions of dissent."

DAWN has effectively linked analyses of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights and globalisation by emphasising the enabling environment as a prerequisite for both the implementation of health policies and the full realisation of women's sexual and reproductive self-determination. We have persistently stated that in the absence of a transformed global economic environment, sexual and reproductive rights will be threatened and undermined. We have also repeatedly emphasised that the combination of religious-political and male fundamentalisms are major impediments to S&RH&R.

In a similar way, we inter-linked our critical perspective on globalisation with our analysis of state, governance, citizenship, democracy and social movement issues, published in 2000 under the title *Marketisation of Governance*. Amongst other things, we argued here that South regions consisted of state-nations, where the corporate power of the state dominates, and the discipline of citizens is enforced through various cultural and material means, rather than nation-states, which would integrate active citizens into their institutions and processes.



*From previous page*

Other supports of our new analytical framework include: production and consumption, the issue of the state, and ensuring security; shifting debate on the global economy and environment away from a focus on efficiency and back to changing existing production and consumption systems by highlighting the externalisation of costs under the present system, and who pays. Ensuring security and sustainable livelihoods through a rights approach that emphasises the indivisibility and centrality of human rights and links with 'decent work' and social security as a citizen's right is a key element in our reconstruction of social contracts and elaboration of alternative economic frameworks.

At the AWID 9<sup>th</sup> International Forum on Women's Rights and Development: Reinventing Globalisation, held in Guadalajara, Mexico, 3-6 October 2002, DAWN was able to outline its work on making analytically clear the links between gender justice, economic justice and democracy, and how religious/national/ethnic fundamentalism and economic fundamentalism intersected, in a panel that discussed the paradoxes facing feminist strategists.

"The struggle of the worldwide women's movement for piecemeal and issue-focused compensatory rights and entitlements can no longer be the central political project of the women's movement. The complexities and paradoxes spawned by globalisation have created a crisis of legitimacy for institutions, for the states, and even for the women's movement as currently constituted. Rather the challenge lies in the capacity of feminist interrogation and activism to produce fresh analyses and critiques that account for the transboundary paradoxes opened up in the current conjuncture, as well as to situate ourselves within the frontier of a people's movement for 'another possible world'." Gigi Francisco. 


## DAWN TRAINING INSTITUTE

**D**AWN's initiative to share its analysis and wealth of experience in global advocacy for gender justice saw the inaugural Training Institute open in Bangalore, India, 14 September to 3 October 2003, with 28 young feminists from 16 countries of the South. DAWN was delighted to have attracted a group of such intelligent, committed, and creative young women who transformed the training exercise into an exciting experience for all.

The primary objectives were to share DAWN's analysis and wealth of experience in global advocacy for gender justice; to impart an understanding of the changing terrain of this struggle and of the interplay of new agendas around gender and development; and to contribute to the emergence of a new generation of global feminist advocates and through this strengthen future advocacy efforts at both global and regional levels.

The inaugural DTI included lectures and interactive discussions, in-depth case study analysis, organised debates and role-play, and practical skill building exercises in research, analysis and advocacy, with an emphasis on group work. Participants formed different groupings for different activities, enriching their own experience and providing lively and imaginative contributions to discussions and presentations.

DAWN is following up the inaugural institute in the regions. DAWN/REPEM held a Latin American event in Porto Alegre, Brazil, 27 March-2 April 2004. DAWN Africa held a training with a focus on gender and HIV/AIDs, gender and trade, citizenship, and ICTs. Planning is proceeding for an institute in the Pacific.

The connections made in Bangalore continue via the the internet, including a website designed and uploaded by Shamillah Wilson in Cape Town. DAWN is bringing as many of the young feminists as possible to Cape Town to participate in the anniversary programme, including an intergenerational debate and a cultural performance. 



**DAWN wishes to acknowledge with gratitude all of the donors who have so generously supported its work over the past 20 years, including:**

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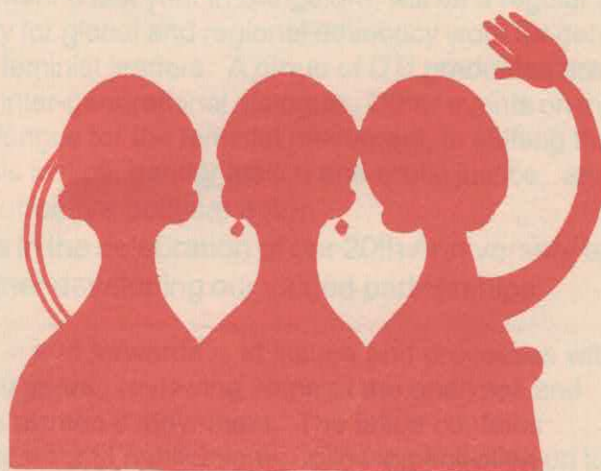
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*Thankyou*

Thankyou also to our friends, colleagues and supporters who have sent us so many good wishes on this anniversary.







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**STEERING COMMITTEE**

**General Coordinator:** Claire Slatter, Fiji

Tel/Fax: (679) 3314770

Email: [dawngc@infogen.net.nz](mailto:dawngc@infogen.net.nz)

**Former General Coordinator:** Peggy Antrobus, Barbados

Tel/Fax: (246) 4374235

Email: [pan@caribsurf.com](mailto:pan@caribsurf.com)

**RESEARCH COORDINATORS****Political Economy of Globalisation:**

*Gita Sen, India*

Tel: (91) 80 663 2450; Fax: (91) 80 664 4050

Email: [gita@iimb.ernet.in](mailto:gita@iimb.ernet.in)

*Mariama Williams, Jamaica (Trade)*

Tel: (561) 6550881; Fax: (561) 8338177

email: [mariamaw@hotmail.com](mailto:mariamaw@hotmail.com)

**Sexual and Reproductive Rights:**

*Sonia Correa, Brazil*

Tel: (55) 21 553 0676; Fax: (55) 21 552 8796

Email: [scorrea@abiaids.org.br](mailto:scorrea@abiaids.org.br)

**Pol. Restructuring & Soc. Transformation**

*Vivienne Taylor, South Africa*

Tel: (27) 21 6504221; Fax: (27) 21 6854304 (h)

Email: [Taylor94@iafrica.com](mailto:Taylor94@iafrica.com)

**REGIONAL COORDINATORS**

**Africa: Anglophone:** Bene Madunagu, Nigeria

Tel: (234) 8722-2340; Fax: (234) 8722-0929

Email: [dawn\\_angafri@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:dawn_angafri@yahoo.co.uk)

**Africa: Francophone:** Fatou Sow, Senegal

Tel: (221) 825-0090; Fax: (221) 825-6533

Email: [Fatousow@sentoo.sn](mailto:Fatousow@sentoo.sn)

**Caribbean:** Joan Grant-Cummings

Tel: (876) 929 8873; Fax: (876) 968 9260

Email: [bracelets59@yahoo.com](mailto:bracelets59@yahoo.com)

**Latin America:** Celita Eccher, Uruguay

Tel/Fax: (598-2) 403-0599

Email: [dawn@repem.org.uy](mailto:dawn@repem.org.uy)

**Pacific:** Yvonne Underhill-Sem, Cook Islands

Email: [yju\\_sem@yahoo.com](mailto:yju_sem@yahoo.com)

**South Asia:** Vanita Nayak Mukherjee, India

Tel: (91) 471 441534

Email: [Vanita@md2.vsnl.net.in](mailto:Vanita@md2.vsnl.net.in)

**South East Asia:** Gigi Francisco, Philippines

Tel: (63) 2 9272421; Fax: (63) 2 4260169

Email: [jfrancisco@mc.edu.ph](mailto:jfrancisco@mc.edu.ph)

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DAWN (Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era)

PO Box 13124

Suva, Fiji Islands

Tel/Fax: (679) 3314770

Email: [dawn@dawn.org.fj](mailto:dawn@dawn.org.fj)

Website: [www.dawn.org.fj](http://www.dawn.org.fj)