

DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVES WITH WOMEN FOR A NEW ERA

Duplicate

DAWN REUNION MEETING

BANGALORE - AUGUST 28 - 30, 1986

INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL STUDIES TRUST

" THARANGA " 10TH CROSS
RAJMAHAL VILAS EXTENSION
BANGALORE - 560 080

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INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL STUDIES TRUST

"THARANGA" 10th Cross,
Rajamahal Vilas Extension,
BANGALORE - 560 080.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Institute of Social Studies Trust and the DAWN Group would like to thank the Royal Netherlands Embassy, New Delhi for a prompt sanction of funds which enabled the Institute of Social Studies Trust to convene the DAWN Reunion Meeting at Bangalore. Our special thanks are due to Ms. Hanke Koopman who encouraged the group in their work and also for her keen interest in DAWN's activities.

We would also like to thank Mr. M. A. Sreenivasan who made the premises of the M. A. Singamma Sreenivasan Foundation available to host the DAWN Reunion Meeting.

Our thanks are also due to the members of Institute of Social Studies Trust for their participation and cooperation.

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INTRODUCTION

DAWN - Development Alternatives with Women For a New era, started as a global project consisting of a study of development experience from the perspective of Third World Women and the formulation of more equitable development alternatives for the future. The main objectives of the project were:

1. to see if women from diverse perspectives could form a strong united women's movement with a unifying platform in an attempt to influence global development.
2. to produce a paper which would provide^e a basis for women to speak with a unified voice on atleast some issues in the decade to follow, and more ambitiously, for women to change the world for the better.

The objectives of the project were more than achieved, in the sense that, a paper was produced and this paper was published as a book entitled "DAWN - Development Crises and Alternative Visions:Third World Women's Perspectives".

DAWN was conceived by researchers, policy makers and activists from the Third World as a first step in a broader

project of consultation, analysis and intellectual exchange. Their aim was to formulate a more integrative analysis which would weave together the diverse aspects of the current development debates with the literature on women and development in order to pose alternative hypotheses about women's role in the processes of socio-economic transformation. As such global Third World initiatives have been few, and it was felt that DAWN could act as a vital Third World umbrella for both developing a framework of analysis on women and development and fostering research exchanges among South scholars. Indeed, the collaborative process to date has resulted in a cross-cultural synthetic overview of development's impact, the global economic, political and cultural crises, and the roles of women's organisations in the development process. While this overview is an invaluable first step, it is apparent that many more questions need to be carefully studied.

For example, the book concludes that both analyses of and proposed solutions to the food-fuel-water crisis neglect women's critical position in societies as food producers, food-fuel-water providers and basic needs managers. It urges the formulation of integrated policies and studies toward farming, timber use, and water management which clearly

recognize women's day roles in these areas. To begin this task, concrete research on the impact of cash cropping on subsistence food production; on women's access to land, credit, technology, markets and rural employment opportunities and on land reform and cooperative farming strategies-all need to be undertaken in greater detail. Or, in the area of international debt, the book speculates about the specific impact of this crisis on women. However, more empirical and theoretical research needs to be undertaken to broaden our knowledge base on the disaggregated effects of the debt crisis. Such studies are likely to have general implications for developing countries in many different regions. There are many other related issues that could also be analysed within the DAWN umbrella at the regional, national and local levels and used as a basis for cross-cultural comparison.

With this background, the Dawn group met in Rio-de-Janeiro in february, 1986 and have chalked out a programme of collective research on two broad themes:

1. Women's movements and women's organisations.
2. The energy and food crisis.

A methodolgoy has been evolved by which the research in both

these subjects will be conceptually integrated such that the knowledge can empower the women's movements to action and vice versa. The experience of women's organisations can empower the research.

REASONS FOR BANGALORE REUNION

At Rio, the forthcoming World Sociology Congress, planned to be held in Delhi, August 18-23, 1986 was identified as an occasion when committee members of DAWN could meet and review the progress since the February Rio meeting. This seemed an important milestone because of two initiatives taken by participants in the Rio meeting:

1. Neuma Aguiar and Lourdes Arizpe already were important members of RC-32 and were planning to have a DAWN Round Table. In fact several DAWN members initiated discussions at RC-32. They were already in touch with Ms. Daniz Kandiyotti, the Chairperson of RC-32 at that time. Thus these two colleagues were willing to take the trouble to bring together as many DAWN persons as possible into those activities.
2. INSTRAW, represented by Ms. Krishna Patel, were planning to have a Round Table called 'Rethinking on Development', which would be a dialogue between

researchers and activists. This was being co-convened by UNESCO. Ms. Krishna Patel offered to field as many as the DAWN committee members' names as possible, to ensure their tickets and expenses for New Delhi.

Thus the New Delhi reunion was planned well in advance. An agenda was tentatively mentioned namely:

1. Convenors of the two research programmes were to prepare outlines, circulate it within their regional co-ordinators and bring up a review for finalising at Delhi.
2. To further discuss on identification of associates in different regions.
3. Reporting of Steering Committee members of progress of work between February and August 1986.
4. Consideration of constraints and needs faced by the new secretariat and how the group can provide more support.

At this time, the idea was also brought up, of having another post World Congress review and reflection at the same venue, as the founding meeting in August 21-24, 1984. This idea found great enthusiasm, as many DAWN

Advisory Committee members who had been deeply involved with DAWN had not been able to come to the first Bangalore meeting. These were especially Carmen Barosso, Noleen Heyzer, Lucille Mair, Lourdes Arizpe, Hameeda Hussain.

Further, Gita Sen, who had been such an important member of DAWN was not able to attend either the Rio or the World Congress due to doctor's advise against travelling during her early pregnancy. It was felt that the reunion in Bangalore may also provide to the DAWN group an opportunity to have discussions with her.

At the reunion in Bangalore, it was proposed that there would not only be a review of the progress of DAWN process between February and August, but also a review of the activation and mobilisation and alliances that may be formed at DAWN during the World Conference. In other words, it seemed an important step with no special fund mobilisation from the point of view of international travel by which DAWN could strengthen its future by a deep reflection on the first phase.

During this period February 1986-August 1986, another activity which emerged was the visit of Ms. Caren Grown, Research Associate, who worked with Gita Sen in preparing the book Development Crises and Alternative Visions: Third

World Women's Perspectives at Nairobi. The book had been discussed and it had been felt that (1) there should be a revision responding to various comments (2) it should be published formally, so that it could be easily available. A mandate was given to Gita Sen and Caren Grown to finalise the manuscript and initiate the publication. Caren Grown reported this at Rio - a publication committee was formed and in consultation with that committee, due to Gita Sen's inability to travel, Caren Grown came to India and spent a few weeks with Gita discussing the manuscript. She raised resources independently. Thus a second aspect of the Bangalore retreat was to see the progress of the work done by Gita and Caren, to discuss the newly written foreword of the DAWN book and finalise it for publication. Thus the Bangalore retreat was kept in mind as something to be achieved.

CONSTRAINTS

1. During the correspondence between Neuma Aguiar, the DAWN associates and Devaki Jain, it emerged that those who were coming to Delhi would not be able to afford the Delhi-Bangalore ticket.

2. Many cables were exchanged between Rio and Bangalore and finally a proposal was made to the Netherlands Embassy, asking if they would be able to fund the extra travel from Delhi to Bangalore and related expenses of the 3-day retreat.

Preparatory work was done in Delhi during the World Congress (see enclosed time-table of DAWN participants while in New Delhi in Annexure 2).

THE PROCESS

The planned meeting - reunion - in Bangalore thus became a part of a PROCESS - a step in building the spirit of a reunion. It was preceded by meetings in Delhi and followed up again by meetings in Delhi, again tied up by a final meeting in Bangalore with the new coordinator, Neuma Aguir with the two principal writers - Caren Grown and Gita Sen- and Devaki Jain, the initiator. Thus the process timetable was as follows:

- August 17 - Meeting with Neuma Aguir to discuss the draft agenda and the participants for the Bangalore Reunion Meeting.
- Few DAWN members who had arrived

- at Delhi met at dinner to discuss their participation in the Bangalore meeting.
- August 18 - The DAWN members met at breakfast to continue discussions regarding participation in the Bangalore meeting.
- August 19 - Meeting with Neuma Aguir to discuss arrangements for DAWN reception.
- August 20 - Gathering of the DAWN members at ISST Delhi to discuss the research methodology on Women's movement and crises.
- August 21 - Discussions with Neuma to decide on list of invitees to the DAWN reception.
- DAWN members gathered again to discuss and finalise the research methodology.
- Dinner hosted for the DAWN members at Devaki Jain's residence.
- August 22 - Reception hosted by DAWN & RC-32

- August 23 - Zen Tadesse, Noeleen Heyzer and Devaki Jain left for Bangalore and met Gita Sen and held discussions on the activities of DAWN at the World Sociology Congress.
- August 24 - A meeting at ISST Bangalore to discuss some issues to be taken up at the next Steering Committee of DAWN.
- The three DAWN members left for Delhi and met the other DAWN members at Delhi to report on their discussions with Gita Sen at Bangalore.
- August 25 - Meeting on "Rethinking on Development" organised by UNESCO
- The Second Steering Committee meeting of DAWN
- August 26-29 - Caren Grown met with Gita Sen at Bangalore to revise some sections of the Book.
- August 30 - Neuma Aguiar read the revised sections at Bangalore and offered

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her comments and suggestions.

August 31 - Neuma Aguiar and Caren Grown left
for Rio and New York respectively

A detailed note on the time-table of activities and the summary of discussions held during these meetings are enclosed in Annexure 2 and 3.

In summary, they held 2 meetings discussing independently the two research programmes and 2 informal meetings. There was also 2 steering committee meetings.

Some of the ticklish issues that emerged from this meeting were as follows:

1. The Boundary - how far membership in the Committees would have to be of South - South persons? This issues came up as a result of the position taken by one of the DAWN founder members, Dr. Marie Angelique Savane.
2. What kind of procedure would DAWN want in its process of empowering the existing networks of researchers and activists.
3. What would be the role of the nodal point in Rio.

Thus visits to Bangalore were made by individuals in sequence, but each Bangalore meeting was fed back into the Steering Committee in Delhi and all the objectives planned for the Bangalore Reunion were achieved.

ACHIEVEMENTS

The representative of AAWORD, Zen Tedesse and Noleen Heyzer and Devaki Jain visited Bangalore during the week end August 22-23, 1986. Two meetings were held reviewing the progress since Rio on all the issues of agenda. A full fledged minutes of this meeting was prepared and this was reported back to the Steering Committee in Delhi on August 30. It was felt by everyone that the Bangalore meeting had provided an important cementing process to the issue of South-South and AAWORD's position.

The participation of AAWORD, which had become fragile, was brought back as a result of this meeting.

Another aspect that came out for emphasis was the DAWN's style and method. It was emphasised that DAWN should remain extremely low profile and flexible and the style must be built on TRUST. On this Gita Sen wrote a note to be circulated to the DAWN initiating Committee (Annexure 4).

A draft prepared by Gita and Caren was discussed and modified by the representative group of Asia and Africa.

After the Congress and the Round Table were over, Caren Grown and Neuma Aguiar visited Bangalore and further finalised the issues, doing a full review of all the events of Delhi and Bangalore. Neuma also made her comments on the draft and the minutes of her meetings were typed and the proceedings were sent to her by the Bangalore Secretariat.

Neuma in her report on the Bangalore meeting (dated August 30, Bangalore) says "written notes were provided on the revised preamble and introduction to the Book. Some of these points are synthesised below:

"The discussions related to the book, referred mostly to a lack of discussion of a range of development theories. Only one discussed uses trickle down theory.

I suggested to show the wide range of diverse theories that this field now represents with contributions from development planning, social ecology, public policy etc. .. Post war development theories should include those originated in the Third World like CEPAL - ECLA import substitution theory. Gita and Caren were referred to the paper by Ollaidine de Ollielina and Tieresita de Barbiew presented in Nairobi as they elaborate a thorough discussion

of CEPAL's development theory.

Topical points were also discussed.

Most important had to do with referring to the structure, research committee and working groups not as something to be constituted in the future, but as an existing reality."

Caren in her report on Bangalore meeting (August 30, Bangalore) says: "During the period of 26-29 August, Caren Grown met with Gita Sen in Bangalore to revise and update the preamble, introduction, and special acknowledgements sections of Development, Crises and alternative visions: Third World Women's Perspectives. The revised edition will be published by Monthly Review Press (New York) in October 1986.

Revisions were formulated along two lines : 1) to more fully elaborate on the significance of the DAWN process, its potential for galvanizing development politics and for unifying the women's movements around a coherent vision of development alternatives; and 2) to more clearly situate the text within the context of the current crisis in development theory and thinking to show how a focus on poor women allows new , more relevant frameworks to be developed and translated into policy action and research. It was also the intention to point out new possibilities for moving beyond

current economic dilemmas in both theory and practice. To adequately complete these revisions, it was useful to discuss and synthesize several of the major theories emerging from the DAWN and Women in Society panels at the World Congress of Sociologists. A number of background papers addressed the main elements of DAWN's perspective viz. , the importance of understanding the dimensions of resource use and abuse and the related problems of poverty and inequality; as well as highlighting how women's roles - as workers and managers of human welfare - are central to the ability of households and communities to tackle the current crisis of survival. It was also beneficial to meet in Bangalore to review the multiple levels of DAWN's decentralized process and to indicate future steps. Both the preamble and introduction will reflect these discussions. After the first drafts of the preamble and introduction were completed, they were given to Neuma Aguir for comment and suggestions. Her useful ideas are subsequently being incorporated into the final text".

The revised preamble and introduction to the book are given as Annexure-5.

Thus, though the Bangalore reunion had not taken place in the same method that was planned, namely, that all persons

would meet together for two days in the atmosphere of the M. A. Singamma Sreenivasan Foundation, the purpose of the planned meeting has been achieved. It was felt that perhaps the achievements were more efficient because each meeting became a proper business meeting and some of their relaxation and wide ranging communication that was planned got cut off.

Gita Sen became deeply involved and it is hoped that she would be able to take on responsibilities for DAWN in its next phase. The minutes of each of the meetings, both Delhi and Bangalore are attached as annexures 6 and 7.

2. Another achievement was a reception hosted by DAWN and RC-32 to which Indians who have been interested in the women issue were invited.

It was ISST's idea to introduce DAWN committee members to various well wishers in Delhi. However, after discussions with DAWN members, it was decided to share the hosting of the reception with RC-32.

Hence, the DAWN reception was held at Samrat - hall being free input of RC-32, ISST sent out invitations, and DAWN (RIO) and ISST shared the cost of food etc. Individuals like Sri. Maheshwar Dayal, Secretary, Non-Conventional Energy,

and other such development agency persons were able to dialogue with the DAWN Women.

At this Reception, the activities of DAWN was explained by Neuma Aguair - since its inception upto Delhi. She then introduced the Research, Training, Advocacy, Publications, Communications and International Relations Coordinators. This platform was also used by the participants to make their own announcements. This Reception was very successful in that those who were desirous of knowing about DAWN had the opportunity of learning and meeting DAWN members. A number of such persons registered as members of DAWN.

INSTRAW and UNESCO organised a Round Table on "Rethinking on Development". Krishna Patel of INSTRAW offered to field as many as the DAWN members as possible to ensure their tickets and expenses for New Delhi. Devaki Jain was asked to present a formulation on the theme for which she drew heavily on the discussions at the World Sociology Congress and the other DAWN meetings. She also circulated her paper entitled "Advances in Feminist Theory" which she had presented at the Congress. This paper is enclosed as annexure 8.

The National Conference on Women's Studies was held in Chandigarh between October 1st and 4th 1986. Devaki Jain was invited to present a paper on Alternative Development at

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this conference. The paper defines DAWN - its ideology and its activities. This presentation helped the participants in a better understanding of DAWN and its activities; and also in enlisting the support of many participants for DAWN's research programme and networking.

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LIST OF ANNEXURES

1. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
2. TIME - TABLE OF ACTIVITIES
3. NOTES OF MEETINGS
4. POINTS DISCUSSED ON AUGUST 24 AT BANGALORE
5. REVISED PREAMBLE AND INTRODUCTION OF THE BOOK
6. PROCEEDINGS OF DAWN GROUP'S MEETING ON WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS AND CRISES
7. MINUTES OF DAWN RESEARCH COMMITTEE MEETING
8. ADVANCES IN FEMINIST THEORY - BY DEVAKI JAIN
9. ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT - BY DEVAKI JAIN
10. ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT FOR WOMEN - BY DEVAKI JAIN
11. THE CULTURE OF THE POOR : IS EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT POSSIBLE? - BY DEVAKI JAIN

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

BANGALORE MEETING

1. Ms. Neuma Aguiar,
Institute Universitario of Pesquisas
Do Rio De Janeiro Rua Da Matriz,
82 Rio de Janeiro,
R. J. - 22260
Brasil.
2. Ms. Zene Tadesse,
Association of African Women for
Research and Development,
BP 3304 DAKAR,
Senegal.
3. Ms. Noeleen Heyzer,
The Asian and Pacific Development Centre
Persiaran Duta, Off Jalan Duta,
P. O. Box 12224,
Kuala Lumpur,
Malaysia.
4. Ms. Caren Grown,
839, West End Avenue,
Apartment 5-C,
NY 10025,
New York.
5. Ms. Devaki Jain,
Institute of Social Studies Trust,
SMM Theatre Crafts Museum,
5, Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Marg,
New Delhi.

6. Dr. Gita Sen,
Centre for Development Studies,
Aakulam Road,
Ulloor,
Trivandrum.
7. Ms. Jaya Sharma
Institute of Social Studies Trust,
SMM Theatre Crafts Museum,
5, Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Marg,
New Delhi.
8. Ms. Shashi Rajagopal,
Institute of Social Studies Trust,
"Tharanga", 10th Cross,
Rajamahal Vilas Extension,
Bangalore - 560 080.

TIME - TABLE

ACTIVITIES AT DELHI:

ISST received a letter from Neuma Aguilar during the first week of August (enclosed letter) informing ISST of her arrival and requesting ISST to provide some support facilities.

Jaya Sharma, Research Associate, ISST, Delhi, was deputed to facilitate the DAWN meetings at Delhi.

- August 6 to 9, 1986. - ISST prepared a kit containing a map from all the major hotels to ISST, the draft agenda (enclosed) and some relevant papers-(enclosed). This kit was distributed amongst all the DAWN members who attended the World Sociology Congress (enclosed).
- August 11 to 14, 1986 - Visits to the ISA Travel agent in Delhi to make a list of DAWN participants attending the congress.
- 14th August - Arrival of Neuma Aguair at Delhi
- 15th August - Meeting with Neuma Aguair at Hotel Lodhi.
- Shashi Rajagopal, ISST, Bangalore, arrived at Delhi, to facilitate the Delhi DAWN meetings and also to coordinate the DAWN Reunion Meeting, scheduled to be held at Bangalore.
- 16th August - Visit to the travel agent.
- 17th August - Meeting with Neuma Aguair at Lodhi hotel. Dinner at Lodhi Hotel with a few DAWN members.
- 18th August - Breakfast at Lodhi Hotel with DAWN members.
- Meeting with Lodhi manager.
- 19th August - Meeting with Neuma Aguair to discuss arrangements for DAWN Reception.

- Meeting with Hotel Samrat Manager.
- 20th August - Gathering of DAWN group at ISST to discuss Research on Women's movements and crises.
- 21st August - Gathering of DAWN steering committee at Hotel Samrat.
- Gathering of DAWN group at Claridges to further discuss and finalise methodology for conducting research - on Women's movements and crises.
- Dinner hosted by Devaki Jain at her residence for DAWN members
- Meeting with Neuma Aguirre at Hotel Lodhi.
- 22nd August - DAWN Reception at Hotel Samrat.
- 23rd August - Left for Bangalore.

ACTIVITIES AT BANGALORE

- Meeting with Gita Sen at her residence
- 24th August - Meeting at ISST, Bangalore.
- Departure for Delhi.

ACTIVITIES AT DELHI.

- Meeting at Samrat Hotel of DAWN members.
- 25th August - Meeting on "Rethinking on Development" was attended by most DAWN members.
- Steering Committee meeting of DAWN at Samrat Hotel.
- 26th August - Rethinking on Development

ACTIVITIES AT BANGALORE

- Arrival of Caren Grown in Bangalore.
- Meeting with Gita Sen.
- 28th August - Arrival of Devaki Jain and Neuma Aguir in Bangalore
- Caren Grown and Gita Sen met to rewrite the preamble.
- 29th August - Meeting with Caren Grown, Gita Sen, Neuma Aguir to discuss revised draft of the preamble and
- 30th August - Neuma and Caren left for Rio and New York respectively.

DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVES WITH WOMEN FOR A NEW ERA (DAWN)

c/o

INSTITUTO UNIVERSITÁRIO DE PESQUISAS DO RIO DE JANEIRO

Rua Paulino Fernandes nº 32 - Rio de Janeiro - RJ.

22.270 - Brazil

Rio de Janeiro, July 25th, 1986

Ms. Devaki Jain

Institute of Social Studies Trust

Tharanga, Rajmahal Vilas Extension

Bangalore - 560006

Dear Devaki,

This is to thank you very much for the cooperation you are giving providing opportunities both to gatherings in Delhi and Bangalore.

I am arriving in Delhi on August 14th at 4:20 AM and I am staying at Lodhi Hotel.

I will be attending the Research Council meetings scheduled as enclosed.

We need the following support:

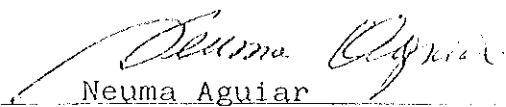
1. Someone to go to the ISA travel agent in Delhi and make a list of DAWN participants attending the meeting.
2. Send me a copy of the list as fast as possible or to leave copies of the list at my hotel to be distributed the first day, or send them directly to participants (see list of addresses enclosed).
3. Find volunteers that could help transporting DAWN members to gather at the proposed dates (enclosed).

4. Send a small Delhi map either to me or straight to participants.

I have sent the enclosed invitations to the also enclosed list of persons.

Will see you soon.

Affectionately,


Neuma Aguiar

List of participants:

- Hameeda Hossain
- Lourdes Arizpe
- Claire Slatter
- Lucille Mair
- Caren Grown
- Noeleen Heyzer
- Zene Tadesse
- Carmen Barroso
- Nirmala Banerjee
- Isabel Largaia
- Neuma Aguiar

DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVES WITH WOMEN FOR A NEW ERA (DAWN)

c/o

INSTITUTO UNIVERSITÁRIO DE PESQUISAS DO RIO DE JANEIRO

Rua Paulino Fernandes nº 32 - Rio de Janeiro - RJ.

22.270 - Brazil

Rio de Janeiro, July 25th, 1986

Ms. Devaki Jain

Institute of Social Studies Trust

Tharanga, Rajmahal Vilas Extension

Bangalore - 560006

Dear Devaki,

This is an invitation for you to join the Steering Committee meeting in New Delhi, India. It will be held at the ISSST. I am enclosing a tentative agenda.

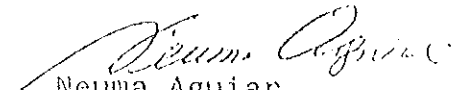
Please observe if you want to add items you think that should be covered. I am also asking you to present a small report on your activities as a International Relations coordinator.

I will be staying at Lodhi Hotel, Lala Lajpatrai Raj Marg 11003. I am arriving there on August, 14th, Flight BA 244, at 4:20 AM. I don't know how efficiently the hotel will take messages and I suggest we gather at the first session in August, 18th at the Taj Palace Hotel. (Bourdes Arizpe presentation).

Please inform Devaki Jain, ISSST Delhi telex number, if you can join the small Advisory Committee gathering she is holding with

Gita Sen from August 28 to 29 in Bangalore. She will supply round trip tickets plus room and board.

Sincerely,


Neuma Aguiar

General Coordinator

cc.: Hameeda Hossain

Lourdes Arizpe

Claire Slatter

Lucille Mair

PROGRAM

- LOURDES ARIZPE : Monday 18 - 20/22 hrs.
 Panel: Women & Social Policy
 Site: Taj Palace 2 Sardar Patel Marg
 Phone: 323-500
- CARMEN BARROSO : Tuesday 19 - 14/16 hrs.
 Panel: Women and Alternative Visions of
 Development
 Site: Hotel Ashok, 50-B Chanakya-puri
 Phone: 370-101
- KRISHNA PATEL : Tuesday 19 - 16:30/18:30 hrs.
 DANIELLE BASIN : Panel: World Economical and Social Crises.
 and Women, Macro and Micro Interlinkages
 Site: Taj Palace 2 Sardar Patel Marg
 Phone: 323-500
- NEUMA AGUIAR : Thursday 21 - 14/16 hrs.
 Panel: Gender and Sociological Theory
 Site: Hotel Ashok, 50-B Chanakya-puri
 Phone: 370-101
- UNESCO-INSTRAW

DATE	HOUR	SITE	EVENT
Aug. 19	20-22	ISST	Gathering of Research Group on Crises
Aug. 20	20-22	ISST	Gathering of Steering Committee
Aug. 21	20-22	ISST	Gathering of Women's Movements
Aug. 23	9-11	ISST	2 nd Gathering of Steering Committee (if necessary)
Aug. 25 through 28	9-17	To be determined	Rethinking Women in Development: Social Science Research and Training
Aug. 28 and 29		ISST Bangalore	Gathering of Advisory Committee

The members of DAWN who attended the World Sociology Congress at Delhi were the following:

Neuma Aguiar, Zen Tadesse, Noeleen Heyzer, Carmen Barosso, Caren Grown, Lucille Mair, Lourdes Arizpe, Hameeda Hossain, Geertje Lykilama, Nirmala Bannerjee and Devaki Jain.

The kit prepared by ISST, contained the following:

1. Map from all major hotels to ISST;
2. Draft Agenda prepared by Neuma;
3. Advances in Feminist Theory - an Indian Perspective, by Devaki Jain. (See Annexure 8)
4. Alternative Development for Women - by Devaki Jain. (See Annexure 10)
5. The culture of the poor : is equitable development possible? by Devaki Jain (See Annexure 11)

NOTES OF MEETINGS

- August 11-14 - Visits to the ISA travel agent in Delhi to make a list of DAWN participants attending the Congress. These visits were futile since the travel agent either did not have the information, or had wrong information.
- August 15 - Devaki Jain and Jaya Sharma met Neuma Aguair to discuss the content and modalities of the DAWN meetings at Delhi.
- August 17 - Meeting with Neuma Aguair at Hotel Lodhi. Shashi Rajagopal and Jaya Sharma met with Neuma Aguair to discuss the Bangalore Reunion Meeting. The discussion centred around the possible number of DAWN members who would be going to Bangalore. Shashi had taken the draft agenda and this was also discussed with Neuma. It was agreed at this meeting that Shashi and Jaya should meet the other DAWN members who were arriving on 17th evening to finalise the list of Bangalore meeting participants.
- Dinner at Lodhi Hotel - Carman Borosso, Lourdes Arizpe, Caren Grown, Noeleen Heyzer, Neuma Aguair, Jaya and Shashi were present at the dinner. However, some non-DAWN members like Deniz Kandiotti, President, RC-32; Serim Timor, Women's Programme Officer, UNESCO; Krishna Patel, INSTRAW, and some other members also joined the DAWN

group for dinner. Therefore details regarding Bangalore DAWN meeting could not be discussed. It was decided that the DAWN core group would meet next morning at break-fast to discuss the details.

August 18

- Break-fast at Lodhi Hotel - The DAWN members who were present at the dinner on the previous night were also present at the breakfast meeting. Lucille Mair and Devaki Jain also joined the group. Lourdes and Lucille said they could not go to Bangalore, Carman said she would go to Bangalore if she could get the ticket for an alternate date, Hameeda could not also go due to prior commitments. Noeleen, Neuma, Zen and Caren were prepared to go to Bangalore. It was agreed that over the next couple of days people would confirm their participation in the Bangalore meeting.

- Meeting with Lodhi's Manager - Shashi and Jaya met the Manager to check if their lounge or conference room could be used to host the DAWN discussions. Most of the DAWN members were at Lodhi. ISST, where DAWN meetings were to be held was away from Lodhi Hotel and DAWN members did not have any transport arrangement. Therefore, it was felt that it would be convenient to host the meeting at Lodhi. However, rooms were not available for use by DAWN groups.

August 19

- Meeting with Neuma Aguir - Shashi and Jaya met her to discuss the arrangements that were to be made for the reception to be used by DAWN. Shashi and Jaya had also tried to get the Lodhi Hotel prepises to host the reception since this was not available, alternate arrangements have to be made. It was agreed at this meeting Neuma Aguir would speak to the participants of the Sociology Association to allow us use the

conference room in Samrat Hotel.

- Meeting with Samrat Hotel Manager - it was mentioned at this meeting that the room would not be made available to DAWN since DAWN was not an official member to the Social Association. It was therefore decided that the reception would be hosted by RC-32.
- August 20
 - Gathering of DAWN members at ISST, Delhi to discuss the Research Methodology on crises and women's movement. Detailed minutes of this meeting has been enclosed as Annexure 6.
 - Discussions were also held with Neuma to chalk out the list of invitees to the reception and invitations were sent out from ISST, Delhi.
 - The DAWN members gathered again to discuss and finalise the Research methodology on crises and women's movements. Decision taken at this meeting have been enclosed as Annexure 7.
- August 21
 - A dinner was hosted at Devaki Jain's residence for the DAWN members. Since all DAWN members were not going to Bangalore it was thought it will be a good occasion for a DAWN Reunion.
- August 22
 - The DAWN reception was hosted on the 22nd evening at the Hunt Room of Hotel Samrat. Participants included DAWN members, members of RC-32 and some other activists. At this reception Neuma Aguair introduced the Research, Training, Advocacy, Publications, Communications and International Relations Coordinators.
- August 23
 - Devaki Jain, Zen Tadesse, Noeleen Heyzer and Shashi Rajagopal left Bangalore to meet with Dr. Gita Sen. They went to Gita Sen's house directly from the Airport and had

number of discussions with her regarding activities of DAWN at the Sociology Congress.

- August 24 - The above mentioned group met at ISST, Gita Sen also attended the meeting. A summary of the discussions held at this meeting is enclosed as Annexure 4.
- Devaki Jain, Noeleen Heyzer and Zen Tadesse left for Delhi.
- The above mentioned members met the other DAWN members at Hotel Samrat. Zen and Noeleen reported the Bangalore discussions.
- August 25 - Meeting on "Rethinking on Development". This meeting was attend by most of DAWN members.
- The Second Steering Committee Meeting of DAWN members was held at Hotel Samrat. Discussions held at this meeting have been incorporated into the main report.
- August 26-29 - Caren Grown met with Gita Sen to revise and update the preamble, introduction and special acknowledgements section of the book entitled "Development Crises and Alternative Visions: Third World Women's Perspectives".
- August 30 - Neuma Aguair read the first draft of the revised preamble and introduction for her comment and suggestions. Her useful ideas were subsequently incorporated into the final text.
- August 31 - Neuma Aguair and Caren Grown left for Rio and New York respectively via Delhi and Bombay.

POINTS DISCUSSED ON AUGUST 24, AT MASSF, BANGALORE

1) BOOK - Monthly Review Press gives 40-50% 'authors' discount. We can use this to get any number of copies. Caren will send a note to Neuma/Lourdes regarding the exact mechanism to be followed when this has been worked out. The book should be out around November and the discounted price will be around US \$ 3.50.

2) PARTICIPATION BY ORGANIZATIONS

- Any organization which shares DAWN's aims and general perspective is welcome to participate in DAWN activities.

3) DAWN's FUNCTIONING

- DAWN's effectiveness depends on trust and openness. The Advisory/Founding Committee had this strength. Gita's sense is to retain it strongly in an advisory capacity atleast for the next two years, since the steering Committee is too small. Devaki's idea is to expand the Steering Committee.

- There should be no honoraria for researchers-this will cut out "bounty hunting".

4) NORTH PARTICIPATION

- All formal positions should be held by South Women.

- If WORKING GROUPS are to be formal, the above holds for them as well.

- Encourage individuals and grassroot groups in both South and North to use and develop DAWN perspectives within their own context, while keeping Secretariat informed. All materials and information will be shared with individuals and institutions.

Preamble

This book constitutes the first stage of a program of activities undertaken by a network of activists, researchers, and policy makers who are committed to developing alternative frameworks and methods to attain the goals of economic and social justice, peace, and development free of all forms of oppression by gender, class, race, and nation. Most participants draw their experiences from action and research within the women's movements of the past ten years; yet we intend this effort to be inclusive of all those who share in our broad visions for society.

The project, Development Alternatives with women for a New Era (DAWN), has grown from small seeds planted in Bangalore, India in August 1984. At that time, a nucleus of committed women from a number of different countries came together to share their experiences with development strategies, policies, theories, and research. They questioned the impact of development on poor people, especially women, particularly in light of the global economic and political crises, and voiced a sense of urgency regarding the need to advocate alternative development processes that would give principal emphasis to the basic survival needs of the majority of the world's people. The group recognized the commonality and power of 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. The experiences of many of the DAWN founders with grassroots initiatives at the community level strengthened their resolve to seek to comprehend such actions within a broader perspective, to link, as it were, the micro-level activities to a macro-level perspective. The group also affirmed that it is the experiences lived by poor women throughout the Third World in their struggles to ensure the basic survival of their families and themselves that provide the clearest lens for an understanding of development processes. And it is their aspirations and struggles for a future free of the multiple oppressions of gender, class, race, and nation that can form the basis for the new visions and strategies that the world now needs.

A "platform" document that would, at one and the same time, articulate such a perspective and also serve to carry forward the debate on alternative development strategies was seen by the group as an important beginning. It must be emphasized that much of the in-depth research and analysis

that will deepen our understanding of development from the vantage point of poor Third World women still needs to be done. This book represents, therefore, but a step in a longer search for new approaches to development. We know that the tentativeness of the discussion and suggestions put forth in the final chapter reflects the unfinished character of the collective search for alternatives. What is presented here is not a finished blueprint, but a stage in a much longer process.

This book was written through extensive debate and discussion with researchers, activities, and policy makers in the year prior to the third United Nations conference marking the United Nations Decade for the Advancement of women. We consciously attempted to adopt an open and flexible process throughout. This has proven to be a pragmatic and fruitful way of drawing upon varied experiences, germinating new possibilities, and effectively advocating common perspectives and aims. The group's emphasis on the importance of the process arises from its recognition that the nature of one's vision of a better society is itself powerfully influenced by the methods adopted to achieve it. If we ourselves can evolve new working styles, new forms of cooperative organization and practices, then this in itself contributes to the search for genuine alternatives. To build a social order that is just, equitable, and life-affirming for all people our methods must correspondingly be open and respectful of differences, and must try to break down hierarchies, power, and distrust.

The groups wished particularly to open the process to the oppressed women of the Third World. The fact that the DAWN project as a whole was initiated in the Third World and continues to be rooted there has strengthened its appeal to many and encouraged their participation. At the same time, the process hitherto has also drawn on the energy, spirit and resources of committed individuals and sympathetic institutions within the more industrialized countries. It has also attracted the interest of oppressed and poor women there, who see in DAWN's analysis and aims an affirmation of their own experiences and visions of a better life.

Many individuals and groups have therefore given unstintingly of their time, experiences, knowledge, and creativity. They nurtured this document as a single collective effort. Often, to the surprise of those involved in its evolution, women and men of differing ideologies but similar commitments to the goals of economic and social transforma-

tion have been able to find within DAWN common understandings about the broad issues of development and the meanings of feminism. We wish to stress that the collective process which produced this book and ongoing DAWN activities reflects the true ethos and potential of the women's movement - an ethos that respects diversity, breaks down hierarchies and competition, and fosters sharing the reciprocity.

The process of outreach and engagement has taken different forms. Conferences and seminars were held in various countries to allow as many views and experiences possible to be debated and incorporated into the document. At its first meeting, the founding group had also planned a related series of activities for the U. N. - sponsored NGO Forum, held in Nairobi Kenya in July 1985. DAWN's panels and workshops - on the effects of growth - oriented development, the economic, political, and cultural crises, and alternative visions and methods for women's movements - provided a Forum for continued debate, discussion, and elaboration of these issues. Additional activities on women and the media and dialogues on various aspects of feminism and on socialism were held to widen the participation and interaction among women at the Forum. Drama, audio-visuals, and songs enlivened the discussions and further drew out the links between such macrolevel phenomena as the global debt crisis and women's lives. But the forum's conclusion, over 2,000 women had subscribed to DAWN's vision and goals. Subsequently, key research and training institutes, international agencies, and development organizations have incorporated this book into their curricula and field work, and women's organizations have attempted to rework and adapt it for use at the grassroots level.

To consider the project's future, the DAWN founders met again in Brazil in February, 1986 to set up a structure which would support the group's ongoing activities and broaden participation with the same free flow of ideas and action. Creating a structure while retaining the flexibility of the process proved to be no easy task. The group selected a seven - member steering committee, consisting of a general coordinator and convenors of working groups in the areas of research, publications, advocacy, training, international relations and communications. The original members will retain their advisory role as the Founding Committee. It was decided that DAWN is not, at present, a

membership organization, but is continuing its activities through processes similar to those used thus far. Working groups are interregional and designed to carry out multiple tasks. The steering committee and convenors of working groups are drawn from Third World countries. While the primary focus of DAWN's activities remains the Third World, we hope that individuals and grassroots groups in the North can use and develop DAWN's perspectives within their own contexts and share their insights to watch the DAWN process.

The Institute of Social Studies Trust (ISST), a non-profit research and advocacy organization based in New Delhi, India, initiated the project and housed the DAWN Secretariat until 1986, when it relocated to the Instituto Universitarío de Pesquisas do Rio de Janeiro (IUPERJ), a Brazilian graduate school and social science research institute. Institutions which lent support during the first stage of the project are the Women and Development Unit of the University of the West Indies (WAND), the Association of African Women for Research and Development (AAWORD), and the Christian Michelsen Institute (CMI). The Asian and Pacific Development Center (APDC), the Pacific and Asian Women's Forum (PAWF), the Asian Women's Research and Action Network (AWRAN), the IUPERJ, the El Colegio de Mexico participated enthusiastically. The following groups and institutions encouraged the nurturance and development of DAWN's activities: The Institute of Training and Research for the Advancement of Women (Stanto Domingo), the Indian Council of Social Science Research, the International Council for Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, the Indian Association of Women's Studies, Economists Interested in Women's Issues Group (India), the Centre for Women's Development Studies (New Delhi), the International International Women's Tribune Centre (New York), ISIS International (Rome and Santiago), the International Center for Research on Women (Washington, D. C.), The Mediterranean Women's Studies Institute (Athens), the Carlos Chagas Foundation (Sao Paulo), Centro de la mujer Peruana Flora Tristan (Lima), the Cuban Women's Federation (Havana), the Brazilian Women's Rights Council (Sao Paulo), the Arab Women's Studies Association (Lebanon), Women and Development Consultancy Services, Ltd. (Nairobi), the Institute for Social Studies (the Hague), and Kali for Women (New Delhi).

Funding for the first phase of DAWN's activities was provided by the Ford Foundation, the Norwegian Agency for International Development (NORAD), the Swedish Agency for Research Cooperation with Developing Countries (SAREC), the Finnish International Development Agency (FINIDA), and the NGO Forum

Secretariat. The Population Council supplied office space and support services during the writing of this book.

Special thanks are also due to those who made invaluable individual contributions to DAWN's first three Advisory Committee meetings. There are many other organizations and individuals who believe in the aims of this project and who have come to view it as their own. They are so numerous that it is not possible to acknowledge them except in this collective manner. Their generous commitments of time and energy will continue to sustain this process and help to realize the visions set forth in this book.

INTRODUCTION

The major issues of development, social and economic crisis, the subordination of women, and feminism may appear to some as too wide-ranging and disparate to be understood within one coherent and unified framework. Yet, these issues are more closely related than academic and institutional discussions would suggest. In this book we begin to clarify for ourselves the nature of these relationships and to explore their meanings for those involved in policy and practical action. We hope this analytic base can serve as a catalyst for further discussion, policy change, and experimentation aimed at fundamental improvement in the status of women, and hence, their families, communities, and societies.

Our knowledge of women's experiences with the development process - as researchers, activists, and policy makers - has brought us to a range of common understandings despite different starting points. The United Nations Decade for the Advancement of Women (1975 - 1985) made many of these experiences possible, prodding virtually every development body - United Nations Agencies, national governments, and private organizations - to develop projects and programs which would improve the economic and social position of women. The implicit assumption behind many of these programs was that women's main problem in the Third World was insufficient participation in an otherwise benevolent process of growth and development. Increasing women's participation and improving their shares in resources, land, employment, and income relative to men were seen as both necessary and sufficient to effect dramatic improvements in their living conditions.

A critical examination of the large volume of empirical evidence amassed throughout the Decade, as well as our own experiences as researchers and activists, now lead us to challenge these assumptions. Rather than improving, these studies show that the socio-economic status of the great majority of Third World Women has worsened considerable throughout the Decade. With few exceptions, women's relative access to economic resources, incomes and employment has worsened, their burdens of work have increased, and their relative and even absolute health, nutritional and educational status has declined. The limited success of the

integrationist approach is due in part to the difficulties of overcoming traditional cultural attitudes and prejudices regarding women's participation in economic and social life. However, an equally important but mostly overlooked factor is the nature of the development process into which women were to be integrated.

In Chapter One, we will examine in greater depth why and how strategies designed to achieve overall economic growth and increase agricultural and industrial productivity have proven to be inimical to women. We argue that fundamental conflicts have arisen between women's economic well-being and wider development plans and processes. Such conflicts occur both because gender relations oppress women and because many long-term economic processes have been harmful-- or at best indifferent-- to the interests and needs of poor people in general. We will show in greater detail how the emphasis on private property and commercialization has often reduced women's access to resources, and how the marginalization of basic needs from the dominant production structures has downgraded their own role as the predominant fulfillers of those needs.

During the past decade, a series of interlinked crises of massive and growing impoverishment, food insecurity and non-availability, financial and monetary disarray, environmental degradation and growing demographic pressure have worsened the problem. The majority of the world's population finds it increasingly difficult to fulfill even their basic requirements of life and to survive from one day to the next. Rather than channeling available resources into programs aimed at eliminating poverty and the burden of gender and other forms of subordination, nations and the international polity have tended to react to these pressures through increased militarization, domestic repression and foreign aggression. There is a growing sense of hopelessness, even lack of concern, about the Third World's poor in donor and agency circles. This is compounded by the shift to bilateralism in aid and loans and cutbacks in contributions to multilateral institutions by some of the richest, most powerful, and most militaristic nations. As a result, Third World nations are increasingly being forced to rely on internal resource mobilization to make up for sharp reductions in the availability of external resources.

These problems in the world economy now present serious difficulties for the body of economic development theory. Development models as such took birth during the reconstruction efforts of South and Southeastern Europe in the aftermath of the Second World War. They gained considerable richness as they were elaborated during the following decades to provide analytical frameworks for the efforts made by the newly independent states of the Third World to hasten the pace of economic growth, to build social infrastructure, and to improve the living standards of their people. In each region, important schools of thought have now developed models appropriate to the specific conditions of Third World economies and cultures. It would take us too far afield to discuss the debates and changes in analytical fashions that development analysis has undergone. Insofar as the impact of development processes on the well-being of the broad mass of people is concerned, the 1970's witnessed a general shift in development theory from the earlier belief that rapid economic growth would automatically "trickle down" in the form of improved living standards to the poorer sections of the population. (Of course, not all development models had been premised on such a belief; we are referring here to the mainstream of Anglo-American theory.) In the face of considerable evidence that economic growth does not "trickle down" in the manner expected, international development agencies came to accept the need to provide directly for the basic needs of the majority of Third World people. But, even as this strategic understanding began to take hold, the economic uncertainties, upheavals and inflationary recession of the past decade began to shake the foundations of development analysis and macro-economic theory in general. Agencies like the World Bank have responded by de-emphasizing basic needs and espousing models of structural adjustment.

As Chapter Two will explain, the implementation has had devastating effects on poor people in the Third World. We do not propose in this book a full-blown alternative analytic model to structural adjustment. But we do wish to argue that, by starting from the perspective of poor Third World women, some much needed reorientation can be given to development analysis. This perspective emphasizes critical dimensions of resource use and abuse -- a central issue for all economic theory. It focusses attention once again on the related problems of poverty and inequality, and forces recognition of forgotten sections of the population who are usually relegated to the status of second class citizens. Perhaps most importantly, it points out how the empowerment of women can provide new possibilities for moving beyond current economic dilemmas.

As we will show in Chapter Three, women's contributions - as workers and as managers of human welfare - are central to the ability of households, communities, and nations to tackle the current crisis of survival. Even as resources to strengthen poor women's economic opportunities are shrinking, women have already begun to mobilize themselves, both individually and collectively, in creative ways. It is only by reinforcing and building upon their efforts in such vital sectors as food production, commerce, and trade that the needed long-term transformation to more self-reliant national development strategies can be achieved. Thus, while the poor and middle income earners may face serious and immediate hardships, the solutions developed to address these crises may lead to policies that are more geared to meeting people's survival and subsistence needs.

As part of this process of empowerment, we need to reaffirm and clarify our understanding of feminism. Over the past twenty years the women's movement has debated the links between the eradication of gender subordination and other forms of social and economic oppression based on nation, class, or ethnicity. The time has come to articulate the position that feminism cannot be monolithic in its issues, goals, and strategies, since it constitutes the political expression of the concerns and interests of women from different regions, classes, nationalities, and ethnic backgrounds. While gender subordination has universal elements, feminism cannot be based on a rigid concept of universality that negates the wide variation in women's experience. There is and must be a diversity of feminisms, responsive to the different needs and concerns of different women, and defined by them for themselves. This diversity builds on a common opposition to gender oppression and hierarchy which, however, is only the first step in articulating and acting upon a political agenda.

This heterogeneity both gives feminism its dynamism and makes it the most potentially powerful challenge to the statusquo. It allows the struggle against subordination to be waged in all arenas-- from relations in the home to relations between nations-- and it involves substantial change in cultural, economic, and political formations.

For many women in the world, problems of nationality, class and race are inextricably linked to their specific oppression as women. Their definition of feminism to include the struggle against all forms of oppression is both legitimate and necessary. In many instances gender equality must be accompanied by changes on these other

fronts. But at the same time, the struggle against gender subordination cannot be compromised in the struggle against other forms of oppression, or be relegated to a future when they may be wiped out.

Many Third World women are acutely conscious of the need for this clarification and self-affirmation. Throughout the Decade they have faced accusations from two sides: from those who dismiss them as not being truly "feminist" because of their unwillingness to separate the struggle against gender subordination from that against other oppressions and from those who accuse them of dividing class or national struggles and sometimes, of uncritically following women's liberation movements from outside. This is why we strongly affirm that feminism strives for the broadest and deepest development of society and human beings free of all systems of domination. Such a global vision has been articulated before, particularly at strategy sessions in Bangkok in 1979 and Stony Point, New York in 1980. This book builds on those earlier initiatives, sharpens our analysis, and strengthens our attempts at change. While we refer to this as a "Third World" perspective, it includes all those who share in our vision, whether from the South countries, from oppressed and disadvantaged groups within the North, or all others who are committed to working toward its fulfillment.

In this context, we believe that it is from the perspective of the most oppressed -- i. e. women who suffer on account of class, race, and nationality -- that we can most clearly grasp the nature of the links in the chain of oppression and explore the kinds of action we must now take. Such a perspective implies that a development process that shrinks and poisons the pie available to poor people, and then leaves women scrambling for a larger relative share, is not in women's interest. We reject the belief that it is possible to obtain sustainable improvements in women's economic and social position under conditions of growing relative inequality, if not absolute poverty, for both women and men. Equality for women is impossible within the existing economic, political, and cultural process that reserve resources, power and control for small sections of people. But neither is development possible without greater equity for and participation by women.

Our vision of feminism has at its very core a process of economic and social development geared to human needs through wider control over and access to economic and

political power. The substance of this book evolved out of the experience of women who have attempted in practical and analytical ways to come to grips with the implications of such a vision. Our initial plan was not to expand or present new data or research results, but rather to place the diverse body of micro-level case studies, projects and organizing attempts in a wider and more unified context. We hope thereby, through the collective process that this book represents, to move towards a framework that can reknit the fabric of development theory and action by drawing together the strands of improved living standards, socially responsible management and use of resources, elimination of gender subordination and socioeconomic inequality, and the organizational restructuring that can bring these about.

Chapter One examines how women's experiences with economic growth, commercialization and market expansion are determined by both class and gender, tracing these experiences through colonial and post-colonial times. In Chapter Two, we link the past history of development policies and strategies to the current systemic crises- in the production and distribution of food, water and fuel availability, international debt, militarization, and a growing conservatism opposed to women's changing roles. This chapter also establishes the importance of women's potential for mitigating the effects of these crises through their role in ensuring the reproduction of their families and communities. In writing this chapter, it became apparent that a dearth of material exists which illuminates the specific sectoral effects of the food, energy, and debt crises and which examines their interlinkages. Only recently are efforts underway to collect evidence, document the impact by class and gender, and analyze the results within a global framework. Research in this area constitutes a central focus of DAWN's ongoing activities.

Finally, Chapter Three seeks to broaden the dialogue on the strategies and methods women need to move us beyond the crises to a society in which women and men participate equally with justice and dignity. As we noted earlier, the discussion in this chapter is quite tentative and in need of further elaboration through continuous discussion within the women's movement. This chapter suggests some of the long and short-term policy changes and strategies consonant with a feminist vision of a better society. Because women's organizations are central to these strategies, the chapter also evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of different

types of organizations and hypothesizes the changes needed to make them more effective in shaping and pressuring for a new policy agenda.

Our main audience for this book is women. Indeed, the actions undertaken by women individually and through organizations have been the most exciting and potentially most promising events of the last decade. Women have come together in organizations, networks and movements. They have tackled problems of income and employment, and altered the ways in which society, governments, international institutions, men and they themselves evaluate women's work. They have struggled to bring the issues of basic human survival and the right to live in dignity to the forefront of public consciousness, to organize against military repression and militarization, and to mobilize their energies in a host of other ways. Women, therefore, have been the catalysts behind many of the actions of governments, agencies, and others during the last ten years.

It is important for us in the women's movement to understand and acknowledge our own achievements and strengths. In 1986, the ideological climate and mood are gloomier regarding the prospects for peace and genuine human and economic development than they were at the beginning of the seventies. It is easy to be discouraged about the concrete improvements in women's economic and social position. They appear to have been as meagre as the resources that agencies and governments have actually directed to women. But let us look at our experiences in another way. We know now from our own research that the subordination of women has a long history and is deeply ingrained in economic, political and cultural processes. What we have managed to do in the last few years is to forge grassroots women's movements and worldwide networks as never existed before, to transform that subordination and in the process to break down other oppressive structures as well. Women know all too well how hard they have had to struggle in their families, political organizations, and communities to achieve the personal autonomy that fuels and builds upon wider socioeconomic change. Initially equipped with little knowledge, training and preparation to challenge the full social, economic and psychological weight of gender oppressions (intertwined as it is with class, national and ethnic subordination), we have acquired skills, self-confidence, and the capacity to organize for change.

While it is principally to such a process of ongoing self-empowerment of women that this document is dedicated, many of the issues, the analysis and the strategies proposed

herein are addressed to governments and agencies as well. But we have learned from our experiences of the past decade that the political will for serious action by those in power is contingent on women organizing to demand and promote change. We therefore need to assert our claim in shaping the major social and economic issues facing our times. In order to clarify the role which we can play in coming years, the successes, failures and potential of our organizations must be assessed. We do this with the recognition that few contemporary social movements have the mass potential, the freshness of vision, the courage to experiment with new methods for action and the respect for diversity and challenge of the women's movement. It is time for us to assert this with clarity, rigor and passion.

Footnotes

1. See Development Dialogue (1982) entitled "Another Development with Women" for the proceedings of a symposium devoted to this theme, Jain, D. (1983), and Beneria and Sen (1981).
2. For similar perspectives on feminism, see the AAWORD Newsletter, Feminism in Africa, Vol. II/III 1985, published by the Association of African Women for Research and Development and Bringing the Global Home, Feminism in the '80s - Book III by Charlotte Bunch.
3. We use the term "Third World" as a positive, self-affirmation based on our struggles against the multiple oppressions of nation, gender, class and ethnicity.
- 4(a). See the "Report of the International Workshop on Feminist Ideology and Structures in the First Half of the Decade for Women, Bangkok, Thailand, June 1979 and "Report of the International Feminist Workshop" held at Stony Point, New York, April 1980.
4. Same as f. n. 4 in book.

DAWN MEETING - RESEARCH ON CRISES AND WOMEN'S
MOVEMENTS-AUGUST 20 AT ISST

Noeleen began by presenting to the group two alternative paths of organizing research on the two themes of crises and women's movements. One option was to have two separate research programmes with strong structural interlinkages. Alternatively, both themes could be brought together as one research project (necessitating 3 instead of 6 regional coordinators)-women's movement could provide the broad framework within which the focus would be on the food and debt crises. She saw advantages and disadvantages in both strategies. As far as the latter option of a combined project was concerned the primary disadvantage stemmed from the area of women's movements, incorporation of important issues other than the food and debt crises. The advantage, however, would be that the research would be more focussed, enabling concrete recommendations to emerge. As for the other option of organizing separately around the two themes, this would allow a wide coverage of the area of women's movements, incorporating cultural and political aspects. There was, however, the danger of diffusion unless interlinkages were established at the planning stage.

She then touched upon issues of women's movements that needed to be covered. The motivating forces behind the upsurge in the last 10 years, the analysis of what issues were being dealt with by these movements (whether they focussed on patriarchal hierarchies or dealt with structures and processes within development), the developments in strategies employed and the means to sustain the achievement-so far being some of these issues. There was the need to understand why divisions have emerged despite the common vision and the effort to build solidarity and what the solutions were to repair this fragmentation.

Devaki's response to the issue of whether the research projects should remain separate or be combined favoured the latter. She felt that this strategy would provide a good focus for the research. Since women's groups tend to be more concerned with issues of gender than with those of food and a focus. There was a need to raise the consciousness of women's movements to macro-issues. The implications of women's movements to macro-issues. The implications of

women's movements to macro-issues. The implications of their micro-actions should be understood both by individual actors such as the poor, rural women and researchers. Nuema emphasized the need for an understanding of the crises in order that a framework be provided to the groups. Cheyova also felt that it was crucial to have a clear picture of the social and economic crises and therefore argued for the two themes to be dealt with separately. Bina also argued for such a separation. She felt that the theme of women's movements was too wide for such merger. Although the food and fuel crises were at the core, other issues such as violence could not be incorporated if the two themes were combined. Danielle also felt that two separate research projects should be maintained. She argued that women's movements and visions included important micro issues other than the macro ones related to the crises. Also, given the importance of policy changes and role that women's organizations have played in that area, she felt that the theme of women's movements was too important, in and of itself, to be merged with the other. In response to this debate Carmen suggested that the issues for investigation include linkages between crises and women's movements.

In response to Danielle's questions, it was clarified that DAWN's role would be to draw together research which was being done in the areas chosen, performing a South-South, synthesizing role. As for the form that the output would take, this was an issue which was open for discussion. Noeleen strongly felt that the result should go beyond forums and books but since this was a meeting to discuss research, those issues could be raised in other discussions.

Bina felt that the kind of research that DAWN does and the form that the output takes will depend upon what use it will be put to, commenting on the General Report (on the Third Advisory Council Meeting and Plans for the Future) she observed that two assumptions had been made. Firstly that DAWN has links with both policy makers and grassroots organizations and therefore functions as an intermediary and secondly that DAWN plays an agitational role. Given its loose structure and international nature, she wondered if it could serve either of the two functions. She felt that a more modest role such as linking with other existing groups might be better. She also observed that in many cases the assumption that grassroots organizations do not have a macro, global perspective, may not be justified, particularly since many of them have middle-class activists.

As for linkages, she thought that it was important to clarify with whom and around what issues these would be established. For instance, in the area of training, there

are organizations such as the Pacific and Asian Women's Forum as well as independent groups such as those in Rajasthan which conduct training, some of whom have used the DAWN report in creative ways. What the needs of these groups are and how linkages could be established should be determined. It would be useful to provide these groups with macro-based research. The documents could either be of the nature of the first DAWN report, a synthesis, or those which could be used more directly for training, the kind which she herself was thinking about. It would be very useful to bring together and distribute existing documents which small groups, who lack funding and logistical support, are using. These documents, therefore, need to be located, selected and reproduced. The process of selection itself would generate dialogues. Such an activity would help to meet the shortage of simple and clearly presented material for training. She also drew attention to the possibility of linking with non-women's groups, particularly in the Indian context where there were a large number of groups who were doing work related to the crises.

Noeleen described her aim as a regional co-ordinator to be to incorporate into the process groups who have not been reached before. This would constitute a step forward and generate fresh analyses. She was therefore extending the Asian network to areas such as Vietnam and China which had a different history and had never had the opportunity of articulating their experience. She also saw in this harder process a rejection of the wrong practice of researchers extracting material and then departing.

She drew attention to the heterogenous nature of South-East Asia by delineating four categories. In addition to the above, another grouping was that of countries such as Malaysia and Thailand where organizations were new, very small in size and trying to develop through borrowing as well as experimentation. Another category would be of countries such as India and the Phillipines which had strong women's movement. Yet another grouping consisted of East Asian Countries such as Korea and Hong Kong.

Noeleen also supported the methodology of identifying groups and building country teams rather than just individual researchers. Although this was a harder process it was a more desirable and lasting one.

She intended therefore to hold consultations at both the regional and country level, the approach which she has used

in the past. She felt that planning should take place after consultation at the country level, while comparative, regional framework be used to analyse the country papers.

She did not see a conflict between this approach and the aim of producing inter-regional comparisons which would enable a third world perspective to emerge. Granting that there must be parameters, she argued that the research should be built up through a "bottom-up" process which avoided the situation where a high level of abstraction was not based on regional reality.

Carmen felt that the idea of country teams was very important and desirable but she questioned its practical feasibility. Her experience in Latin America had been that of time and infrastructural constraints making networking even with individual researchers a difficult process.

Noeleen admitted that her experience was likely to be unique in as much as her centre (which she vehemently denied as being a U.N. organisation!) provided her with the network and infrastructural support required. However, she avoided making this process a discrete function, and tried to integrate it with opportunities such as conferences. Carmen added that the conference on women and politics which had taken place in Uruguay last June had provided such an opportunity. They were also hoping to conduct a "major outreach exercise" at the Latin American Studies Association meeting in October. Devaki added that the National conference on Women's studies was meeting in October, with the theme of women's struggles.

Returning to the issue of whether the two themes would be combined into one research project or not, Devaki added that at present, the food and energy crises constituted important areas of research and the Women's movement input was small at present, growing and should become important.

Bina raised the issue of the need for greater clarity about the nature and aims of DAWN in order that groups conducting research have a basis for deciding whether they want to network with it. Devaki added that the process of networking needed a lot of goodwill and trust. The groups should in no way feel that they are being replaced or their territory encroached upon. Gita's outline did this successfully. However, now that DAWN had matured, this would be more difficult to achieve. It needed to be emphasized, however, that DAWN was embodied in an aspiration and not an organization.

Ayesha' response to the issue of networking was that restricting to the organizations already in the network was preferable to further extension owing to the time constraint. She said she would report to AAWORD about the meetings, who could then take decisions. In response to Noeleen's request for her to share her experiences with women's movements in Africa, since one of the aims of the meeting had been to generate ideas for areas of research, Ayesha presented an overview of the situation as she perceived it.

Given the infrastructural and lingual barriers, she spoke primarily for Nigeria, not even West Africa, let alone the whole of Africa. She felt that none of the mass movements could be labelled "feminist". There were, however, smaller women's organizations which fell into several categories.

Firstly, there were the organisations which worked at defending particular interests rather than changing the patriarchal structure. The market women's associations which had historically maintained a strong defence of their trading interests, continued to do so. Although they do not control a large volume of trade, they are numerically strong. Not unlike the colonial government, the authorities in Nigeria and Ghana are becoming increasingly worried about the power of autonomous organizations. They are therefore imposing bureaucratic restrictions which have to be satisfied before an organisation is given official recognition.

These market women's associations often come into conflict with the official, national women's organizations, which are infamous for towing the government line, provoking the label of belonging to the AGIP (Any Government in Power) party. It was noted that the situation in India was no different. In Nigeria, when the war on Indiscipline was declared, the national organization supported the government's analysis which placed the blame on mothers who were employed outside home. When the market women protested against the 40% increase in market stall fees, they received no support from the National Council.

The second category of women's organisations consisted of the wealthy religious Muslim and Christian groups. Two trends can be identified within these. The first being the fundamentalist, right-wing one and the other the more liberal one which tries to use progressive interpretations of the Koran to support certain rights for women. The latter is a weaker trend since it requires the study of Islamic law

and teaching of a level which most women do not reach.

The number of actual feminist women's groups is few. These groups are very new and some are still at the stage of their own consciousness raising before beginning mass action.

The account of women's organizations other than feminist women's groups raised the possibility of networking with them. That such a linkage might prove feasible was indicated by the responses of Muslim women in the North when they were asked about the kind of political system they wanted in the future. Despite having said that women were incapable of being leaders, the concrete conditions they desired, such as reservation, and a free, single and compulsory system of education were revealing. They also stated clearly that they needed organisational help.

Carmen mentioned that Nirmala had felt that the issues for investigation were biased towards Latin America. She felt therefore that the regional convenor needed to revise and adapt according to specific needs.

She herself did not want to be convenor. Noeleen too did not want to be the overall convenor since she felt that with her experience and the facilities and network she had access to, she would be more useful as the regional co-ordinator.

It was decided at the end of the session, that the meeting should be reconvened the next day.

MINUTES OF RESEARCH COMMITTEE MEETING

MEMBERS PRESENT: Carmen Barosso
Lucille Mair
Nirmala Banerjee
Hameeda Hossain
Noeleen Heyzer
Shashi Rajagopal

1. Research studies will be conducted on a regional basis initially for a period of 1 1/2 years.
2. Each Region will have a regional research co-ordinator.
3. Regional research can be divided into sub-regional studies which can further be divided into country cases.
4. It would be up to the regional convenors to decide whether they need country convenors.
5. A broad framework would be necessary within which the research would be conducted.
6. The two outlines prepared by Noeleen and Carmen on women's movements and crises respectively would be circulated, and comments would be invited. The two outlines would then be put together to provide one framework.
7. The regional coordinators would be given enough flexibility to chose/conduct research.
8. After the first 18 months, during which time the regional studies would be complete, another meeting would be convened (probably by Hameeda Hossain) where the research studies of all the regions will be presented.
9. An inter-disciplinary Congress would be convened in July '87 in Ireland. Carmen and Noeleen have been invited to participate in this congress. They would write to the organizers to check if DAWN Panels can be accommodated into the programme. It would, however, not be a substantial panel but just to keep to contact with other academicians.

This kind of a meeting, which has an academic responsibility, would also be useful for DAWN in that it would be useful to get funds for independent research.

10. The following would be the regional coordinators:-

Women's Movement	-	1) Pacific	-	Claire
-----		2) Asia	-	Hameeda
		3) S. E. Asia	-	Noeleen
		4) Carribean	-	Rhoda Reddock
		5) Latin America	-	Virginia Vargas
			-	Carmen Barosso

Crises		1) S. Asia	-	Nirmala
-----		2) Carribean	-	Peggy Antrobus
		3) Latin America	-	Lourdes, Cheyova Spindel
		4) Pacific	-	Noeleen will identify persons.

		Africa	-	Ayesha	{
			-	Semia Fonja	} ?
			-	Rudo Gaidzanna	{

11. For the Aaword members, participation in the DAWN Steering Committee and DAWN research would be separate issues. However, DAWN has to write to Aaword formally (approach them as a group) to conduct research studies.

12. As regards funds, the Rockefeller Foundation may provide funds for research groups, particularly to convene meetings. Therefore, if for each region, the number of countries are identified, it would be easier for Neuma to canvass for funds.

13. Noeleen would prepare a budget for a sub-regional meeting, and submit it to Neuma who will then have an idea of the amount involved to convene a sub-regional meeting.

ADVANCES IN FEMINIST THEORY

-AN INDIAN PERSPECTIVE-

Devaki Jain,
August 15, 1986.

SECTION - I

In this paper, I propose to present a perspective on the Indian debate on feminism which will be limited by its own limitations, i. e. :

limited to: a) my experince of the debate
b) the very few readings I have done
c) my ideological or philosophical preference/biases

I would suggest -

1. that feminist theory - as different from feminist practice - is still not a body of knowledge in India. This statement implies that feminist practice is wide spread in India which I maintain, it is.
2. that in Inda and perhaps in other similar countries the reflections or even early statements on theory are emerging from the empirical field: from activist knowledge and dialogue. The theory is grounded in user's languages; is derived as a response to the need of the grass root activists.
3. that the goal of excercises in theory building are predominantly to find a basis for solidarity - feminist solidarty, a united women's movement, a common politics.

This paper was presented at World Sociology Conference held at New Delhi in August 1986.

Summing up I would suggest that feminist theory in India is defined by feminist practice and feminist goals. I would illustrate this from various types of empirical evidence:

- a conference
- a study - in process
- a networking process
- a book and
- a man

A Regret

It would have been feminist, it would have been a true reflection of the Indian feminist way if I could have discussed this paper with groups or group and presented it as a collective view. But, alas I could not because I did not start doing the paper till the 12th - one more short-coming.

However, before I offer these illustrations I would venture to list what in my view are the "advances" in Indian feminist theory in recent years. They are all interlinked and may look repetitive.

1. A self-confidence revealed in the wider acceptance of the term feminism, where earlier the term "women's movement" was current; accompanied simultaneously by an affirmation of its cultural/political context, with content moulded for Indians by Indians. Put negatively, this would read "accompanied simultaneously by a rejection of definitions, of context, of preoccupations developed in the West."
2. A quest to derive the roots - the explanatory variables of the female condition in India from religious, cultural, historical and economic forces and trends. Thus a consideration of terms such as "intra-household" instead of "patriarchy" and so on. To look at subordination in a wider context than gender relations -perhaps in terms of power relations.
3. A search for a platform - for building unity. The unity as a part of the collective empowerment process to deal with national crisis - social, economic and

political.

4. Bringing development and its impulses as a factor to deal with and thus through a process of consultation seeking to design feminist development or a feminist framework for appraising development. To reconstruct theory, to empower the modes of production exchange which predominate in India; to give a new normative science to assess them - and thus reconstruct development.
5. A slow, cautious selection of local issues/observed phenomena to support a kind of "renaissance". A strengthening of existing economic and social modes as culturally suited modes. Including in this sweep some aspects of women's work styles, "enjoying" as the opposite of feeling "guilty" - some aspects of our particular place in the firmament. In this process of reflection and revaluation there is full awareness of the dangers of romanticizing the past or conservative modes.
6. Finding a place for women's voices in the South-South economic -and political alliances especially the non-aligned movement, the six nation disarmament initiative. A process of conscientization of the powers/the policy makers on the importance of gender differentiation as well as giving gender considerations a legitimacy in Third World politics. Theorising in the language of the South : fitting into the frame - influencing that frame.

SECTION - II

Some empirical bases:-

- (1) A Conference {1}

To derive some glimpse of feminist theory, my first resource is the National conference held in December, 1985, in Bombay, called "Perspectives for the Autonomous Women's Movement in India".

Some 85 women's groups and several individuals from different parts of the world attended the conference. All of them some 300 in number came on their own initiative and expense. The conference was structured to have two workshops per day. Presentations were made in the morning and sub groups for each workshop were formed for discussions. A

plenary session was held towards the end of the day for a general reporting to all the participants. Cultural programmes - plays, singing, and audio-visuals followed. The last day saw a variety of small workshops suggested by the participants.

The method of convening this conference was feminist - several prior consultations on venue, themes and decisions taken by a group of representatives of women's groups. Attendance self-supportive and self-motivated - all roles of moderator, rapporteur etc developed at the conference.

Crisp formulations such as these below came out of the meeting.

Quotes from Report of the Conference (1)

"The term feminism needs clarification. Do you accept that sexual bondage is a stronger one than the class bondage? Is it possible to bring all women together on the same platform? Or should there be separate demands for separate classes? What is meant by reformism - the act of counselling?"

"Cohesiveness and richness comes out of private activism, while validity comes from public activism. Therefore, there is always pressure to participate in public activism. This often forces a group to resort to public activism in a rather traditional form."

"This led to the whole issue of defining feminism. While some felt that feminism as a tool is sufficient to explore oppression and inequalities in all its form, others disagreed with this definition. "

'Who is a real feminist'. Some members felt that at times women became feminist chauvinists who look down on women who have to do house work, child care etc. These middle class, articulate women tend to dominate groups. And in such groups, if expected behavioural patterns are not visible then they question the feminism of the others. This opinion was not shared by many. However, some women continued to argue that women's organisation is not a non-class organisation. The women's organisations have neglected the class issue in the same way as left political organisations have neglected the gender issue. This has led to the exclusion of large mass of poor women."

The principal concern of the conference was alliances - an understandable natural preoccupation in a plural, multiple religion, multiple caste, multiple language, multi-party unequal but secular democratic nation. Not only alliances with existing forces, political parties, ideological movements - the external - but also alliances within i.e. of women with women as individuals; of women's groups of one kind, say activist with women's groups of another kind, say research.

Women's groups claiming to work as collective had often empowered an individual or reverse had exploited one. Feminist research had been no better in its interest than inherited man-made of research. Dichotomies such as activist and research; class and caste persisted. Where was the breakthrough.

No movement - left, reformist, Christian Gandhian had been able to accommodate women's voices. If all existing political forces are not appropriate vehicles then what? -We need our own politics is the answer. What is that politics? asked this large non-party political formation.

The other strong concern was consolidation. The two, finding a politics and consolidation are of course closely related quests - but not the same.

Consolidation of this dynamic self conscious widely dispersed representative women's movement has become a real preoccupation in its every part. Simple aggregation does not make it into a political force. Yet the potential is there - A tantalising situation. The need for consolidation is vivid because of the happenings in the Indian polity - Reassertion of separatism. Violent expressions of hidden angers over languages, religion, caste and gender differentiation.

Why this sliding back to "old" barriers? An issue brought out poignantly by feminists like Kumari Jayawardane (2) in analysing the ethnic conflicts in Sri Lanka. Ethnic consciousness has overpowered class consciousness, she says, one reason is the scrambling for the cake - A mix of unattainable and untenable consumerism on the demand side and accelerated but distorted growth of output in the supply side. In the midst of these shattering experiences feminist consciousness seems to flicker like a lamp still alight before getting snuffed out.

Kumari Jayawardane described the spontaneous way women from different classes, religions, politics took a united stand against the ethnic riots, took peace marches, peace actions.

The group then suggested that feminist consciousness was alive - was today replacing class consciousness and class solidarity as the focal point for progressive causes. The burning question again became how to prevent feminist consciousness from withering away or being subordinated as has happened to class solidarity. What can we learn from the history of the deterioration of class consciousness? How resist the decline? Again consolidation seems to be a first step and consolidation needs a politics - a common frame, theory.

What theory can enshrine this quest? trace the roots of the tangible unity, solidarity that seems present in the room - but escapes agreement when expressed. Feminist theory in India has to find an answer to these questions. This conference was a beginning.

2. Illustration - The Study {3}

"The report of the committee on status of women in India had pointed out the numerous ways in which women in India suffered discrimination and subordination. But neither that report, nor work done thereafter had come to grips with the problems of what constitutes an unambiguous improvement in the status of women of a nation, community or region, and what variables are crucial to determine the direction of the change. So far, status had often been measured by any one of several kinds of social indicators depending on the model used regarding concepts of status and of positive changes in it. A view of available data had suggested that not all these indicators move in the same direction for all regions at all time."{3}

Other curious paradoxes exist in India - worship of goddesses by men and women (Learning, wealth, power are all goddesses) and the nutritional deprivation of woman. Outsiders notice a sense of self confidence, ease in powerful positions and vigour in Indian women: and a sense of resilience and androgyny in men. Yet, as Lakshmi Lal says {4}.

"This breast of yours, unfailling, refreshing, bearing treasures, giving of largesse by which all that is choicest in the world is nourished, may you nourish, O Saraswati-. . . .you have given birth to a hero and thereby attain heroic stature. . . .

Thus ends an ancient household rite, described in great detail in Brihadrannyaka Upanishad, for obtaining a male child. It is in fact the only point in the whole

proceedings starting with the actual act of intercourse and ending with the placing of the son on her lap, at which the woman receives a measure of affectionate attention. She is simultaneously deified too, in the true Hindu manner. She is, to use a modern managerial euphemism, kicked upstairs."

Then there is the Indian freedom struggle with vivid participation by Indian women (5,6) without the usual slide-back noticed in other experiences of the big struggle and the little struggle. That Gandhi moulded the modes of that struggle had its own ripples.

This study attempted to put together these threads as explanatory variables. After the first round of scanning the data especially the linkages between sex ratios, work participation and literacy rates, Nirmala Bannerjee, the researcher suggests that:

"Women's status is dependent on a complexity of socio cultural factors most of which interact significantly with each other. It is essential to understand these interactions between the forces and to allow for them in designing policy measures for improving women's status.

The pattern of regionwise variations in levels of women's status can be described as cultural in the sense it is expressed in terms of cultural practices and taboos. However, it is not random, but is based on economic forces which in turn were determined by ecological factors. This cultural pattern of Indian women's status falls into five broad categories corresponding to five broad basis types of economic situations or ecosystems in the country".

She finds that once the country is divided into these 5 types, important indicators of change remain 'constant' - in other words the women's movement and the development interventions put together have not had any impact on the situation. What a fact to face!

She calls these types traditional cultural categories. She hopes to unlock some of these doors, through workshops of cross cultural marriages, oral histories of women stratified across class and languages - and finally forge the links.

One waits with baited breath to see where that leads us to in reaching the roots of our power and our subordination - the quest of theory.

3. A network to gain macro perspectives on development.

The Dawn process (7). Analysis of poor women's experience of development in the third world in the context of the macro situations in their region like food crisis in Africa, debt in Latin America, poverty and hunger in Asia revealed both the impoverishing nature of 'development' but also the validity of the several strategies of poor woman. Empowerment of poor women, it seemed, did not need intervention, but needed to be left alone, not to be crowded in, but offered territory to step into. Activism was to listen; research was to learn and reveal Development to facilitate their steps.

The root of this devastating development which emptied oceans of fish, tribals of forests, women of wage and food created enslavement of the South to North, seemed to be not merely in the evil intentions of the North, but in these theories and practices of development in the South too - a legacy and language of the North.

Observing the various forms of social, economic and political processes in our countries, we can identify some modes of production which are not only the predominant modes, but the strengthening of which could in fact provide a new form of organisation of production and exchange giving us certain positive values:

For example, self employment is perceived as a less worthy form of employment than wage employment, by ideologies, administration as well as labour itself. However, it is the predominant mode in our country, especially amongs the poor, and provides certain inbuilt securities if properly nurtured. However, the guilt inherited from colonial legacies compels us to abandon this mode when we in fact should enjoy it.

Dispersed production provided not only decentralisation of power, not only perhaps less human congestion but also more control over life styles. It is a point of intense debate whether home based work with the exploitative mechanisms which exist is not a further intensification of female household subordination. Yet experiences whether from Africa or from India show that within dispersed work patterns alternative arrangements are possible to reverse the trend of exploitation to empowerment. Such turning over a pyramid can in fact be the thin end of revolutionary processes. Accepting existing structures and trying to debate within them seems old fashioned.

"Formalisation" of every institution and process is another concept and value which needs reconsideration. An organisation must be registered, title to land must be clarified and so on. Why? Formality makes the rigidity: often overpowers democracy, openness, closes options. Resilience may be necessary to avoid not only conflict but aggrandisement. Labour not employed in a factory for a wage is called 'informal' - when in fact it is procedurally bound as wage/factory labour. There are so many legacies that need reordering to make our economic and social cultures look interesting, useful, potentially rich - which indeed they are. Gandhi was one leader who plucked at these strings.

It is my view that the modes, not only modes of economic exchange but also social and political exchange that is derived from our own histories and cultures have been neglected and overpowered in the theory building that we have inherited from the 'north'. However, the poor and amongst them especially women have in fact survived in spite of the 'attacks' of development because they are still operating in those modes.

Often, these 'old modes' are branded as feudal or primitive - the very names are suggestive of unwanted characteristics. Yet, when because of these "lenses", various culturally homogenous groups and processes such as for example the tribal way of life, the island societies way of life get destroyed, there is a cry of alarm and concern. It is this inconsistency that has to be looked at again. "Old" structures which have built in unequal and oppressive elements can perhaps be cleansed of their oppressiveness without necessarily destroying that core in those structures or processes which provided the self-generating inner power of these societies over history. These deep links between history, society, culture and economy have been ignored by the globally popular development strategies including women and development strategies.

The usual argument is that to improve the level of living we need growth, and growth creates structural imbalance whether in socialist or capitalist countries. In these processes, some sacrifices are made. It is presumed, in the socialist countries, the sacrifice is made by the property owners and in capitalist countries by the working class.

In the alternative development programme, what is challenged is the very process as well as the goals. Most revolutions talk of structural change - usually based on production and its ownership and organisation, linked to class and its

relation limited to power relations. The alternative path also requires a structural change but in values, conceptual and implementing processes.

Therefore, there is a need both to build theory as well as to practice the theory through individual evolution as well as collective action.

4. A Book (8)

An inter religious dialogue amongst feminists cosponsored by the group Workmen, Religion and Social Change at Harvard by Diana Eck and later brought out as a book 'Speaking of Faith' by an Indian feminist publishing house KALI, leads to the view that while discrimination against women exists in all faiths, since women are the primary practitioners, there must be a strengthening and bonding aspect of religion -along with all the other package of discrimination and bigotry. What is it? Feminist theory for an Indian, a Hindu or Muslim may have a root in the religion and build on that relationship.

While Christology and Feminism have begun to interplay - this has not happened to the same extent with non-Christian religion : it needs to and is beginning to happen.

Fatima Mernissi has published a book called Women in an Islamic Paradise - A collection of such profiles of women in Hindu, Buddhist Christian and other paradises can reveal what paradises are not and also what they can be.

In the book "Speaking of Faith" I wrote an essay which showed that religion can empower women, given the context and the method. I illustrated with Gandhi's practice of meeting tradition half way. Drawing on it so that those who have been caught in its web can step out. Leading into it to keep the value of the core, of individual ethics, the 'purity' of self, enshrined in every religion.

I referred to Bhajans and further "Sarva Dharmas" prayers to reveal both the mobilising and the educating roles of religion. I showed how following an ethic of self effacement can be a step to annihilate differences of all kinds, gender, class, caste, religion - "me and the other". Becoming the other in a conflict situation was part of an etiquette derived from religion - this form of Secularism (Sarva Dharma) was not agnosticism but acceptance that there were many paths to the Divine.

* Sarva Dharmas - All Religion or Every Religion

I went on to suggest that women were the best vehicles for providing this leadership in religious practice - thus leavening, healing and sublimating conflict ridden humanity.

But today these views are in suspense. Women's condition of oppression perhaps leads her to deeper extremes rather than moderation - I don't know.

What I know is that the women's movement cannot be a bystander to this process in India. It will have to find out and stimulate religious sentiment towards tolerance and forgiveness. We are distracted because we see the woman only as victim of religious war. We must see them as antagonists to that war. We must open our eyes and walk with those religions. Since women are the main vehicles of social change, and the main practitioners of religion - in the study of women, religious consciousness has to be included.

Women are the main practitioners in every religion. Religion has often been their only support - a deity in place of the mother left behind; a court of appeal since there is so much domestic oppression, a source of providing courage when fear is dominating. The majority of women - all classes - will be orphaned without religion. But if they are the main practitioners, could they provide another culture of religion than what we see? How do we get this new culture of religion to become all pervasive and wipe away the old?

We need to see the roles of women during religious wars. Were they the fire stokers or were they the softeners? One hears of both types of behaviour.

The dialogue across faiths was discontent with concepts like patriarchy (9) and sexuality. They paused on motherhood, fertility - power politics in social dynamics. Another fountainhead for theory building.

5. A Man - Gandhi

While earlier the linkages between Gandhi and Indian women were not seen positively except by those who worked with him, there has been another look at him both in his personal as well as his political behaviour - from the feminist perspective (5,6). He emerges almost unscathed as his 'package' not only for women but the society and the economy of India are life saving and freedom giving.

The quest for the feminist ethic lands me in Gandhi every time, wherever I start - development, religion or politics.

To me feminist theory for India could be built around Gandhian thought - and every experience I have listed above leads me to the same view.

Whether it is in Bombay when the groups were asking how to operate a model where individuals do not misuse informal or collective groups for self empowerment - when I would say but it is the individual's ethic - or analyses of the root causes of inequities, insensitive development, when I would remember his views on decentralised production and exchange; restraint as consumption and so on. Gandhi seemed relevant and useful.

All ideological training Communist, Christian, Islamic Hindu demands self development. But this has been ridiculed by the modern person and especially feminists as they feel it is only legitimising what they have been enduring namely suffering.

Why see it that way? If women are strong as individuals it is because of these experiences. They are already into personal development processes as it has been their strategy to deal with their societal situation. I suggest let us maintain that strength - but autonomously. Let us change the bath water, and keep the baby.

If feminist theory emphasizes the individual's self discipline, self conscious evolution it only carries on what women are already into as responsible individuals.

Though this needs thinking through - and I hope to be doing that through both a process of reading and dialogue, I would like to suggest that there is a key here to shifting feminist analysis from female/or gender subordination which leads us to patriarchy, to just human or person subordination - another domain of discourse.

Subordination of one individual by another - whether based on race, religion or gender could be seen as the limited awareness in the oppressor of the oppressed. His ignorance, blindness, lack of imagination, lack of personal evolution into "higher" more sublime levels of consciousness.

Gandhi was working on this when he practised the idea of taking on the consciousness, the identity of the other - the "adversary", or the person who is subordinated, victimised. Simply stated, putting yourself into the other person's shoes, seeing it from the other side - the worm's eye view. His method of handling conflict non-violently was based on attempts to efface the reason for the conflict, at its root namely separate identities or separate consciousness.

Thus he wore clothes like the rural poor, lived in the houses of the "untouchables", travelled in the modes of the poor by foot (padayatra) and when necessary economy (third class) main compartments. (This has been mocked at as a joke because when VIPs try to do that it causes more fuss than demonstration, but I am here looking at:

- a) the mind and hope behind the effort
- b) in full faith that he tried this even before becoming a VIP, became a VIP because of the mass appeal of his attempts so there is a legitimacy in these ideas).

There is an emphasis here on the Mental i. e. The attitude, the frame of mind. Both the subordinated and the subordinator are in a mental state of incomprehension. By the subordinator getting into the shoes of the subordinated he understands, he can be enlightened to give up his oppressive arts. The subordinated is afraid, hostile. By coming close to the subordinator she/he loses fear, opens doors of communication.

To believe in the validity of such attempts requires a faith in the human being: For Gandhi who saw god in every person, this was no problem. But to us, it may be hocus/pocus.

Ramachandra Gandhi, the philosopher, has elaborated in a more scientific and erudite terms this concept of merging one's consciousness into another's and the validity of this in analysing conflict".

For religions, cultures, society etc. , economies like the ones in India - highly unequal with onslaughts from the inside and the outside - where separating gender subordination from the numerous other forces operating both ways attacking and resisting: to root, trace the source in the mind in the consciousness, rather than the body seems to offer a relevance and appropriateness.

I think this has to be further probed by us using other disciplines, including psychology, theology and so on.

The source of the angry uncontrolled competitiveness that we see expressed in monopolistic assertions such as movements like 'sons of the soil' linguistic chauvinism, or religious territorial assertions it is often suggested is the style of development and its thrust - to physical output, to surplus generation, to export - to consumerism. Consumerism planted on a society brought up on deprivation and on sharing:

imbedded in all kinds of inequality is like a holocaust. Gandhi foresaw the potential violence of consumerism and concentrated on using consumption as the lever for guiding the economy. Women have been conscious of the role of consumption and there have been many efforts at dampening consumerism, another vital and major pre-occupation of the Indian feminist.

REVIEW

I had an opportunity to quickly glance through the two other papers that are being presented on the panel namely, Deconstructing Patriarchy by Deniz Kandiyoti and The Gendered Nature of Social Structure and Culture by Joan Acker and Karen (Paige) Erickson, and was delighted to find that both papers are asking for "deschooling - of certain thought processes. [Acker and Paige emphasize the need to open up sociological investigation across disciplines to understand the influence of culture on the status of American women (an exercise very similar to that being undertaken by Nirmala Banerjee){10}. They ask for a blending of the humanities with the social sciences]. Kandiyoti wants to look at patriarchal bargaining as it operates in different cultures and reassemble from empirical knowledge and more positive non-residual concept of patriarchy.

In many ways what feminists in the third world are doing is to dismantle not only the concept given to them by Western feminists but the understanding of social and economic processes that is being given to them by what is called the dominant discourse, classical capitalists or socialists framework. They also are in the process of reconstructing. Thus these echoes are in some way in harmony.

Social science concepts would need a new language which by itself generates new values for certain phenomena. For example, substitute the words on the right for the words on the left and we begin to see a change in perception of what is and what ought to be:

For	Current	Read	New
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	Subsistence		Self-reliant
	Seclusion		Socialisation
	Decentralisation		Local Organisation
	Home based work		Household Enterprises

Home

A work place

It is amazing how pervasive are the theoretical concepts from which almost all development strategies are derived. We in the developing world, who make so many attempts to unite, e. g. Group 77, NAM, South-South, Poor Countries, Former Colonies - to resist the exploitation and the enslavement which has become part of the global political economy, however, derive even our strategies for change from the countries that we are resisting or are dominating us.

This problem or phenomenon is most crisply stated in an article by a young Indian historian. "Orientalism created the Oriental", - he says "an enormously systematic discipline was created by which European culture was able to manage and even produce the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment period. . . . In every case, there is a paradigm derived from the understanding of European history in the post-Enlightenment period". In other words whichever political theory, we in the developing countries adopt - capitalism or socialism, we cannot move towards independence because we pursue the same strategies and structures of our masters and therefore necessarily have to depend or link ourselves to them.

Why is this so? Because we have neglected deriving a positive normative theory which legitimizes as well as gives values to our own modes of production, exchange, our own modes of social organisation and stratification - our own modes of political participation.

How well this matches a paragraph from Kumari Jayawardane's book *Feminism and Nationalism in the third world*.

"It is variously alleged in the Third World by traditionalists, political conservatives and even by certain leftists, that feminism is a product of 'decadent' western capitalism, that it is based on foreign culture of no relevance to women in the Third World, that it is the ideology of women of the local bourgeoisie, and that it either alienates women from their culture, religion and family responsibilities on the one hand, or from the revolutionary struggle for national liberation and socialism on the other. In the West too, there is an Eurocentric view that the movement for women's liberation is not indigenous to Asia or Africa, but has been a purely West European and North American phenomenon, and that where movements for women's emancipation or feminist struggles have arisen in the Third World, they have been merely imitative of Western

models."

The field in India is fertile for building an original feminist theory and as I see it, its goal and its process would be for building a well grounded solidarity.

As an Indian woman - I feel great sadness these days that our country which withstood so many onslaughts of every kind in the past is violently agitated right now, seems to be in a trauma which could lead to the breakdown of many institutions and behaviours that have survived so many shocks.

I firmly believe only women can control and deflect this agitated nation into healing constructive paths. To do that we need to bind together and with a common perspective on solid moral foundations.

The source materials I have used for this presentation give me hope that we will.

Annexure 1

Dialogues with Feminists from the North

A Conversation North/South, June 1986, Athens:

"But why do you women in the so called third world separate yourselves we are struggling against the same system patriarchy and against the same dominant discourse." said a Dutch Feminist to me.

But I said "We are struggling against two dominant discourses - the one you are struggling against and the one you are generating. They are strong powerful highly disseminated, you flood us. We need to consolidate, know ourselves before we join you.

"What is your stand? She added "We don't know, We know it is not only the "male" nor is it "imperialism, capitalism zionism". It is something else. We will find out by dealing with it, I said. "

I am giving here some quotations - denoting those with which I feel identity and those with which I do not, as illustration of the distance and the nearness.

Examples of Distance

"The focus of feminist consciousness is the troubled response to the Male and the low perception of self(1). "

"Feminism has unmasked maleness as a form of power that is both omnipotent and nonexistent, an unreal thing with very real consequences (2). pp. 29.

"And in all this, do we forget that we have swallowed the old paradigms, been raised in the same woman-hating culture? We ourselves have learned to associate woman with nature, dark skin with dangerous knowledge. In a part of us, we are afraid of all that masculine society knowledge. In a part of us, we are afraid of all that masculine society fears. We fear female power, in ourselves and in others. And we fear separation. We do not like another woman to think differently than we do. We confuse ourselves and our own integrity with that of other women, whom we confuse with our mothers, whom we confuse with nature. That which in society has created conditions which imprison us also determines the shape

of the dialogue we have between us, the shape of our efforts toward liberation. Just as society has separated the idea of "woman" from the ideal of "knowledge", we cease to be able to accept our own thoughts, feelings, and sensations as a source of authority. We too, long for an ideology which will erase our own experience. "{3}.

Example of Nearness

"What I know from the political theory of liberation is that where an old paradigm exists, a new paradigm can come into being{1}.

"I believe that we are shaped by circumstance and that we shape the circumstances around us. In my own mind I experience the same dualism which haunts civilization between psychological thinking and political thinking. Yet, I cannot give up either vision, because both to me are equally true and experienced as such every day, every moment"{2}.

"Feminism stands in relation to marxism as marxism does to classical political economy: its final conclusion and ultimate critique. Compared with marxism, the place of thought and things in method and reality are reversed in a seizure of power that penetrates subject with object and theory with practice. In a dual motion, feminism turns marxism inside out and on its head{3}. "

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NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON WOMEN'S STUDIES
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ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT BY DEVAKI JAIN

INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL STUDIES TRUST

SECTION I

I am grateful to the IAWS for granting me this privilege to speak at a general session.

I guess I am asked to participate in this panel because I am associated with a process called DAWN (Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era) - which started in 1984. Today in this hall there are many friends who are either part of the DAWN process or are critics of it. I hope they will share this presentation.

I wish we had some kind of agreed version, leaflet - statement answering questions like - a) what is DAWN? b) who is the DAWN group? c) can anyone join it? d) what is its ideology/goals? e) has it any future plans?

I had hoped that some such material would be ready before this conference - the conference offers a golden opportunity for critically discussing this effort. But no such papers/folders are ready.

In a way the reasons for the lack of literature reflect the nature of DAWN. There is no real energising secretariat or fund. There is an ongoing debate on how much identifiable identity DAWN should assume, how much structure, strength in terms of finance, decision making, initiative taking.

The same questions and dilemmas that face women's groups - especially collectives, - in India are faced by DAWN. For instance, to have structure with all its evils of funds, leadership power - or to be a loose formation with all its drawbacks of again hidden leadership, overload, poor identity, quick dissolution? To keep the network open ended with some conditions for entry, who determines these conditions? Does this not make it exclusive?

However the DAWN process has continued to exist, reflecting not only the commitment of the individual women who first came together but the response, the interest of a section of women who are interested in the development sector.

Recently at the World Sociology Congress, several of the initiators of DAWN were present and had elaborated on the subject and process by which they hoped to carry on their work.

There is a research programme with two themes:

- the women's movement
- the crisis of development.

The idea is to link ongoing researchers, research - A process of consolidation aggregation, self strengthening, South-South.

The argument and a tentative outline of questions have been drawn up after extensive consultations by individuals like Hameeda Hossain of Bangladesh, Noleen Hayzer of Malaysia - and Carman Barosso and Lourdes Arizpe of Latin America. They in turn have found partners in individual countries as focal points and I believe Kumud Sharma of CWDS for the women's movement and Nirmala Banerjee of CSSS for crisis have undertaken these roles - so Hameeda tells.

Developing training curricula and spaces for training in the South is also a focus of the group. Here the initiative is from Africa but there are others here in India and Asia that will provide the forum.

The process has not undertaken the responsibility of financial sponsoring but a communicating, networking role - and even those who like Hameeda will play this role world wide will be doing it voluntarily i. e. without payment building whatever needs they have like postage etc. into existing overheads of supportive institutions. Thus the process is a flow of communication are not funding. In India, post Nairobi, the DAWN book and process has built a network. This network is being nurtured by Sharda Jain and colleagues at IDS Jaipur.

SECTION II

Having presented the nitty gritty of DAWN, I know it would be incomplete if I did not venture to define DAWN as well as what is meant by alternative development, to this group. I would like to use Dr. U. Kalpagam's review of the DAWN Book in Economic and Political Weekly (EPW Vol. XXI No. 14, April 5 '86, p. 574-576) as a peg to hang a presentation of this section. She has both given the content and the legitimacy for the endeavour.

I quote

"There is just no other work that articulates in so clearly a manner the links between the gender issues and the other macro-structural issues. The dominant view about the women's movement, even by some of the leaders of progressive movements, is that the women's movement is divisive of working class movements on the one hand, and on the other, at least at some peripheral level it is anti-men. Such crude and deliberate misconceptions no doubt reflects patriarchal domination, which domination like all other forms of domination, the women's movement seeks to overcome. What is significant from the DAWN analysis is that unless the poor women's perspective is taken into account, no substantial gain can be achieved in efforts that otherwise seeks to bring macro-structural changes. So it is not that if class-based domination is overthrown, the gender subordination would be taken care of automatically, just a matter of time and patient waiting. And in presenting the third world women's perspective, it has established the plurality of feminism, not only to the first world women but to educated men of the third world with half-baked ideas on 'women's Lib'."

She raises some questions on the legitimacy of the two Indians Gita Sen & myself in coming together to work on such an ambitious project, as well as alleges that it had special loaves and fishes - advantages to the centre where I work.

A Marxist and Gandhian, however half baked coming together to analyse issues of equity - class and gender - seems more appropriate to us than to her as both ideologies are basically involved in equity - though admittedly their analysis of causes, and their prescription of method for resolving the conflict are at great divergence. But such "tension" provides the necessary condition to work out ways/alternatives - it is the feminist critique of Marxism/Socialism, the feminist critique of Capitalism of Gandhi, of Christ that will set the stage for creative thinking and new directions, I believe.

On the question of access to more funding for ISST, the philosophy of the DAWN process has underlined that this is a voluntary effort - voluntary in the sense that no individual member of the initiating group was paid for their efforts - no consultancy. They volunteered this time to DAWN. Secondly that the energising point, the focal point would float from institution to institution perhaps across regions, so that no institution or individual will become a power centre either through money or through leadership.

Thus for the short period of 20 months that ISST provided a secretariat, it received support from communications and some staff salaries. This ended with the transfer of the DAWN secretariat to RIO. Donors have likewise shifted their interest to the new DAWN secretariat as intended.

The DAWN process made such a sincere effort to implement the vision of a feminist way which seeks to disengage itself from the usual tracks of institutions building which have been associated with.

I will now try to answer some difficult questions:

WHAT IS DAWN: DAWN is an aspiration and not an organisation. DAWN is neither a physical formation nor a financial formation. The DAWN group have defined themselves as a loose formation of women engaged in what can be called a search for finding a way out of the various types of conflicts and crisis that are troubling this world of ours.

This may seem somewhat poetic but from the very beginning the group has shed the inhibition against the dreaming of dreams and the designing of visions.

The process however of finding this way out begins with a consolidation of the analysis of development across class and gender from different perspectives - the perspectives

and gender from different perspectives - the perspectives given by ideologies or frameworks derived from Marx, Gandhi - religions such as Christianity, Islam; political systems such as dictatorships and other forms of regimes. It is really a discourse but emerging from the political and cultural context of the developing countries.

WHAT IS DAWN'S IDEOLOGY: I would venture to suggest that DAWN is seeking to find the boundaries of an ideology. It is easy enough to see a problem and to consolidate information, to review, to see the error. What is difficult is to design the alternative.

In almost all the DAWN consolidations the area of what is called vision is where the dialogue gets sticky. Generally, there is a belief that visions and methods would differ and cannot be defined. Yet some common negative and positive elements need to be traced, to be built, to form some platform. In the method of finding the new track emphasis is on learning from women - to listen and to build.

A concern has been that the alliances South feminist have been with North, i. e. Vertical. For example, alliances based on subscribing to socialism or christianity or lesbianion or some basic parameters of theory. Even if there are some difficulties of convergence, the ideology is to forge new alliances which are horizontal, with countries of the South - to share, to build, to train, out of the difficult contexts in which third world women find themselves.

Again if we are thinking of alternatives, it will be wrong to say that the alternative is an alternative equally rejecting of capitalism and socialism. It would be an alliance of with the socialit framework but seek alternative methods and these alternatives would emerge from third world experience. Thus it would go behind the rhetoric, to the empirical.

SECTION III

I have so far only covered the DAWN effort - however I think I should depart from that both because I am only describing an effort to which I belong but not myself and also because I have my own views on the vision which may not necessarily match the collective of DAWN.

I think that there is an extremely critical and urgent need for the women's movement however heterogenous and differing in its analytical frame to identify some of the development efforts which are causing havoc to poor women and generate a form of response/resistance on the one hand, as well as safeguarding of poor women's interest on the other. This may look too simple but I believe it is urgent in India.

I have also found women's groups however divergent because of ideology or clientele can come together when they have an issue such as an alternative health programme or a view on ecological devastation and so on. It is necessary to build on this possibility.

There are so many examples of women who have laid out alternatives systems sometimes in diarying, in fisheries in forestry, in trade unionism and so on. Some consolidation of this can itself provide perhaps short term strategy but yet a force.

Another experience I have shows that even amongst heterogenous women's groups there is some identity on methods-Method of organisation and implementation though we see many cracks in some of our efforts in this direction. I see a great richness in the dialogue amongst women such as at the Bombay conference. Again in a search to find ways out of the traps which have ossified or inhibited other mass movements. Somehow we have to build on this.

Analysing the experience of women with development I have found that there is a strong case for a renaissance around theory building.

It is amazing how pervasive are the theoretical concepts from which almost all analysis is derived. We in the developing world, who make so many attempts to unite, e. g. Group 77, NAM, South-South, Poor Countries, Former Colonies- to resist the exploitation and the enslavement which has become part of the global political economy, however, derive even our strategies for change from the countries that we are resisting or are dominating us.

This problem or phenomenon is most crisply stated in an article by a young Indian historian. "Orientalism created the Oriental:, - he says "an enormously systematic discipline was created by which European culture was able to manage and even produce the orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically and imaginatively

during the post-enlightenment period". In other words whichever political theory, we in the developing countries adopt-capitalism or socialism we cannot move towards independence because we persue the same strategies and structures of our masters and therefore necessarily have to depend or link ourselves to them.

Why is this so? Because we have neglected deriving a positive normative theory which legitimizes as well as views values to our own modes of production, exchange, our own modes of social organisation and stratification-our own modes of political participation.

In many ways what feminists in the third world are doing is to dismantle not only the concept given to them by western feminist but understanding of social and economic processes that is being given to them by what is called the dominant discourse, classical capitalist or socialist frameworks. They also are in the process of reconstructing.

As an Indian women-I feel great sadness these days that our country which withstood so many onsloughts of every kind in the past is violently agitated right now, seems to be a trauma could lead to the breakdown of many institutions and behaviours that have survived so many shocks.

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ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT FOR WOMEN
BY

DEVAKI JAIN

PRESENTED AT THE MEDITERRANEAN WOMEN'S STUDIES INSTITUTE
(KEGME), ATHENS -WOMEN'S STUDIES SUMMER PROGRAMME.

SECTION I

WHY ALTERNATE DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

Alternative to what? Alternative both to theories as well as mechanisms of development as elaborated by capitalism and socialism.

It is amazing how pervasive are the theoretical concepts from which almost all development strategies are derived. We in the developing world, who make so many attempts to unite, e. g. Group 77, NAM, South-South, Poor Countries, Former Colonies - to resist the exploitation and the enslavement which has become part of the global political economy, however, derive even our strategies for change from the countries that we are resisting or are dominating us.

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Why is this so? Because we have neglected deriving a positive normative theory which legitimizes as well as gives values to our own modes of production, exchange, our own modes of social organisation and stratification - our own

modes of political participation.

The experience of women especially poor women both as active agents finding or carving a place for themselves through survival strategies in their societies economies; or as those who respond to the stimulus of development in the developing countries offer an enormous fountainhead of inspiration, a release of new energies.

Alternative development that we wish to present derives from this culture of poor women and from the best in the civilization of South Countries.

If it is theoretically postulated it can even show communion if not communication, with supporting groups even in the North Countries, especially the poverty sections, the immigrant and the coloured in the North Countries.

Observing the various forms of social, economic and political processes in our countries, we can identify some modes of production which are not only the predominant modes, but the strengthening of which could in fact provide a new form of organisation of production and exchange giving us certain positive values:-

- e. g. Self-reliant (as a positive, and opposite of dependence on foreign countries)
- e. g. Conservation of resources
- e. g. Decentralization of economic and social power

Examples/Illustrations: Self-employed workers may look like 'informal' or marginal workers and self employment a primitive mode. Yet self-employed namely production and exchange by individuals and families are the primary predominant persons in the production and exchange system especially in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

We see them selling processed food, garments on the streets of Bangkok, Manila, Bangladesh and India. They are central, not marginal. Modernization, it is said, is to put them into factories and organise them into large trade unions - once again adding to concentration of economic power and hierarchies.

Is there an alternative?

On another definition of modernisation it could be said that small scale decentralised production with arrangements such

that the interest of the workers is safeguarded and producers are linking whenever necessary could be a suitable form of organisation for our countries.

Other issues to be explored are (i) family business; (ii) alternative production, and exchange systems; (iii) alternative arrangements for workers and; (iv) new economics based on poor women's strategies.

An important example is from Africa. The recent African experience of starvation is analysed as being the result of the neglect of the fact that in African culture, ownership was not an important issue, and African women were food producers. Development, formalisation of land ownership commercial market and for export. Gradually, Africa lost out and as we heard recently Africa is exporting proteins while Africa is starving.

SECTION II

DEVELOPMENT HAS BEEN TROUBLESOME - WHY?

Interesting illustrations of the inequity of development from all regions of the world has emerged from various analyses done of the impact of development policies on poor women. (2,3,4)

Each morning as we read the paper, we see reports on the destruction of spaces that poor people occupy through some intervention in the name of technological progress or economic growth or international reputation.

Recently there has been much discussion on the plight of fisherfolk of Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka in India as a result of Fisheries Development Projects. Earlier, there have been reports of the struggles of the poor to have access to their forests for both fuelwood and food and work, and the greed and the need of forest based large scale industry. We hear of resistance to large irrigation works by those whose lands get waterlogged or are overrun by the canals which take water for other people. (5,6,7)

In each case, the struggles of the poor for getting their territory has been seen as in the some way resistance to modernisation, to the inevitable structural changes that are part of improving the standard of living of the country.

Little is it realised, however, that the space - geographical area as well as metaphorical - that is occupied by the poor is not only legitimate, but sensible, resource saving and relevant product releasing. This encroachment of their territory will land the country in situations of dependence, crisis and conflict.

Let us take two examples of the impact of development, potential and actual, one in Gujarat and one from Karnataka, with all the implications for an alternative strategy.

1. SEWA, or the Self Employed Women's Association, headquarters in Ahmedabad is a trade union with a current membership of about 20,000 plus. Amongst its members are vegetable vendors who have traditionally (over 20 years,

even 50 years for some) sat in a square called Manekchowk. Their customers are usually women on foot - lower middleclass and working class women and men.

In the name of traffic efficiency, the municipality wanted to clear the Chowk of the vendors - for whom? For a CAR PARK for customers who have cars; businessmen who have shops in the chowk. Sewa through Satyagraha and the Supreme Court, forced the Municipality to withdraw their plan. Basic argument: the vendors had more legitimacy in occupying the place than the built shopkeepers. They were poor and this was their livelihood. Basically a legal and a moral argument. However, in taking the argument further they found that city planners, architects never made space for these small self employed working class traders who were central to the city's economy. They were always "evicted" to non-commercial areas. They had a seminar to discuss designing of cities and finally changes of curricula in city planning and schools of architecture.

2. Tadri in North Kanara, Karnataka, India is basically a fishing area where a project is being implemented whose main goal is improving the quality of the community along with income growth through greater production and sale of fish. A survey revealed that the project design including modern mechanised boats would (a) over-harvest the ocean (leading to killing the goose that is laying the golden egg as has happened in Kerala) (b) prevent thousands of women from access to fish on landing - for trading purpose. Thus they would lose their source of livelihood, and (c) prevent village households in the interior villages from fish consumption as these trading women also vend the fish by carrying head loads house to house on foot sometimes walking 10-15 kilometres a day.

Further, the fishing community traditionally preserves the fish by SALTING, then sending even to villages in Maharashtra. Salted fish lasts in all types of weather. The cold storage fish perishes the moment it is removed from ice. Thus it becomes a commodity for selling and buying only for the refrigerated class.

What a price to pay for what? More fish for cold storage and export to Bombay and abroad. A kill for the large trader while local fisherfolk would be reduced to labourers for the contractors and traders.

This is the culture of production and exchange of the poor. Development dislocates this and leaves them with nothing.

These examples may look like emerging from a mixed capitalistic economy like India, and not socialist countries.

Analysis of the history of Eastern European countries, of China and Cuba (9, 10, 11) show that while women have been given security in terms of place in the wage labour market, the other parameters of autonomy which have to be provided through social and political intervention are yet to come. They also show forms of dependence and trade off between communities, their cultural continuity, history and the needs of rapid 'modernisation'. The socialist countries struggle to keep up with the capitalist countries is in itself an indication that these two parts of the world are after similar goals.

What is the way?

In a word, the other way is learning from the poor, allowing their own dynamics to function but at a much less dehumanising level of living than they are at present. This may look simple minded and may look like begging the question. The usual argument is that to improve the level of living we need growth, and growth creates structural imbalance whether in socialist or capitalist countries. In these processes, some sacrifices are made. It is presumed, in the socialist countries, the sacrifice is made by the property owners and in capitalist countries, by the working class.

In this alternative development programme, what is challenged is the very process as well as the goals. The level of living is a concept, but not the same as indicated by per capita income.

Most revolutions talk of structural change - usually based on production and its ownership and organisation, linked to class and its relation limited to power relations. The alternative path also requires a structural change, but in our views, our values, conceptual and implementing processes.

The first step in my view is the acceptance of a philosophy based on personal ethics-strong self confident individuals. The second is identification with poor - learning from the

poor, believing in their intelligence, strengthening their own capabilities to the extent that they cease to be poor but without disturbing their own cultural life style.

The culture of poverty can be the paradigm for development - not the poverty, but the culture - the attitude, the choices, the interlinks and exchanges that this culture provides. This possibility is highlighted or illuminated significantly by the lives of poor women.

Women are the poorest whether we take the nutritional or the income criterion. Also the hard core of society which ensures its survival are women. The culture of women, is the predominant force within the culture of the poor, as women are the majority of the poor and it is their creative energy and sense of responsibility which sustains that section of society.

The poor in India are not wretched nor passive, nor really overpowered by poverty. They are terribly deprived of all aspects of physical well being - they are literally worked to death by the society and the environment but they are not pessimistic. They are aware, alert, carving spaces for themselves against all odds.

A typical family would be female headed, small in size. Adult men would have migrated or abandoned the family. The Techniques of survival would make the family search for income and food in ways which recycle waste, use every resource productively including food. The choice of activity would be careful - to ensure survival income real or monetary. Each individual in the family would be allocated to optimise survival. Society uses their services, and the strategies of the poor but refuses to recognise their legitimacy.

Thus when Gandhi idealises the village, it is not that he does not realise that the village is a hard place to live in. However, he sees the possibilities of making the village a way of life, which can contain human greed - thus avoiding conflict - thus ensuring peace. Proximity is a great source of knowledge and adjustment inspite of differences. The Gandhian methodology of production and exchange in economics; of overcoming social barriers like caste and creed in social relations, is based on proximity.