

# Women Challenging Globalization

A gender perspective on the United Nations International Conference on Financing for Development, March 18-22, 2002, Monterrey, Mexico



equal access  
**HUMAN RIGHTS**  
PEACE  
healthy planet  
eco  
**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**  
economic justice  
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<b>Preface</b> BY NOELEEN HEYZER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, UNIFEM .....	3
<b>Introduction: Turning Words Into Action</b> BY JUNE ZEITLIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, WEDO .....	4
<b>1. The Monterrey Consensus: A Failure to Challenge the Status-Quo</b> BY JANICE GOODSON FOERDE .....	8
<i>The issues, the process and the outcomes.</i> <i>What women wanted, what we got, and what blocked us.</i>	
• <b>The Power of Influence: FfD, the United States and ODA</b> BY EMIRA WOODS .....	12
• <b>The Doha Ministerial: Not Good for Development,     Not Good for Gender Equality</b> BY MARIAMA WILLIAMS .....	19
<b>2. Women in the Global Economy: Issues, Roles and Advocacy</b> BY NADIA JOHNSON ..	20
<i>Monitoring, analyzing and offering action strategies to transform the current macroeconomic framework.</i>	
• <b>Where Submachine Guns Safeguard Ice Cream</b> BY MARTA BENAVIDES .....	21
• <b>No Peace, No Development: The Case of Burundi</b> BY LILIANE RUVAKUBUSA .....	22
• <b>The NEPAD, Gender and Poverty Trap</b> BY ZO RANDRIAMARO .....	24
• <b>In the Newly Independent States, Women Take On Debt</b> BY OKSANA KISSELYOVA .....	27
• <b>Global Public Goods: Controversy, Hopes and Fears</b> BY MARINA FE B. DURANO ..	28
• <b>Expanding the Debate on the Global Tobin Tax</b> BY GIGI FRANCISCO .....	30
• <b>Put Power in the Communities</b> BY DEVAKI JAIN .....	32
<b>Resources</b> .....	35



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WEDO is an international advocacy organization that seeks to increase the power of women worldwide as policymakers at all levels of governments, institutions and forums to achieve economic and social justice, a healthy and peaceful planet and human rights for all.

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UNIFEM is the women's fund at the United Nations. It provides financial and technical assistance to innovative programmes and strategies that promote women's human rights, political participation and economic security. UNIFEM works in partnership with UN organizations, governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and networks to promote gender equality. It links women's issues and concerns to national, regional and global agendas, by fostering collaboration and providing technical expertise on gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment strategies.

The views expressed in this publication are those of the authors, and do not necessarily represent the views of UNIFEM, the United Nations or any of its affiliated organizations.

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ON THE UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON FINANCING  
FOR DEVELOPMENT, MARCH 18-22, 2002, MONTERREY, MEXICO**

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# Preface

BY NOELEEN HEYZER

## AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT

Fund for Women (UNIFEM), I am pleased to support the effort to include women and women's perspectives in the process of shaping globalization. UNIFEM support to women's organizing in preparation for the Financing for Development (FfD) Conference is part of our program to strengthen women's economic security and rights. It responds to the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, which mandated UNIFEM to "increase options and opportunities for the economic and political empowerment of women in developing countries so that they can more effectively contribute to and benefit from the development of their countries and communities."

The FfD Conference offered an opportunity to create an international financial system based on economic democracy, transparency, accountability, and the inclusion and empowerment of all people, to ensure that the values expressed at the Millennium Summit are made into reality, and that the resources follow the rhetoric. It offered the chance to work toward a global system that allows women and men to expand their opportunities and increase their capabilities, to eliminate the gender inequalities that inhibit development by hindering productivity, effectiveness and progress.

In speaking to ministers and delegates in Monterrey I repeated what women everywhere have been working for:

Perhaps the clearest message to emerge was that the effort to transform the globalization process must be ongoing and that women's organizing is a vital part of the effort.

one, access to and control over productive resources; two, recognition and valuation of women's unpaid work in the care economy; three, incorporation of a gender analysis into the ways national resources are raised and spent; and four, greater participation in economic decision-making.

In Monterrey I concluded by saying: "We have an opportunity today to set out precisely how, in what time frames and with what appropriate benchmarks, development based on transparency, accountability and equality can be embedded throughout the international and national financial systems and monitored for its effect on human progress."

Perhaps the clearest message that emerged from the conference was that the effort to get the world to seize these opportunities to reshape and transform the globalization process must be ongoing and continual, and that women's organizing is a necessary and vital part of that process.

This report reflects that reality and explores ways for women and civil society organizations to move forward. The road ahead is very much uphill. But as such, it mirrors and encapsulates women's long climb to equality, and however difficult, there is No Turning Back.

*Noeleen Heyzer is Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).*

# Introduction: Turning Words Into Action BY JUNE ZEITLIN

**OVER THE PAST 30 YEARS, WOMEN HAVE PARTICIPATED IN AND** organized at United Nations international conferences to promote the advancement and rights of women—from the First World Conference on Women in Mexico City in 1975, through the second in Copenhagen (1980) and third in Nairobi (1985), to the fourth in Beijing in 1995. At these conferences, women provided testimony, analyses, proposals, solutions and enormous energy. We focused public attention on diverse women’s economic, social, environmental and political circumstances, and secured political commitments from governments and international institutions to provide redress.

These conferences were unprecedented successes providing the glue that bound together diverse women’s organizations and regional networks, across the global North and South and across the full range of women’s issues, into a global movement. They not only served as forums for the development of a global women’s agenda, they forced governments worldwide to listen to women’s issues and to take steps to address our demands. Issues such as violence against women, women’s poverty and illiteracy, women’s health and reproductive rights and women’s under representation in government became part of the public discourse.

The United Nations conferences held during the decade of the 1990s provided the opportunity for women to take their

demands one step further, mainstreaming their concerns into the UN human rights and human development agendas. Beginning with the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, women from around the globe came together to strategize and to gain formal recognition of their crucial role in achieving a new kind of development that is socially, economically and environmentally sustainable. At subsequent conferences women won significant government commitments to protect and advance women’s human rights, reproductive health and rights, poverty and social development, and a broad platform of political, social and economic action.

Women focused their energies, locally and globally, on the implementation of these commitments and struggled to hold their governments accountable. Much was achieved—legal reforms were undertaken in many countries to spell out rights for women, programs to address violence against women were initiated, micro-credit for women was widely instituted and a few women achieved high political office. But, as WEDO’s co-founder Bella Abzug would often say, “We have the words, now we need the music. And the music is action.”

What stands in the way of the music? The answers are unfortunately simple—POWER and MONEY. The arenas where women continue to lag the farthest behind are in political and economic decision making. And, despite the advances

## FfD Timeline: Passage of a Process

### 1997

**June 20, 1997:** In adopting the Agenda for Development the United Nations General Assembly decides that: “Due consideration should be given to modalities for conducting an intergovernmental dialogue on the financing of development...”

**December 18, 1997:** The General Assembly adopts resolution A/RES/52/179 entitled “Global partnership for development: high-level international intergovernmental consideration of financing for development” following negotiations based on a draft

resolution proposed by the Group of 77/China

- Establishes ad hoc open-ended working group to make recommendations “on the form, scope and agenda of the high-level international intergovernmental consideration of the topic of financing for development...”

### 1999

**December 22, 1999:** The GA adopts resolution A/RES/54/196 entitled “High-level international intergovernmental consideration of financing for development,” which makes FfD procedural decisions.

### 2000

**May 30–June 2, 2000:** Resumed organizational session and first substantive session of the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom I)

- Documents: Second Report of the Bureau to the Preparatory Committee (A/AC.257/8); Preliminary FfD-agenda adopted (A/AC.257/L.2/Rev.1).

**August 2–5, 2000:** ESCAP (Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific) regional consultations, Jakarta, Indonesia

- Documents: Final report (A/AC.257/13)

**November 6–7, 2000:**

Hearings with NGO representatives, New York

**November 9–10, 2000:** ECLAC (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean) regional consultations, Bogota, Colombia

- Documents: Final report (A/AC.257/17)

**November 15–22, 2000:** ECA (Economic Commission for Africa) regional consultations, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

- Documents: Final report (A/AC.257/14)

**November 23–24, 2000:** ESCWA (Economic and Social Commission for Western

and improvements in many women's lives, as a group worldwide, women remain the poorest of the poor.

Unquestionably, the challenges of inequality and the feminization of poverty have been exacerbated by the rapid globalization of the world economy. It is now well-documented that the current Washington Consensus model of globalization, based on unrestrained trade and financial liberalization, deregulation, and privatization, has increased inequality between peoples and nations. For those at the bottom of the economic ladder, particularly women who assume multiple roles as economic provider, caregiver and household linchpin, the negative impacts are exacerbated.

Women worldwide understood the importance of the Financing for Development process; the commitments governments had made at previous UN conferences needed to be backed up by resources. New domestic resources were needed and these depended in part on addressing the structural inequalities in the global economic system. The emphasis given to the process was therefore welcomed.

In partnership with UNIFEM, WEDO undertook the "Investing in Women" project which enabled more women

working at both the grassroots and the policy level to participate actively in the FfD process. As a result, women were a strong voice in Monterrey, making the case that new financial resources must be identified and/or reallocated in order to achieve the development targets to which governments had previously agreed.

The promise of the FfD process was to link the financial resources to the promotion of development. This link was to set apart this UN-sponsored meeting from the routine financial discussions of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank and other strictly financial institutions. It was also to provide a forum where all countries, developing and developed, would have a real voice in policymaking and where civil society would have a real opportunity for input. Unfortunately, as Foerde says in her assessment of the

process, these promises were not realized. While the government delegates and other stakeholders, principally the international financial institutions, talked a lot about finance and financial mechanisms, there was little political will to actually commit new resources or to create new mechanisms. There was almost no discussion of how existing resources would actually advance development. In fact, as at the

**The promise of FfD was that the resources needed to implement a decade of government commitments to development would be identified and that women would get to make a genuine input.**

Asia) regional consultations, Beirut, Lebanon • Documents: Final report (A/AC.257/16)

**December 6–7, 2000:** ECE (Economic Commission for Europe) regional consultations, Geneva, Switzerland • Documents: Final report (A/AC.257/15)

**December 11–12, 2000:** Hearings with business community, New York

## 2001

**January 2001:** Report of the Secretary-General to the Preparatory Committee for the high-level international

intergovernmental event of Financing for Development, UN, New York.  
<http://esa.un.org/ffd/policydb/sgreporto.htm>

**February 12–23, 2001:** Second Substantive Session of the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom II) • Documents: Report of the Committee (A/AC.257/L.5) • NGO community decides to hold Civil Society Forum on financing for development alongside the official conference

**May 2–8, 2001:** Third Substantive Session of the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom III) Part I •

Organization of work • Documents: Report of the Committee on its third session (A/AC.257-22, Cor1, Add1)

**October 15–19, 2001:** Third Resumed Substantive Session of the Preparatory Committee, Part II (PrepCom III cont.) • Documents: Report of the Committee on its resumed third session (A/56/28)

## 2002

**January 14–27, 2002:** Fourth Substantive Session of the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom IV) • Documents:

Fifth report of the Bureau (A/AC.257/33); Draft text of the Monterrey Consensus agreed January 27, 2002 (A/AC.257/32)

**March 14–16, 2002, Monterrey, Mexico:** NGO Global Forum—Financing the Right for Sustainable and Equitable Development

**March 18–22, 2002 Monterrey, Mexico:** International Conference on Financing for Development

Fourth Ministerial Meeting of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001 in Doha, Qatar (page 20) where free trade was seen as an end in itself rather than as a means to advance human development and global prosperity, “finance” too became an end in and of itself. While developing countries were indeed present, their voices—so evident in early drafts of the Monterrey Consensus, the negotiated conference document—were muted in the final text. And the concerns of civil society were too frequently ignored.

As the Women’s Caucus noted in one of its final statements, in the FfD Roundtable on “Looking Forward:” “Women have been actively engaged in the Financing for Development Conference process. We have participated in good faith. But we have not been heard. As we made clear in the Declaration of the NGO Forum, we do not agree with the Monterrey Consensus. Lest our participation be misconstrued, the Women’s Caucus wishes to state categorically that we do not join in this consensus.

We are deeply concerned that very little progress has been made in ensuring the availability of sufficient financial resources for sustainable development. The resources to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have not been made available so far. The prospects are even worse for the larger development agenda...”

Many at the UN and certainly many government representatives spoke of a “trinity” of conferences—the Doha WTO ministerial, FfD in Monterrey and the UN World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg in August/September 2002. These conferences were linked

because, together, they were supposed to address trade and global finance for achieving sustainable development

Doha, hailed by some governments in the North as a “breakthrough” after the political stalemate at the Seattle Ministerial in November 1999, was supposed to usher in a new “development” round. Yet there is much disagreement and uncertainty as to the exact nature of the agreements reached at Doha and now even some of the developing countries

which were present are questioning the adequacy and usefulness of the outcome. Yet a few industrialized countries led by the United States rushed to enshrine the Doha language in both the Monterrey and Johannesburg outcome documents. Efforts by NGOs and some developing countries to take another look at trade related matters, such as harmful or trade-distorting subsidies, were beaten back at both of these conferences because, as we were told, trade was already dealt with at Doha.

Monterrey was supposed to comprehensively examine five financial mechanisms to identify new resources for the purposes of development. These included domestic resource mobilization, foreign direct investment (FDI), trade, official development assistance (ODA) and debt reduction. FfD also took up systemic issues, which could have included an examination of global governance by the international financial institutions. During the FfD process, developing countries emphasized the need to take up the international sources of finance. This was sharply contested by the industrialized countries, particularly the U.S., which repeatedly emphasized that the document should focus 90 percent on domestic resources and 10 percent on international resources. The final Monterrey Consensus is weighted towards domestic resources.

In terms of international resources, the Monterrey Con-

**With their rich and diverse experiences and comprehensive analyses linking sustainability, equality and human rights, women are forging a new development paradigm that’s good for all humanity.**

## Acronyms Used in this Report

**BWIs:** Bretton Woods institutions

**CDF:** Country Development Framework

**CEDAW:** Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

**CEE/NIS:** Central and Eastern Europe/Newly Independent States

**CTT:** Currency transaction tax

**FDI:** Foreign direct investment

**GATS:** General Agreement on Trade Services

**GDP:** Gross Domestic Product

**GEAR:** Growth, Employment and Redistribution

**GPGs:** Global public goods

**HIPC:** Heavily Indebted Poor Countries

**IFIs:** International financial institutions

**IMF:** International Monetary Fund

**LDCs:** Least Developed Countries

**MCA:** Millennium Challenge Account

**MDGs:** Millennium Development Goals

**NEPAD:** New Partnership for Africa’s Development

**ODA:** Official Development Assistance

**OECD:** Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development

**PRSP:** Poverty Reduction Strategic Papers

**SAPs:** Structural Adjustment Programs

**SWAps:** Sector-Wide Approaches

**TNCs:** Transnational corporations

**TRIPS:** Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights

**UN:** United Nations

**WB:** World Bank

**WTO:** World Trade Organization

sensus contains few new commitments—it reiterates Doha on trade, encourages private investment and a positive domestic enabling environment, it reaffirms HIPC on debt reduction and continues to call for compliance with the existing 0.7 percent target on ODA without any specific timetable. Essentially, FfD left the Washington Consensus economic model in place. Governments called for “sustainable, gender-sensitive, people-centered development,” but did not alter the existing financial architecture or financial mechanisms to turn the words into music.

Again, we were told that sustainable development would be taken up at the World Summit on Sustainable Development. With memories of all that women had achieved ten years earlier at the Earth Summit in Rio, we prepared earnestly for Johannesburg. We understood that the needs of women and all humanity are greater and more urgent than ever. The gap between rich and poor, peoples and nations grows wider and the degradation of the environment continues. We feared that this might be the last chance that governments of the world—gathered in one place under UN auspices—have to shift from the current collision course between the rich and the poor to an approach that implements the three pillars of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental) for all people and the planet.

Despite the urgency of the needs and the demands of civil society and the South African landless and poor outside the conference center, there was not sufficient political will or power to move away from the existing economic paradigm to one emphasizing sustainable development. Indeed, no new institutional arrangements were forthcoming that would put the social and environmental pillars of sustainable development on an equal footing with the economic one. WTO primacy was reaffirmed. Issues relating to environmental protection, human rights or labor rights (no mention of gender equality) are mere add-ons or window dressing. Thus, though some incremental gains for women were achieved, this triad of global meetings from Doha to Monterrey to Johannesburg failed to put us on a path to gender equality, poverty eradication and sustainable development.

This report is a valuable tool for policymakers, academics and women’s rights advocates to advance understanding of the gender dimensions of the FfD process, the experiences of women in the global economy, and what needs to be done to truly tackle poverty. In section one, Janice Goodson Foerde maps the uneasy road women have travelled throughout the FfD process, and provides a gender analysis of the outcomes, the Monterrey Consensus. In section two, Nadia Johnson gives an account of women’s roles and issues in the global market economy, and describes some innovations women have undertaken to bring a gender perspective into economic decision-making. Throughout the report various contributors from around the world offer first hand incites into regional con-

## Stakeholders

1. Governments/UN member states
2. Institutions:
  - Bretton Woods institutions: International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank (WB)
  - World Trade Organization (WTO)
  - Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
  - Bank for International Settlements (BIS)
  - Regional Development Banks
3. UN System:
  - commissions, funds, programmes and organizations
4. Business NGOs, interest groups, and companies
5. Civil Society Organizations

## Main Negotiating Blocs

- G-77/China: Caucus of over 133 developing countries and China. Chair rotates on an annual basis by region.
- European Union (EU): Currently 15 countries. Presidency rotates every six months.
- United States

cerns and provide expertise on a variety of issues. The report ends with action strategies.

The directions offered are clear: Women must continue to demand that our governments implement the commitments they have made and we must use all available national and international platforms to push for transparency and accountability. We must go back to our communities and organize. As the contributors eloquently describe in this report, women experience the multitude of economic forces—global and local—in their daily lives. Most women may not know the current World Bank or IMF jargon, but they can certainly describe the effects of these policies in their daily lives.

As women of the world, we will continue to emphasize and build the local to global to local linkages. We will double our efforts to increase women’s economic literacy, strengthen the capacity to undertake economic analyses, experiment with different approaches and advocate for policies that are responsive to women’s needs. With our rich and diverse experiences and comprehensive analyses linking sustainability, equality and human rights, we are forging a new development paradigm that is good not only for women and children but for the entire human community.

*June Zeitlin is the Executive Director of Women’s Environment and Development Organization (WEDO).*

# The Monterrey Consensus: A Failure to Challenge the Status-Quo

BY JANICE GOODSON FOERDE

## THE UNITED NATIONS' RECENT EXAMINATION OF ISSUES RELATED

to financing for development culminated in March 2002 with the International Conference on Financing for Development in Monterrey, Mexico. When this process began in 2000, it was billed as an innovative approach to promote the action plans and initiatives adopted, but rarely implemented, over the previous decade of world conferences and summits on an array of development issues.

Beginning with the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), diverse women from around the world, deploying joint strategies, gained formal recognition of their crucial role in achieving development that is socially, economically and environmentally sustainable. At subsequent conferences throughout the 1990s—in particular, the UN World Conference on Human Rights (WCHR) in 1993 in Vienna, Austria; UN International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in 1994 in Cairo, Egypt; and in 1995 the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen, Denmark, and the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China—women advanced their agenda, winning government commitments to protect and promote women's human rights and reproductive health and rights, and to take action on a broad platform of political, economic, and social development goals.

But even as women struggled to hold their governments accountable in the implementation of these commitments, the challenges of inequality and the feminization of poverty have been exacerbated by rapid globalization of the world economy. For women, therefore, the FfD conference process held great potential, focused as it was on resources and mechanisms to finance the development commitments of the 1990s conferences and of the UN Millennium Summit held in New York in September 2000, which affirmed many of these goals.

Women, who for years had monitored trends in six critical aspects of development finance—mobilizing domestic resources, mobilizing international resources, trade, international cooperation, external debt, and systemic issues—embraced the opportunity to reach a more common understanding of these interlinked concerns and to build consensus for meeting previous commitments. FfD was seen as a much-needed means for achieving sustainable, gender-sensitive, people-centered development for all, a concept imply-

ing that issues related to women's development—including fair income distribution and equal access to productive and human development resources—must be core, cross-cutting themes.

As it turned out, the Monterrey Consensus, the outcome document governments eventually signed at the conference in Mexico, does enshrine this populist definition of "development" (paras. 8, 9). However, despite high levels of participation and enthusiasm among women and other stakeholders, in the end the Monterrey Consensus failed to challenge the current macroeconomic framework that perpetuates global imbalances, inequality and suffering.

In the end FfD failed to challenge the current macroeconomic framework that perpetuates global imbalances, inequality and suffering.

## The Monterrey Consensus: Gaps and Gains

NGOs had high expectations and hopes for the Monterrey Consensus based on the early drafts of the outcome document, but the text was progressively watered down in the

process of negotiations. It is particularly weak on the kind of systematic changes and gender analysis that would make a real difference to women and the poor.

Many of the deficiencies of the Monterrey Consensus stem from one central factor: its failure to address the current macroeconomic framework of faulty policies—deregulation, privatization, and trade and financial liberalization—that have swelled the ranks of the world's poor, particularly women, and led to growing global inequality. Known as the Washington Consensus, this neo-liberal economic model relies almost exclusively on trade liberalization and foreign investment to spur economic development, giving little weight, beyond lip-service, to human development or environmental protection.

*Gender Strokes:* By sticking with the Washington Consensus model, it was impossible for governments to adequately address the economic realities of women's lives. Although it is generally accepted that women make up the majority of the world's poor, the government consensus reached in Monterrey is almost devoid of gender analysis and reflects only a limited commitment to gender equality.

The document indicates little recognition of women's particular position within the labor market—concentrated in the informal sector, rural agricultural sector and low wage positions in the formal labor market—and the differential and negative impact of global economic policies on these sectors.

Neither was it acknowledged that women bear the brunt of the negative aspects of neo-liberal style globalization in terms of additional domestic and community responsibilities as social services are privatized, cutback or eliminated.

The link between gender and other forms of equity and macro-economics is ignored. Under neo-liberal economic globalization, the multiple roles of women at home, in communities and in the paid work force, have led to marginalization, exploitation and ultimately the feminization of poverty. Dealing with this kind of structural discrimination requires a structural solution.

Thanks mainly to the efforts of the Women's Caucus, the Monterrey Consensus does contain a sprinkling of gender sensitive references, although governments accepted far fewer references than were proposed. The "Staying Engaged" section (paras. 68-73) provides for increased cooperation between the United Nations and international financial institutions—World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Trade Organization (WTO)—on implementing the commitments of previous conferences, a big plus for women's activism. And a reference to social and gender budgeting appears, although only as an example of reinforcing "national efforts in capacity building in developing countries and countries with economies in transition" (para. 19).

Under the section on mobilizing domestic resources (paras. 10-19) "protecting labor rights and the environment" is listed with "empowering women" but only in the context of creating "appropriate policy and regulatory frameworks ... in a manner consistent with national laws to encourage public and private initiatives ...". Even without the anomalous grouping

of "women's empowerment" and "labor rights," no new suggestions have been put forward for achieving these goals.

The document does encourage stakeholders to: "Mainstream the gender perspective into development policies at all levels and in all sectors...(to) strengthen the effectiveness of the global economic system's support for development" (para. 64). But earlier and stronger proposals for gender mainstreaming in international financial and development institutions, which is crucial for the FfD objectives of poverty eradication and sustainable development, failed to make the final cut.

Sprinkling a few references around the outcome document cannot advance the struggle against gender, racial, and other forms of injustice. Far-reaching reforms and longer-term steps are needed to challenge unequal power relations inherent in the current economic model itself.

*North/South, Rich/Poor Divides:* The Monterrey Consensus is also hitched to an unequal and discriminatory global economy, with widening discrepancies between countries of the global North and South and the countries of the former Soviet Union as well as within nations.

Unrealistic demands are made on developing countries while the developed nations are held to few obligations. The primary focus was on mobilizing domestic resources, which places the responsibility for development on national governments even as international donors who dictate the terms—via opening domestic markets to trade liberalization and foreign direct investment—are merely required to take "voluntary" actions. This imbalance works against poor, devel-

## Defining the FfD Issues

### 1. Mobilizing domestic financial resources for development:

Improving an enabling domestic environment by addressing various national governance issues and macroeconomic decision-making.

### 2. Mobilizing international resources for development:

Enhancing private capital flows for development financing by facilitating private flows, especially longer-term flows; expanding foreign direct investment (FDI) to more developing and transitional countries; addressing

the development impact of transnational corporation investments in developing countries; improving measures to reduce international financial volatility in destination and source countries.

**3. Trade:** Ensuring market access for export to developing countries; addressing issues related to trade liberalization and regional and international trade policies, such as those of the WTO; strengthening regional cooperation for global trade.

### 4. Increasing international financial cooperation for

**development:** Enhancing official development assistance (ODA) to fulfill the target of 0.7% GDP while increasing its effectiveness and efficiency; differentiating ODA from global public goods (GPGs) financing; exploring internationally cooperative tax initiatives such as currency transaction tax (CTT).

**5. External Debt:** Addressing debt problems of developing countries; enhancing and expanding the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative; exploring

ways to avoid the recurrence of debt crises; providing technical assistance for debt management; assessing the lending policies of the World Bank and IMF.

**6. Systemic issues:** Enhancing the coherence and consistency of the international monetary, financial and trading systems; improving global governance; promoting accountability, transparency, and broader participation in decision-making and norm-setting; strengthening the role of the UN in international economic decision-making.

oping countries but is not seen as a violation of these countries' right to development.

*Mobilizing New Money:* International cooperation was weakened because of United States opposition to a minimum of 0.7 percent of GNP to official development assistance (ODA) although governments have agreed on this figure in other UN meetings and documents. References to this target complement those countries that have reached the 0.7 target (Denmark, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden consistently; Luxembourg since 2000) but other countries are only "urged" to meet this goal (para. 42). In the period from the final preparatory meeting at the end of January 2002 up to the conference in March, pressure grew for countries to make individual commitments as a show of good faith. The combined \$30 billion in additional ODA over the next several years pledged by the European Union and the U.S. was one example although it does not reach the World Bank needs estimate of \$50 billion per year.<sup>2</sup> Also embedded in the Monterrey Consensus is a plan by donor countries to use existing funds more effectively without increasing funds, by improving the quality of aid or moving funding sources around.

No mechanisms have been introduced to mobilize new financial resources to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, agreed by 189 governments at the 2000 UN Millennium Summit. Only ODA, debt relief, foreign investments, trade and domestic resources are considered potential sources of additional resources. Under the section on development assistance, governments "agree to study, in appropriate forums, the results of the analysis requested from the Secretary General on possible innovative sources of finance." They note a proposal to use special drawing rights allocations for development purposes, although they maintain that the IMF's Articles of Agreement and established procedures on global liquidity must be respected (para. 44). Under the systemic issues section, there are no new procedures to increase international tax cooperation, but only a call for encouraging enhanced dialogue and greater coordination (paras. 52-67).

*Weak Language, Few Tangibles:* The language of the Monterrey Consensus is generally weak, and most proposals are not concrete enough to implement. The language politely requests (with words such as "consider", "encourage", "invite" and "urge") or states facts (like "the need to ensure"). There are only 12 places containing language that could be con-

sidered a commitment, with phrases such as "will implement" and "commit ourselves." Most, merely affirming decisions made at the Fourth Ministerial Meeting of the WTO held in Doha, Qatar in 2001, are to be found in the trade section (paras. 26-38); one or two reside in the ODA/financial and technical development cooperation section (paras. 39-46), while the rest fall under systemic issues (paras. 52-67).

*Missed Opportunities:* There are no references to any of the agreements contained in the plans of action from the previous decade of UN conferences and summits, except for the MDGs and Millennium Declaration (paras. 2-4, 39-41, 49, 52, 71), and the UN Charter (paras. 9, 57).

An opportunity has been missed for establishing a human rights framework to confront the challenges of financing sustainable development. Such an approach, applied to macroeconomic issues, would draw on UN and international human rights instruments as primary guidelines and indicators of sustainable economic development.

The document fails to employ innovative strategies such as financing global public goods (GPGs) to advance sustainable development. Advocates suggested gender equality—a prerequisite for achieving sustainable development—should be considered as a GPG. They also agreed that further research and analysis was needed in order to assess the potential benefits of this approach. But since it was impossible to reach consensus on GPGs at all, none of the original references made it into the final document.

Environmental sustainability is only briefly referenced (paras. 3, 12, 23, 46) although this is an essential element for achieving people-centered, gender-sensitive, sustainable development.

A vague follow-up process is sketched out (para. 73) but while the UN General Assembly and Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) both have a clear role to play, no precise mandate is given to the UN as the primary or lead agency in terms of governance of global economic relations.

## Official Reaction to Results

When the meeting concluded, official governmental and intergovernmental stakeholders appeared pleased, despite some critical governmental voices and despite the weaknesses of the Monterrey Consensus, which embraced only a limited number of commitments and timeframes for implementation. Stakeholders emphasized a few positive results, including support for the FfD process, agreement on its need, general consensus on its continuation as an innovative dialogue forum, and some individual

**The document does not include previous conference agreements or strategies to advance sustainable development, and it misses a chance to establish a human rights framework for FfD.**

(continued on page 13)

# The Monterrey Consensus: Commitments At-A-Glance

## I. CONFRONTING THE CHALLENGES OF FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT: A GLOBAL RESPONSE

**Para. 4:** Achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, demands a new partnership between developed and developing countries. We commit ourselves to sound policies, good governance at all levels and the rule of law. We also commit ourselves to mobilizing domestic resources, attracting international flows, promoting international trade as an engine for development, increasing international financial and technical cooperation for development, sustainable debt financing and external debt relief, and enhancing the coherence and consistency of the international monetary, financial and trading systems.

### II. LEADING ACTIONS

#### • Mobilizing domestic financial resources for development

No commitments.

#### • Mobilizing international resources for development: foreign direct investment and other private flows

No commitments.

#### • International trade as an engine for development

**Para. 26:** .....In that regard, we reaffirm our commitment to trade liberalization and to ensure that trade plays its full part in promoting economic growth, employment and development for all. We thus welcome the decisions of the World Trade Organization to place the needs and interests of developing countries at the

heart of its work programme, and commit ourselves to their implementation.

**Para. 31:** We will implement the commitments made in Doha to address the marginalization of the least developed countries in international trade as well as the work programme adopted to examine issues related to the trade of small economies.

**Para. 32:** We also commit ourselves to enhancing the role of regional and subregional agreements and free trade areas, consistent with the multilateral trading system, in the construction of a better world trading system.....

#### • Increasing international financial and technical cooperation for development

**Para. 44:** .....we agree to study, in the appropriate forums, the results of the analysis requested from the Secretary-General on possible innovative sources of finance, noting the proposal to use special drawing rights allocations for development purposes.

**Para. 46:** We will ensure that the long-term resources at the disposal of the international financial system, including regional and subregional institutions and funds, allow them to adequately support sustained economic and social development, technical assistance for capacity-building, and social and environmental protection schemes. We will also continue to enhance their overall lending effectiveness through increased country ownership, operations that raise productivity and yield

measurable results in reducing poverty, and closer coordination with donors and the private sector.

#### • External debt

No commitments.

#### • Addressing systemic issues: enhancing the coherence and consistency of the international monetary, financial and trading systems in support of development

**Para. 53:** .....We also underscore our commitment to sound domestic financial sectors, which make a vital contribution to national development efforts, as an important component of an international financial architecture that is supportive of development.

**Para. 65:** We commit ourselves to negotiating and finalizing as soon as possible a United Nations convention against corruption in all its aspects, including the question of repatriation of funds illicitly acquired to countries of origin, and also to promoting stronger cooperation to eliminate money-laundering. We encourage States that have not yet done so to consider signature and ratification of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

**Para. 67:** We attach priority to reinvigorating the United Nations system as fundamental to the promotion of international cooperation for development and to a global economic system that works for all. We reaffirm our commitment to enabling the General Assembly to

play effectively its central role as the chief deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations, and to further strengthening the Economic and Social Council to enable it to fulfill the role ascribed to it in the Charter of the United Nations.

### III. STAYING ENGAGED

**Para. 68:** .....We thus commit ourselves to keeping fully engaged, nationally, regionally and internationally, to ensuring proper follow-up to the implementation of agreements and commitments reached at the present Conference, and to continuing to build bridges between development, finance, and trade organizations and initiatives, within the framework of the holistic agenda of the Conference.....

**Para. 70:** To support the above elements at the national, regional and international levels, we resolve: To continue to improve our domestic policy coherence.....; To harness the active support of the regional commissions and the regional development banks; To keep the financing for development process on the agenda of the intergovernmental bodies of all main stakeholders.....

**Para. 71:** .....We shall support the United Nations in the implementation of a global information campaign on the internationally agreed development goals and objectives, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration...

# The Power of Influence: FfD, The United States and ODA

BY EMIRA WOODS

The United States paid little attention to the financing for development process until the October 2001 preparatory committee. In the first two PrepComs, in 2000 and early 2001, developing countries and the conference facilitator dominated discussions about the outcome document.

But in October, the U.S. emphatically declared that the document was misdirected, calling for a redrafting with 90 percent focused on what developing countries can do for themselves and 10 percent on what the developed world can do to foster development. The U.S. delegation threatened withdrawal from the FfD process and warned that without the changes, President Bush would not attend the Monterrey conference.

The strategy worked: Delegates scrambled to focus the document on the domestic mobilization of resources. Six weeks before Monterrey, they signed a finalized version of the text.

A week before the conference, President Bush made a dramatic pledge to increase U.S. official development assistance (ODA), an announcement that suggested the U.S. wished to avoid the appearance of arriving empty-handed. In his announcement of the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA), President Bush called for a new compact for global development, defined by new accountability for both rich and poor nations; pledged to increase

U.S. development assistance by \$5 billion per year over existing levels by fiscal year 2005; and specifically endorsed the Millennium Development Goals, saying: “America supports the international development goals in the UN Millennium Declaration, and believes

**Not only did the U.S. sway the agenda to suit its own interests, but it also helped to undermine a multilateral process with its unilateral interventions.**

these goals are a shared responsibility of developed and developing countries.”

The MCA would be driven by criteria guiding the selection of recipients, including good governance, investment in people (notably health and education), and policy reforms to encourage business and investment.

The U.S. trumpeted its pledge as historic, the highest level of ODA increase it had ever offered, even while it neglected to mention the impact of inflation. The move came within a week of the European Union issuing a similar pronouncement: It committed itself to raising the EU average for ODA to 0.39 percent of GDP, swelling its contributions by \$20 billion by 2006.

The twin announcements shifted the debate at Monterrey overwhelmingly in

the direction of ODA, at the expense of other issues. Not only did the U.S. sway the agenda to suit its interests, but Washington and Brussels may have undermined a multilateral process with their unilateral interventions. There were opportunities to use the negotiations to

advance ODA commitments, previously a pariah issue and the only one on which delegates tried to backtrack a week before the meeting.

Since Monterrey, much of the discussion in Washington has been on the MCA and indices to measure the

achievements of countries that are “good performers” and spur better progress by “poor performers.” Senior US officials claim that the MCA will be a pilot program to encourage “good performers” with large inflows of assistance and inspire “poor performers” by holding out examples of what’s possible.

When pushed on the question of what happens to “poor performers” and their citizens, who are penalized by both the domestic situation and lack of external assistance, the Administration responds that on-going U.S. Agency for International Development and other programs will continue responding to their needs.

But many development practitioners and policy analysts express concern in general about tying aid to specific criteria, including economic

and governance conditions defined by Washington. The unilateral imposition of conditionalities dictates policies to developing countries rather than supporting strategies national governments have devised in response to the needs of their populations.

In relying heavily on the market to deliver development objectives, these policies also hoist a greater burden onto women, who already make up a disproportionate share of those living in poverty or who are otherwise marginalized. Conditionalities restrict political space and further limit the voice of developing countries in economic policymaking. They cut down the effectiveness of development programs by relying simply on market forces instead of setting poverty elimination targets. And, declining social expenditures in areas such as health and education, which often accompany the implementation of conditions, burden women as primary caregivers, with more demands for services and fewer options for support.

The U.S. and other donors have a responsibility to deliver good quality development assistance in the right way—by respecting individual country situations and strategies, and by eliminating poverty and offering substantive advances for women.

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country commitments to increase development cooperation.

However, NGO participants drew another conclusion. Over the three days prior to the Monterrey conference, the Global NGO Forum took place under the banner, “Financing the Right to Sustainable and Equitable Development.” Representatives of civil society organizations from all over the world debated the purpose of FfD and assessed the Monterrey Consensus, which had already been finalized at the final preparatory meeting in January 2002. NGOs weighed the draft outcome document in relation to the objectives of FfD and found it insufficient, stating: “We are not part of the Monterrey Consensus.” They did not consider the consensus “a sufficient basis for combating poverty or for advancing economic, social and cultural rights,” but intended “to stay engaged in all efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals,” although acknowledging that, “even if [these are] met, we will

still have more than half a billion people living in abject poverty.” NGOs agreed to “continue to mobilize our constituencies for implementation of the commitments [governments and intergovernmental stakeholders] have made over the last decade.”<sup>3</sup>

Many civil society advocates had spent two years of discussion and analysis on promoting sustainable, people-oriented development, and they voiced their discontent about FfD in a statement at the opening of the conference. For WEDO and many others, dissatisfaction centered on the absence of references to gender equity, women’s economic rights, and realities for women and girls; the failure of the process to fully take NGO views into consideration; and the lack of provisions for transforming global systems of trade and financial architecture, and ensuring debt cancellation for the poorest developing economies.

## The Monterrey Consensus: Women and Gender References At-A-Glance

### I. CONFRONTING THE CHALLENGES OF FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT: A GLOBAL RESPONSE

**Para. 8:** In the increasingly globalizing interdependent world economy, a holistic approach to the interconnected national, international and systemic challenges of financing for development—sustainable, gender-sensitive, people-centered development—in all parts of the globe is essential.

#### II. LEADING ACTIONS

##### • Mobilizing domestic financial resources for development

**Para.11:** Good governance is essential for sustainable development.....Freedom, peace and security, domestic stability, respect for human rights, including the right to development, and the rule of law, gender equality, market-oriented policies, and an overall commitment to just and democratic societies are also essential and mutually reinforcing.

**Para.12:** We will pursue appropriate policy and regulatory frameworks ... in a manner consistent with national laws to encourage public and private initiatives, including at the local level, and foster a dynamic and well functioning business sector, while improving income growth and distribution, raising productivity, empowering women and protecting labour rights and the environment.

**Para.16:** Investments in basic economic and social infrastructure, social services and social protection...which take special care of children and older persons and are gender sensitive and fully inclusive of the rural sector and all disadvantaged communities, are vital for enabling people, especially people living in poverty, to better adapt to and benefit from changing economic conditions and opportunities.

**Para.18:** Microfinance and

credit for micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, including in rural areas, particularly for women... Bearing in mind economic and social considerations, efforts should be made to incorporate the informal sector into the formal economy, wherever feasible.

**Para.19:** It is critical to reinforce national efforts in capacity-building in developing countries and countries with economies in transition in such areas as...human resource development ... [and] social and gender budget policies...

##### • Mobilizing international resources for development: foreign direct investment and other private flows

**Para.23:** .....businesses, for their part, are expected to engage as reliable and consistent partners in the development process. We urge businesses to take into account not only the

economic and financial but also the developmental, social, gender and environmental implications of their undertakings.

##### • International trade as an engine for development

No women, gender references.

##### • Increasing international financial and technical cooperation for development

No women, gender references.

##### • External debt

No women, gender references.

##### • Addressing systemic issues: enhancing the coherence and consistency of the international monetary, financial and trading systems in support of development

**Para.64:** To strengthen the effectiveness of the global economic system’s support for development...Mainstream the gender perspective into development policies at all levels and in all sectors.

What was at stake in Monterrey was the need to establish a framework, secure commitments, set time-bound obligations and jump-start the implementation of gender-sensitive sustainable development. Many officials and commentators had linked the conference with two other major international events: the Fourth World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference in Doha, Qatar, in November 2001, and the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg, South Africa, in August 2002. Together, the meetings were promoted as a three-pronged strategy for achieving economic growth, human and socio-economic development and a healthy planet. When the Doha conference did not live up to NGO hopes, greater expectations grew around Monterrey. Yet once again, the outcome was limited.

### Players in the Process

UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, at the January Preparatory Committee, proposed the following as success criteria for the FfD Process:

- Strengthening and sharpening policies on capital flows and foreign investment;
- Building on the Doha Ministerial Conference results and moving to areas of importance to developing nations but neglected in Doha, such as the commodity crisis;
- Doubling ODA in a stated time-frame, which would still fall short of the 0.7 percent goal but would have a big impact;
- Implementing the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative to make debts manageable.
- Giving developing countries a bigger say in the management of the global economy;
- Developing follow-up mechanisms.

Only the items on ODA and follow-up mechanisms can be said to have been partially fulfilled by the Monterrey Consensus. Granted these are all long-term goals, but the road paving the way to their resolution should have been constructed in the FfD process.

FfD Co-chairs, Ambassadors Ruth Jacoby (Sweden) and Shamshad Ahmed (Pakistan) highlighted the process that the Monterrey Consensus would set in motion and ensure further work on FfD issues. This process would include:

- Annual spring meetings between the UN Economic and Social Council, World Bank and IMF, involving the WTO, and, to some degree, civil society and the private sector;
- The UN General Assembly's biennial high-level dialogue on international cooperation for development through partnership, which would be reconstituted to become the inter-governmental focal point for FfD follow-up;
- Annual FfD-related reporting by ECOSOC and other bodies, in cooperation with the World Bank, IMF and WTO.

During an NGO side-event sponsored by WEDO and the World Council of Churches-Ecumenical Team at the close of the Monterrey conference, Jacoby summed up three additional important achievements: that the conference took place and was an inter-sectoral and inter-institutional event; that it attracted attention that would deepen the international debate; and that the United States, European Union and others had promised some \$30 billion in new ODA flows.

*The Negotiating Blocs:* All parties at the January PrepCom, including the Group of 77/China, fought hard to reach a consensus across yawning divides and under pressure from the U.S., which at one point threatened to leave if it didn't get its proposals through. The "Staying Engaged" section of the outcome document was the last to be finished, with the final sticking point being a date for an FfD follow-up meeting. The G77/China lobbied for 2006, but governments agreed only to *discuss* a follow-up "not later than 2005" (para. 73).

Other contentious issues between the parties related to ODA and international resources, including foreign direct investment. The G-77/China won the inclusion of a number of proposals, such as language specifying "initiatives should be carried out in close cooperation with all relevant stakeholders...including civil society," that capital flows should be

## Innovative Ideas That Failed to Make the Final Cut

Along with fostering few commitments and lacking mechanisms and accountability measures to promote and realize sustainable development, the Monterrey Consensus is an extremely watered down version of previous draft outcome documents. As there were already

only a small number of innovative ideas and mechanisms brought to the negotiating table throughout the process, some governments from the North, predominantly the United States, imposed their political weight to weaken the document, threatening to pull out of the process if cer-

tain items remained at the table. This was abundantly clear after the October 2001 PrepCom, when various ideas from the most recent draft outcome document prepared by the Facilitator [September 18 2001, A/AC.257/25] failed to make it to the next rounds of negotiations, most notably:

- global public goods (GPGs) (para. 31-33)
- currency transaction tax, or "Tobin tax" (para. 36)
- carbon tax (para. 36)
- International Tax Organization (para. 54:7)
- world economic body under the aegis of the UN (para. 58, 62)

consistent with developing country needs, and that FfD follow-up should be placed under the control of the UN General Assembly. The Group also helped map out ways to continue the FfD debate—including the UN's dialogue on international cooperation for development—and called upon the Secretary General to provide sustained follow-up within the UN system to ensure effective secretariat support, and to report back annually on this process.

Prior to the final PrepCom, some NGO networks, including WEDO, produced a “counter draft” to the draft outcome document, on the suggestion of G-77/China delegates, and made it available to all governments. The G-77/China used this counter draft in internal negotiations, but while some NGO language proposals were incorporated, most were left out. The G-77/China did argue for continued NGO input during the second week of the January negotiations, at a time when the EU, U.S., Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Japan would have preferred to limit NGO participation. However, this alliance was not consistently developed. The G-77/China did not use the opportunity to gain political leverage by extending negotiations on selected demands beyond January. For some developing countries, it appears to be more profitable to search for individual solutions. Other G-77/China members considered it a fundamental achievement to reach

a consensus on continuing the FfD debate after Monterrey. *IFIs Active in the Process:* Government delegates regarded the participation of the World Bank, IMF and WTO in a UN process as an innovative element. In particular, Northern industrialized UN member states, who are also members of the Bank, the IMF and the WTO, did not want to risk losing them as stakeholders. These institutions were active in the preparatory meetings and in Monterrey, offering technical advice. But these presentations occurred at times when other stakeholders, such as the NGOs and business groups, were not given the floor. While the involvement of international financial institutions is essential to the financing of sustainable development and macro-economic policy coherence, the opportunities for dialogue and debate with civil society were inadequate.

*Non-governmental Organizations:* NGO involvement in FfD grew as time progressed but their voices were limited by the process. The most visible groups were involved in development cooperation and financial issues, in addition to the thematic caucus groups that routinely monitor the UN, such as the Women's Caucus, Labor Caucus and the World Council of Churches/Ecumenical Team. Less visible were the social movements focused on fair trade, the WTO and the Bretton

## Women Mobilized at Regional Workshops

REPRINTED FROM *WEDO NEWS & VIEWS*, VOLUME 15, NUMBER 1, MARCH 2002.

A WEDO/UNIFEM sponsored joint initiative to help facilitate gender-sensitive policy and decision-making in the Financing for Development (FfD) process included regional workshops for Africa, Central and Eastern Europe/Newly Independent States (CEE/NIS), and Asia/Pacific. These workshops brought together government officials, grassroots women activists, and feminist economists to share experiences, strategize, and network around FfD issues in their regions. The workshops aimed to attract regional attention to the FfD process and catalyze further advocacy efforts at the national,

regional, and global levels.

The Africa regional workshop was organized by the African Women's Economic Policy Network (AWEPON), and was held in Kampala, Uganda. It covered the regional dimensions of economic and social governance, gender and trade, external debt, security and peace, HIV/AIDS, technical aid, food security, and domestic resource mobilization.

The CEE/NIS regional workshop in Kiev, Ukraine was organized by the Liberal Society Institute and focused on corruption, access to micro-finance, domestic resource mobilization, social protection, new forms of violence against women, sex trafficking, and the recent emergence of external debt.

The Asia/Pacific workshop

was organized by South Asia Watch and Sancharika Samuha in Kathmandu, Nepal. The need to decentralize power and increase state autonomy was highlighted, and the external debt crisis, illiteracy, food security, corruption, sex trafficking, and labor exploitation fostered by current neo-liberal foreign direct investment and trade frameworks were issues at the table.

A Latin America regional workshop was convened by REPEM/DAWN with UNIFEM in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, and included discussion of various FfD issues, regional priorities, and strategies. The workshop formed the Feminist Initiative of Cartagena to further the work of the group.

These workshops provided

an arena to inform and strengthen networks while developing strategies for future activities such as information sharing, research and education, training, lobbying and advocacy, publishing, and participation. Connections were made between FfD and the World Summit on Sustainable Development—recognition of the need to form ties between development financing and economic, social, and environmental sustainability. The discussions were both informative and inspiring, and the combined networks of the participants demonstrated the potential for women's advocacy around the impact of macroeconomic issues at the national, regional and global levels, at Monterrey and beyond.

Woods institutions partly because the World Social Forum took place in February just a few short weeks before Monterrey.

One of the most positive aspects was the high level of participation NGOs enjoyed in some of the preparatory meetings, although there was always uncertainty about whether this level of participation was guaranteed. This became evident when some delegations demanded the removal of NGOs from the negotiations. The lack of set procedures forced activists to scramble to adjust strategies, reducing time for planned contributions. However, many government delegates also willingly met with civil society representatives.

Various NGO caucuses—whether formed around issues,

themes or geography—worked well together, aided by NGO listservs in between meetings. But the large number of NGO caucuses also meant much time was spent on internal discussions, consensus-building and collective formulation of statements. Caucuses and groups had to jostle for time-slots to address delegates, while parallel caucus meetings complicated information-sharing. A plethora of well-prepared side-events together with the regular official plenary and group meetings also competed for NGO attention.

All this activity served to distract groups from direct advocacy work with government delegations and hindered systematic reporting back to the daily NGO Caucus meetings.

## Women From Around the World Took Collective Action



### ...in consultations

Halfway through the second Financing for Development (FfD) PrepCom in New York in February, women paused and put their heads together at a consultation convened by WEDO in partnership with UNIFEM, for some serious strategizing on the issues at stake. Some 30 representatives of women's organizations from around the world spent the day mapping out ways to bring a feminist perspective to the FfD proceedings.



Focussing on a gender analysis of the Secretary General's Report, different groups took responsibility for the six sections: World Council of Churches Ecumenical Team and Freedom from Debt (Philippines) monitored and reviewed the section on debt; trade was covered by Center of Concern (U.S.) and the International Gender and Trade Network; Women's Eyes on the Multilaterals (Mexico), evaluated systemic issues; Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) based in Canada, assessed official development assistance, while WEDO reviewed foreign direct investment and mobilizing domestic resources. Participants included (clockwise from top left): Esther Camac-Ramirez (Costa Rica/Peru); Hilda Lini (Fiji); Gemma Adaba (Trinidad and Tobago/U.S.) and Laura Frade (Mexico); Wendy Flannery (Australia/U.S.), Maria Floro (Philippines/U.S.); and (l-r) Rebecca Lozada (Philippines), Nicoleta Druta (Romania), Marina Durano (Philippines) and Mariama Williams (Jamaica).



The caucus meetings themselves were also confronted by time constraints and a diversity of issues; at times announcements, briefings and updates took precedence over strategizing or tactical revisions in response to intelligence gathered from lobbying efforts.

In some situations, strategic use of the media enabled NGOs to get their messages out. In Mexico, the media afforded good coverage, due to the long, hard and efficient work of the NGO Forum Mexican Organizing Committee, supported by the International Steering Committee.

The FfD Women's Caucus was one of the ongoing, thematic groups that was generally very effective. Civil society

organizations advocating a gender development perspective, gender analysis and a human rights approach to sustainable development joined forces, facilitated by WEDO and UNIFEM. Participants included women's, development and church groups; labor unions; and social movements. Many contributed to a gender analysis of the FfD themes, worked to mainstream gender into the process and the issues, and ensured the visibility of the rights of women and girls.

The Women's Caucus generally supported, from the perspective of gender and women's development, key NGO demands, including public debt cancellation for poor nations; a debt arbitration mechanism with private banks, particular-



### ...creating lobbying tools

◀ A high level panel of government ministers, UN officers and leading economists and activists launched an FfD gender policy briefing kit in Monterrey. They included (clockwise from top left): Zo Randriamaro, Third World Network/GERA (Ghana); Maria Floro, American University (Philippines/U.S.); Sarawathi Menon, UNDP Resident Representative, Mongolia; Ambassador Tanya van Gool, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Netherlands; Jocelyn Dow, WEDO/Red Thread (Guyana); Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Director, UNIFEM; Mark Malloch Brown, Administrator of UNDP, and H.E. Juanita Amatong, Under Secretary of Finance, Philippines. June Zeitlin, WEDO's Executive Director, presents Horst Kohler, Managing Director, International Monetary Fund, with a copy of the kit.



### ...on the streets

▲ Demonstrating for economic justice and human rights for all women as the NGO Forum ended and the official talks begin: Grace Okonji (Kenya), Carol Barton (U.S.), Nadia Johnson (U.S.), Shareen Gokal (Pakistan/Canada), Norah Makgopela (South Africa), Ejim Dike (Nigeria/U.S.), Phelisa Nkomo (South Africa), Laine Alston (U.S.), Pam Rajput (India).



### ...and in celebration

◀ Salsa dancing at the end of the long FfD process.

### ...and slogans

- Poverty Eradication = Political Will
- Whose Bank?
- Gender in the Agenda
- Monterrey Consensus...  
...Washington Nonsense
- Imposing **M**arket **F**undamentalism
- **F**inancing **f**air **D**istribution
- No Human Rights, No Consensus
- **W**ealthy **T**ransnationals **O**nly



**Supportive Media:** In Mexico the national media gave wide coverage to NGO activities at both the NGO Forum and the official conference, and demonstrations by local groups. This was largely due to the mobilizing efforts of the NGO Forum Mexican Organizing Committee, an alliance of national organizations. They were supported by an International Steering Committee of representatives from groups in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and North America. Some members of the Steering Committee, including WEDO's representatives, are shown at the final session of the Forum in a feature carried on the front page of the cultural section of the daily newspaper, *El Norte*.

ly for middle-income developing countries; a currency transaction tax that can finance development and curb financial speculation; and increased development assistance controlled by recipient countries.

Women also supported broad demands for limitations on the role and the agenda of the WTO so all members genuinely determine their best interests in terms of sustainable development; an end to the blind belief in the roles of trade and foreign direct investment as the principle mechanisms for development financing; and an increased role for the UN in leading financing efforts and holding international financial institutions accountable.

During the four PrepComs and the conference, the Women's Caucus met daily. Consultations organized by WEDO took place before three of the PrepComs, and additional strategy sessions were convened during the October and January meetings. The Caucus coordinated participation in the larger NGO Caucus and in groups meeting around other common issues. Members monitored and shared information about the official sessions and side-events, and prepared statements used in lobbying for caucus positions.

The positions were formulated in the Women's Consultations Recommendations in May 2001 and the Women's Consultation Briefing Papers in October 2001. (See box, page 35). Two UNIFEM-commissioned reports,<sup>4</sup> prepared by economist Maria Floro, guided the preparation of these lobbying tools.

By the time of the conference, advocacy methods had changed because governments had signed off on the final outcome document. The focus shifted to presenting positions at a series of roundtables and side-events.

At the NGO Global Forum in Monterrey, few Women's Caucus meetings were held due to the diverse group of participants, many of whom were new to FfD. Instead, activists focused on events related to gender and women's development, such as WEDO's organization of several panels on regional FfD gender strategies. At the official conference some

NGOs honed in on the conference's three roundtables—discussions on partnerships, coherence and the way forward—and produced related statements and side-events. Throughout the FfD process, WEDO and UNIFEM and partners offered copious documentation and advocacy material, helping to keep gender visible on the FfD agenda.

Despite its faults, FfD was a key forum for highlighting the need to advocate for gender equality and equity in all discussions related to financing and development. It brought together an unprecedented range of national and international players and issues in the field of financing to begin a debate that has long needed to take place. And women were there, making sure their voices were heard. In spite of the gaps and deficits, with the FfD process set to continue in the future women may come to view the conference in Monterrey and its agreement as important building blocks in what remains the larger search for economic and gender justice, peace and a life free from poverty, for all women, everywhere.

*Janice Goodson Foerde, WEDO's Senior Advisor for Economic and Social Justice for FfD, is Chair of ICDA and K.U.L.U.-Women and Development, Denmark and Coordinator of IGTN-Europe.*

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Seventy percent is the commonly-used estimate, but since "gender-sensitive income-poverty indicators have yet to emerge...there is no way of estimating the extent of feminization of poverty." "Biennial Report: Progress of the World's Women 2000." UNIFEM, 2000. p. 95.

<sup>2</sup> Shantayanan, D., Miller, M., Swanson, E. *The Costs of Attaining the Millennium Development Goals*. World Bank. February 2002

<sup>3</sup> "Civil Society Statement to the 5th Plenary Meeting for the International Conference on FfD." <http://www.un.org/ffd/statements/csfE.htm>

<sup>4</sup> Floro, M. *Gender Dimensions of the Financing for Development Agenda*. April 22, 2001. *Gender Audit of the Facilitator's Draft Outcome Document of the International Conference on Financing for Development*. October 15, 2001. UNIFEM, New York.

# The Doha Ministerial: Not Good for Development, Not Good for Gender Equality

BY MARIAMA WILLIAMS

EXCERPTED FROM *INTERNATIONAL GENDER AND TRADE NETWORK MONTHLY BULLETIN*; VOL. 02, NO. 01; JANUARY 2002.

The Fourth World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference, which took place in 2001 in Doha, Qatar, was the most recent in the series of multilateral negotiations that are attempting to reshape the global economy. It produced a Ministerial Declaration that promises to deliver everything: protection of the environment, development and rapid return to world economic growth. It might deliver on some fronts, but these won't include development.

The International Gender and Trade Network (IGTN) and other NGOs in Doha argued for reform of the WTO system and narrowing its agenda, advocating that development, human life and equity come before trade and profit. Instead, the European Union and the U.S. steered the WTO back on the track of rapid trade liberalization.

Overall, the declaration only reaffirms the usual platitudes, with developing countries permitted to "take account of their development needs, including food security and rural development" (para. 13). But it does not offer any provisions for effective agricultural liberalization in the North, nor propose any mechanisms to ensure food security. Along with a few weak concessions on agricultural support in developed countries, the EU agreed to study "phasing out" agricul-

ture export subsidies. Yet no date was set and the real issue—reduction in the use of "permitted" subsidies by developed countries—must be negotiated in a future round of the negotiations.

From some perspectives, the one positive outcome of Doha is the separate Declaration on the Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) agreement and public health. While it reaffirmed the WTO's commitment to the TRIPS agreement, it argues that the agreement "should be interpreted and implemented in a manner supportive of WTO members' right to protect public health and, in particular, to promote access to medicines for all" (para. 4).

However, the declaration offers no guarantee that countries are still not vulnerable to court challenges should they override patent protection. It also fails to address the broader issues of intellectual property rights and development: the privatization and monopolization of knowledge, the locking in of access to genetic resources, and the transfer of seeds and technology. With the dominance of transnational corporations, poor men and women stand to lose access to seeds, genetic variety and genetic resources.

Many reasons explain the lack of significant advances at Doha: the power imbalance between the North and South; the undemocratic and unparticipatory nature of the WTO; the lack of consultation

with civil society in national capitals; trade-offs and deal-making between northern and southern governments; and threats and intimidation by powerful nations.

But one critical factor is that the South has become trapped within the market access framework. Having swallowed the neo-liberal argument that trade liberalization is the generator of growth, many southern governments have found themselves in increasingly weak positions, boxed in by commitments made in bilateral and regional negotiations. With little leverage, many southern governments in multilateral trade negotiations have tended to give up everything they want at the start in exchange for one or two concessions at the end.

However, governments at Doha could not dodge mounting evidence of economic and social disasters resulting from liberalization. NGOs and others have assessed the existing agreements and proposed future negotiation texts. Now southern governments must gather data to argue their cases. The long-term development of nations cannot be sacrificed to benefit a political party or to attract a meager portion of aid.

There is a great deal of work ahead for NGOs, at the local, national, regional and international levels. IGTN and other gender and trade activists must operate from the perspective that development is not paramount to

the Doha Ministerial, and is ongoing. Even the explicit development issues on the agenda—small economies, debt and finance, transfer of technology, technical cooperation and capacity building—have been relegated to separate working groups.

Furthermore, most WTO debates sidestep gender, even as liberalization threatens women's access to food, health care, education and natural resources. Advocacy efforts must continue to highlight the gender and social implications of liberalizing agriculture and services, intellectual property rights, trade-induced shortfalls in government revenue and trade-poverty linkages. New issues to be emphasized include industrial tariff reduction, investment, competition policy, transparency in government procurement and trade facilitation.

In general, the renewed push for further liberalization, egged on by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, needs to be monitored closely and critiqued. And gender and trade activists must insist that gender analysis be incorporated in all forms of trade policy and theory to ensure appropriate attention to social development issues, poverty eradication and equity for all.

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# Women in the Global Economy: Issues, Roles and Advocacy

BY NADIA JOHNSON

**FOR YEARS, WOMEN'S ADVOCACY GROUPS HAVE MONITORED,** analyzed and developed alternatives to the macroeconomic policies that have negatively affected their lives and communities. Linked by similar experiences and recognizing their under-representation in various economic policymaking forums, women have actively sought to transform the economic mainstream by building alliances and networks within and across local, national and international arenas. The results of these efforts are reflected in numerous international agreements and national reforms calling for gender equality and social, economic, political and environmental sustainability.

In most policymaking processes, however, sustainability remains an afterthought to growth—an add-on word, not a framework. Social safeguards such as labor standards, environmental protection measures, and poverty reduction programs are simply attached to preexisting market-based policies.<sup>1</sup> And the institutions creating and implementing the policies remain unaccountable to the people they are supposed to benefit. The current macroeconomic system thrives on power imbalances and rhetoric, claiming their plans will 'eradicate poverty,' while in practice they perpetuate it.

Today, women stand at the forefront of identifying the devastating impacts of this system and its most ominous manifestation, corporate globalization, bearing the brunt of the aftermath of years of structural adjustment programs (SAPs). Because poor women and children suffer the twists and turns of political events most acutely, advocates have maintained that they ought to be the touchstone for considering the effectiveness of development theories and solutions.

This approach set the stage for how women would subsequently look at development in practice, research, advocacy and analysis.<sup>2</sup>

## Advocating a Sustainable Global System

Women have actively participated in the era of development politics since it began in earnest during and after World War II as nations sought to rebuild their war-torn economies, creating multilateral institutions such as the United Nations. Women's advocates have contended that the needs of women must be integrated into all policymaking and development

programs, from local to international. Women's rights activists and feminist economists have long contended that the road to sustainable development lies through transformation of the global economic system and macroeconomic decision-making. They have pointed out that the global environment is jeopardized by severe imbalances in productivity, resource mobilization, and distribution of goods and services, resulting in part from the skewed policies of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The so-called Washington Consensus promotes a model of economic globalization based on deregulation, public enterprise privatization, and trade and financial liberalization with secondary regard to the social and environmental costs.<sup>3</sup> It is filled with contradictions that perpetuate stratification,

inequality and injustice. Institutions and policies supposedly designed to eradicate poverty in developing countries have instead served to expand the markets and wealth of developed countries. There is a gratuitous promotion of development through a paradigm that fosters corporate interests while lacking participatory governance, transparency, regulation and accountability.

Within this system, the World Bank, IMF and World Trade Organization (WTO) act almost as sovereign entities, implementing policies and structural adjustment measures loaded with conditionalities, as well as trade liberalization practices that ignore critical concerns such as cultural protection; food sovereignty and security; environmental, labor, and human rights; and public health standards. Under these prescriptions, it is obvious that the underdevelopment of the global South is a direct result of the development of the global North. In a world with a population of six billion, more than one billion people, the majority of whom are women, survive on less than a dollar a day. The current system may promise endless wealth and opportunities for a few but for the rest it is perpetuating and deepening severe inequalities between nations and people.

A key aspect of economic globalization has been the reorganization of work and labor patterns, along with increased competition, internationalized production and 'advanced' technological innovations. With shifting patterns of international labor mobility, labor flexibility has grown, and the gender composition and structure of output of the labor force have changed.<sup>4</sup>

*(continued on page 23)*

**Women are at the forefront of identifying the devastating impacts of the current macroeconomic system, having borne the brunt of debilitating structural adjustment programs over many years.**

## Where Submachine Guns Safeguard Ice Cream

BY MARTA BENAVIDES

There is a country, in what is now called Central America, whose indigenous name is Cuscatlan. The name is only used these days for banks, stadiums and the like, for to use it is considered not only politically incorrect, but even subversive.

Being labeled subversive is not easy, for even now it can cost one's life. Cuscatlan means "land of riches," and so it appeared once to the indigenous people, who could celebrate a land rich in water, fertility, creativity and biodiversity. Maybe this name does not fit anymore, now that there is erosion everywhere and the country—beautiful still with its mountains and volcanoes—is on the verge of becoming an arid desert.

There were three very terrible earthquakes early last year, which added almost a half million people to the quarter million already without homes. Suddenly, water could only be found at greater depths, or it became salty as the ocean tunneled underneath, while mountains fell onto communities, and fewer lands could be planted.

The official response to these problems has been to maintain law and order by training more police, and to create more free trade agreements, although the country has an agricultural economy. There is no plan to mitigate disasters or to assist the majority of people who suffer these pains each year. There is no plan for agriculture, and no program to recognize and

safeguard biodiversity. We have some of the highest rates of teen pregnancy and single-mother-headed households in our region, as well as one of the largest populations, but to talk about sexual education and reproductive rights is too radical—worse than a sin.

Meanwhile, our government opens more free trade zones. We have had them for more than five decades, but the government says we must open more of them, so now we even have them in the countryside, on the most arable lands. We must open more than during the 1980s and pull down all barriers to foreign investment. We must offer incentives. After all, free trade zones are not for free trade. They are free for foreign companies to come and set up shop without respect for national or international laws protecting workers rights, safeguarding the environment, banning the exploitation of child labor and so on. These factories leave whenever they want, abandoning workers without salaries and disregarding the state of the economy. Sexual abuse and harassment "can happen," they say, and illnesses such as renal disorders, back and eye problems plague women workers at an early age.

Unemployment abounds. With the "dollarization" of the economy last year—we say that this was as bad as the earthquakes; that it was in fact the first and the worst earthquake—civil society

has crumbled. The number of children living on the streets has shot upward, and so has the number of violent youth gangs. Soldiers with submachine guns guard the ice cream parlors and other stores for the few who can afford them. Kidnappings are a problem, and the government has declared that it doesn't know what to do anymore. And not only people are kidnapped—more

**The first and worst earthquake was last year's "dollarization" of the economy.**

than 25 truckloads of fertilizer, international donations meant to support the small farmers after the earthquakes, also "mysteriously disappeared," to be found a few weeks later, after much brouhaha, in the storage places of the rich.

There is talk already that a new war is in the making, even worse than the 12-year war that ended in 1992. This time, it will come from all the problems we have just seen, but more so because of the lack of land and water, and the desertification of our fields.

The roads to Monterrey and Johannesburg seem not to be on our map—not in our Central American country of El Salvador, not in many, many other countries around the world. How then are we to work to guarantee a

peaceful and healthy planet—both within and across our communities, our nations and our regions? These two roads lead toward the Millennium Development Goals, which were agreed to by 189 governments in 2000 as a means of bringing sustainable development to all. So we must find and fortify these paths, and make sure that our governments, not only the executive branches,

but also the judicial and legislative branches, participate in this process.

We, the people, must become these roads. We must be clear about our understandings. If we want a peaceful and healthy planet, we must

have clarity about it. This is a feminist perspective, and it must be our practice too, knowing this is not only about space for women and engendering all programs. It is these things, but it is also the integration of concerns and actions resulting in good governance, inclusiveness, respect for all people, protection of biodiversity, and assurance of social, ecological, cultural, political, and human rights. This must become the nature of our lives in all places, individual, community, national and global.

*Marta Benavides (El Salvador) is director of the International Institute for Cooperation Amongst Peoples (IICP).*

# No Peace, No Development: The Case of Burundi

BY LILIANE RUVAKUBUSA

Devastated by 40 years of civil conflict and a hemorrhaging economy, Burundi spins in a vicious cycle between poverty and war. While inter-ethnic fighting has devastated the country's struggle to develop, the tense scramble over nearly non-existent resources spurs more hostilities.

In one of the least developed countries in the world, most Burundians scratch a living from subsistence agriculture. Only two crops are produced for export—coffee and tea—and World Trade Organization dictates paved the way for these industries to be increasingly taken over by foreign concerns, with little benefit for local people. Soon after the WTO entered Burundi and pinched the national economy, the civil conflict accelerated.

To finance the most basic concerns of development, such as education and health care, the troubled government of Burundi has been forced to go, cap in hand, to international donors, and the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, thus opening the country to the imposition of structural adjustment, local currency devaluation and privatization.

Inter-ethnic violence and massacres started in Burundi in 1962, after Belgium carved its former colonial territory in the Great Lakes Region of central Africa into three nations and withdrew. For years before independence, the Belgians pitted different ethnic groups against each other, practicing a policy of

divide and rule in what are now the modern states of Rwanda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

On October 21, 1993, only six months before the genocide that killed some 800,000 people in Rwanda, violence exploded in Burundi,

**Women in Burundi have developed a set of demands including increased participation of community leaders skilled in conflict resolution.**

with Hutus killing their Tutsi neighbors following the assassination of the first elected Hutu President. Although a UN mission concluded in 1994 that genocide occurred, the international community has so far refused to accept this designation.

Since then an estimated 200,000 people have died in the worst of the fighting, both Tutsis and Hutus. Men and boys were killed first, and then women and girls were raped and killed. Many who escaped from the massacres fled from their houses, which were destroyed. Nearly 400,000 people, mainly women and children, have still not been able to return to their homes.

Most of these women came from rural backgrounds, where they survived off their land. Today, they depend on humanitarian aid, under conditions that allow diseases

such as cholera and HIV/AIDS to flourish. Women working in informal or formal jobs in the cities often have ties to family members in rural areas and have brought many of these displaced people into their homes. However, the large households, devaluation of the currency, and the fall-out from an economic embargo imposed on Burundi from 1996 to 1999 mean an average salary is no longer enough for a normal life. The prices of essential goods have increased from 100 to 200 percent since the war began.

In August 2000, 19 parties to Burundi's peace process signed a peace accord in Arusha, Tanzania. An inclusive transitional government has been in place since November of that year. Yet armed factions often fail to recognize their political leaders, and in some cases appear not to be controlled by their official masters. Approaches to these groups have been inconsistent, identifying them as both "negative forces" and partners at the negotiating table.

Women in Burundi have come together to develop our own set of demands for implementing the Arusha accord and developing our country. These demands include the following:

- Loans from international donors must not include conditionalities, which perpetuate poverty and war.
- More government transparency in aid allocation.

- All levels of the country's administration must embrace the tradition of *ubushingantahe*, which relies upon community leaders with skills in conflict resolution and reconciliation. Civil society must also be reinforced.
- The justice system must be restored, with appropriate punishment for the genocide and all crimes against humanity. The international community must extend the war crimes tribunal in Rwanda to Burundi.
- The peace process must become gender sensitive, including women from the grassroots to the decision-making levels.
- All communities must be allowed to participate through the indirect rule system.
- Leaders of the peace processes in the Great Lakes Region (Lusaka, Pretoria, and Arusha) must ensure talks and agreements are more coherent, consistent and transparent.
- Reconstruction priorities must focus on displaced persons, especially women and children and emphasize schools and hospitals.

Shifting the focus of development from exports controlled by foreign interests to the needs of rural women is necessary to securing a real and lasting peace.

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Yet attempts by developing governments to improve efficiency, attract foreign capital and investment, and meet external conditionalities imposed by international financial institutions have spurred sometimes drastic cutbacks on price subsidies, public investments in infrastructure, and social expenditures on education, health and public services.<sup>5</sup> These societal costs have shifted to the labor market, where they have disappeared from formal economic indicators but become glaringly obvious to women workers, particularly in poorly paid labor markets.

While the sponsors of structural adjustment policies maintain that they improve efficiency, in fact inefficiency has flourished. It lurks, for instance, in the near invisibility of much of women's employment. Women's participation in the labor force has risen significantly, but they work most often in informal jobs under insecure, hostile and degrading conditions.<sup>6</sup> They remain disproportionately illiterate and impoverished, lacking access to resources, education, training and health care.

Globalization's disparate fallout underscores a clear justification for a system of global economic governance—one that ensures greater equality between countries, and more democratic and accountable governance of international financial institutions. The UN could play a critical role, fulfilling the need for a multilateral body to govern international financial, monetary and trade institutions in order to ensure coherence, participation, transparency and implementation of international commitments. With the Washington Consensus proving to be economically, socially and politically unsustainable, the challenge now is to develop and implement a structure and rules for achieving human development that sustains and benefits all.<sup>7</sup>

### **It Starts With Macroeconomics**

In the process of advocating for structural transformation, women have conducted groundbreaking analyses on macroeconomic policy issues, offering new perspectives on resource mobilization, trade, development assistance and external debt. They have shown how some of the indicators used to measure welfare (such as GDP) have understated or even omitted women's contributions to economic development. Feminist economists have not only pushed for changes in the macroeconomic growth models employed by organizations like the IMF, but they have also created alternative models that include gender and unpaid work as intervening variables.<sup>8</sup>

Many women's advocates have emphasized that while national governments are the primary actors in developing

the national financial sector—ensuring provision of social services and securing human development resources—globalization and market liberalization have placed severe limitations on their ability to fulfill these roles. Instead, governments confront the dilemma of crafting a 'competitive' economic environment from policies that wreak social and economic devastation.<sup>9</sup> Markets that have been liberalized with no regard for the consequences have intensified women's subordination in numerous areas—among them, literacy, life expectancy, and access to land, information, technology and education.

Liberalization itself often discourages the development of policies that could help blunt its worst impacts. Taxation, for example, could be a useful tool for redistributing wealth and redressing social inequities, but the ability of governments to generate tax revenues is inhibited by IMF/World Bank-style reforms that favor predominantly male, middle-to-high income brackets, while reducing or eliminating subsidies on

basic goods such as milk, bread and cooking gas, on which poor communities, particularly women, survive.<sup>10</sup>

The mobilization of international financial resources also lacks a gender focus. Investment policies and institutions affect women and men differently, with women controlling less than 10 percent of global resources and earning less than men for comparable work and owning only about

one percent of the world's property. Both domestic and international resource mobilization patterns widen these disparities, since existing inequalities constrain women's ability to build on opportunities, respond to policy initiatives or engage in productive advances in terms of land rights, credit and technology.<sup>11</sup> Trade policies meant to attract foreign direct investment, for instance, have resulted in export processing zones rife with horror stories about unsafe working conditions, particularly among women and children.

In general, liberalized trade, expanded and propagated under the WTO regime, has significantly contributed to the weakening of national governments' ability to regulate their economies and govern their people. Transnational corporations from industrial nations use the WTO to open foreign markets and impose new directives to maximize profits regardless of the social costs. Limitations spring up curbing the capacity of governments to provide social protection and resources for human development. In some places, transnational corporations arguably subordinate national governments in power, within and beyond national boundaries.

Despite its harsh impact on gender and social equality, trade liberalization is proceeding rapidly, posing particular challenges to women in the areas of food security and protection, agricultural livelihood and rural development, health and

**Women's participation in the labor force has risen significantly, but they work most often in informal jobs under insecure, hostile and degrading conditions.**

health care, and access to public services, biological diversity and technology. Restrictive investment measures also carry serious implications for the growth and development of micro and small businesses, where women are concentrated.<sup>12</sup>

While some of the impacts of liberalization could be cushioned by official development assistance (ODA) from developed to developing and transitional economies, aid has fallen sharply over the last decade, and the conditions for assistance remain highly contentious. Governments have signed many international agreements stating that developed countries should meet a benchmark of 0.7 percent of GDP for ODA, but only five European countries have reached this target.

The U.S., the richest nation, is also the stingiest donor, releasing only about 0.1 percent of GDP from its purse each year.

International financial assistance is seen as a critical supplement to sound macroeconomic policymaking, because ODA and other forms of support play a significant role in defining the macroeconomic framework. Yet some important new strategies that have the potential to improve donor coordination and local ownership of development models—such as Country Development Frameworks (CDF), Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), Sector-Wide Approaches (SWAs)—still tend to neglect the different needs of women and men. Like past economic reform policies, these

## The NEPAD, Gender and Poverty Trap BY ZO RANDRIAMARO

**EXCERPT: "THE NEPAD, GENDER AND THE POVERTY TRAP: THE NEPAD AND THE CHALLENGES OF FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE"; CODESRIA AND TWN-AFRICA. APRIL 2002.**

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is the latest in a long line of policy frameworks intended to put Africa on a path of sustainable growth and development. While, the plan is celebrated by the international community as a model of international cooperation and African ownership in design and implementation, its tenets hold dangers for the continent's poor women.

NEPAD does address a central question in the ongoing debate on governance in Africa noting: "Today, the weak state remains a major constraint on sustainable development in a number of countries. Indeed, one of Africa's major challenges is to strengthen the capacity to govern and to develop long-term policies. At the same time, there is also the urgent need to implement far-reaching reforms and programmes in many African states." (Para. 23). But disturbingly, NEPAD

claims the goal is to "...enhance Africa's rapid integration into the world's economy." (Para. 52).

Gender equality advocates also underline that "current trends indicate that states are being reorganized to serve the interests of market forces and these interests do not coincide with those of the dispossessed. Moreover, the reality for poor women across countries reveals that the reorganizing of the state bears little relation to the process of social transformation."

Yet while acknowledging these concerns, NEPAD supports many of the factors that cause them. The plan is therefore likely to perpetuate the economic and social exclusion of poor women, while further entrenching patriarchal patterns in politics.

**IN THE WAKE OF SEPTEMBER 11**  
The international promotion of NEPAD began in the wake of the September 11, 2001 attacks in the United States, that heralded a shift in U.S. foreign policy toward establishing an international coalition against terrorism. With the sudden shift in the dis-

course many analysts are predicting that NEPAD could become a new platform for fighting terrorism, instead of tackling critical issues for women and the poor. Elements of NEPAD related to security, conflict resolution and governance could receive special aid from donor countries, with scarce resources diverted to defense budgets. Additionally, the association of legitimate protests with "terrorism" could threaten civil society and women's struggles for progressive social transformation.

Furthermore, the coalition against terrorism has solidified ties between international financial and trade institutions and rich countries that support the Washington Consensus model of economic governance. This was evident during FfD and poses a major challenge for women's activists in Africa and beyond.

### **WHO SPEAKS FOR WOMEN?**

From a gender perspective, the prevailing notion of democracy in most African countries raises doubts. What government really represents women's interests? Ignoring the huge gender gaps in polit-

ical participation, can any country in Africa pretend to be truly democratic when the interests of half the population are not being served?

A stated objective of NEPAD is to promote women's participation in African political life (para. 49). Yet even the plan's development lacked democracy and transparency, instead reflecting the perspectives and interests of the participants. The drafting of NEPAD's main component, the Millennium Africa Recovery Programme involved "select elites" mainly from the North, including the U.S. President and leaders from other wealthy countries, heads of transnational corporations, and the World Bank President. Consultation took place with only a few African governments—namely South Africa, Algeria and Nigeria—and civil society and other social forces within the continent were marginalized.

Although some discussions took place with selected members of civil society, including women's groups, political parties and the media, they occurred largely

new approaches pose the threat of destabilizing impacts, particularly for women. They must be revised to support sound socio-economic policies grounded in gender equality, focusing on key concerns such as environmental protection and labor rights.<sup>13</sup>

Increased and more clearly focused ODA alone, however, will not be enough without tackling the issue of debt. Effective investment of aid builds upon policy and structural reform, which is impossible for countries both tightly strapped into World Bank/IMF mandates and severely crippled by debt servicing. Even as foreign debt continues growing exponentially—with flows coming into the country remaining minute

compared to flows going out to repay loans—debt relief persists as an exercise of power and control through structural adjustment policies. SAPs give priority to debt repayments over spending on health, education, sanitation, clean water and other social needs. This undermines accountability by debtor governments to their people and erodes local democratic institutions. Corruption thrives, as debt and loan negotiations are conducted in secret between elites in the North and South.

Present debt management proposals—the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative and the Enhanced HIPC—offer too little, too late, to too few coun-

after the Organization of African Unity's adoption of NEPAD. The meetings, which were small and sporadic, contradicted NEPAD's claims for democracy, pluralism, transparency and accountability.

#### WASHINGTON GOES TO AFRICA

The lack of consultation resulted in a gender blind plan that reproduces the Washington Consensus. Among other shortfalls, NEPAD fails to critically analyze globalization and the root causes of Africa's marginalization in the global economy and endorses free trade and privatization without recognizing issues such as the power of transnational corporations and the dangers of uncontrolled financial liberalization. It does not call for cancellation of sometimes decades-old debts, which place a heavy burden on women in particular, and only narrowly equating poverty as lack of access to resources, without questioning the structures of subordination that make women poor in the first place. Furthermore NEPAD explicitly elevates relationships with the plan's northern partners within the Comprehensive

Development Framework of the World Bank.

One of NEPAD's largest failings is to ignore the traumatic fallout on women of structural adjustment programs (SAPs) and other policies imposed by the international financial institutions, as well as their contribution in the impoverishment of African countries. Although NEPAD mentions that SAPs "...promoted reforms that tended to remove serious price distortions, but gave inadequate attention to the provision of social services," there is no hint of the burden Africans carry as a result of IMF and World Bank stabilization measures, which have gutted basic public services, privatized public assets, slashed access to credit and productive resources for the poor, and shifted often unaffordable costs of basic needs to communities and households.

Not surprisingly, therefore, the plan misses women, who make up the majority of the poor. In fact, NEPAD's recommended economic framework is likely to imprison women in poverty and reinforce gender inequalities since it builds on South Africa's own neo-liberal macroeconomic policy, known

as Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR). South African analysts say GEAR has produced no new jobs and no growth while increasing the gap between rich and poor.

#### VAGUE PROMISES, MAJOR LIMITATIONS

A long-term objective of NEPAD is "to promote the role of women in all activities." (Para. 67). But instead of mainstreaming gender considerations and women's needs the emphasis in the NEPAD action program is on offering women a handful of income-generating measures. The plan does not attack the fundamental structural causes of women's poverty and inequality,—discriminatory laws and cultural norms, male-biased development priorities, limited access to land, unbalanced public expenditures and skewed macroeconomic policies.

In particular, NEPAD bypasses the impact of globalization on women's employment. Even where women are a big part of the labor force, they are found mainly in low-wage jobs with low standards of health and safety.

**ANOTHER KIND OF CONSENSUS**  
For NEPAD to truly embrace

the concerns of women and the poor, it must move away from the Washington Consensus and its institutional arrangements. It must use a human rights framework to formulate policies ensuring economic and social justice, including poverty eradication and gender equity. It must listen to African women and men from all walks of life and prioritize the rights of the disadvantaged over the interests of foreign capital. It must establish mechanisms for democratic participation in economic policy making.

Ultimately, governments of the global South must not accept aid, trade and investment in exchange for political and military complacency. As women, we will not sacrifice our lives and the lives of our children, families and communities for this blood money.

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<sup>1</sup> Taylor, V. Marketization of Governance: Critical Perspectives from the South. *DAWN* 2000, p. 59.

<sup>2</sup> Bond, P. "Interpreting Thabo Mbeki's various African Initiatives." November 18, 2001.

tries, since they are devised by creditors for debt collection, not relief. Unless present debt management plans become debt release opportunities that are effective, equitable, development-oriented and durable, the devastating cycle of debt accumulation will repeat itself, condemning millions more people to suffering.<sup>14</sup> A disproportionate number of them will be female.

### Participating Where Decisions Are Made

Beyond mainstreaming gender into macroeconomics lies a further challenge: ensuring women participate fully in designing policies. Women are poorly represented at all levels of economic decision-making, even in terms of advocacy, due to financial and human resources limitations among women's NGOs. This situation persists despite many international agreements supporting equal participation.

The 1995 Beijing Platform for Action states that: "In order to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development, women and men must participate fully and equally in the formulation of macroeconomic and social policies and strategies for the eradication of poverty."<sup>15</sup> Signatories also committed themselves to: "Review and modify, with the full and equal participation of women, macroeconomic and social policies with a view to achieving the objectives of the Platform for Action."<sup>16</sup>

The Monterrey Consensus further agrees to "mainstream the gender perspective into development policies at all levels and in all sectors."<sup>17</sup> While there is no direct reference to equality in gender representation, it is unequivocally related. Furthermore, the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), a legally bind-

ing agreement drawn up in 1979 and ratified by 170 countries, includes several articles specifying gender equality in decision-making bodies and processes.

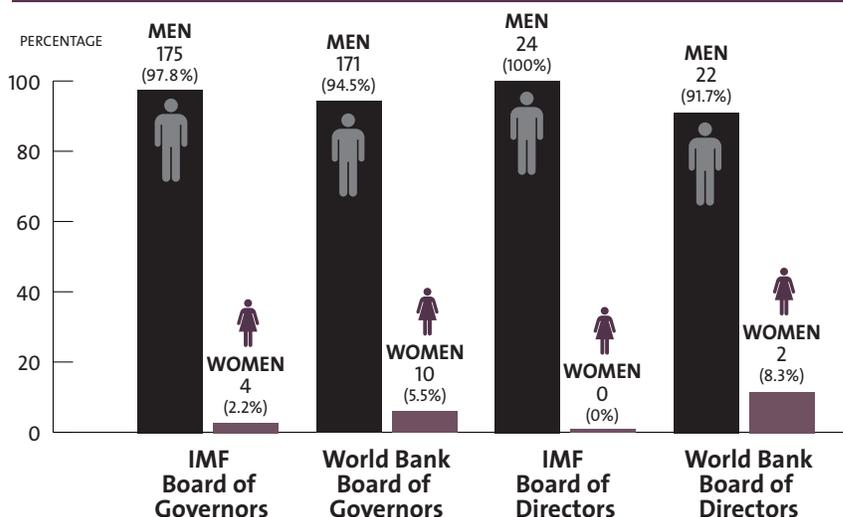
### The Numbers Speak for Themselves

Despite these commitments, women still comprise only 13 percent of national legislators and 14 percent of government ministers worldwide. Among policymaking areas, economics and finance have the lowest levels of women's representation—across all countries, only 28 female ministers hold economics-related portfolios (including finance, economics, trade, development, industry and agriculture). Women are much more likely to be concentrated in the so-called soft domains such as education, health, social affairs and human resources. Internationally, the number of women in the decision-making structures of the major finance and trade institutions is also dismally low.

In the IMF and World Bank, the Board of Governors is made up of senior economic government officials, such as Ministers of Finance and Central Bank heads, with each member country represented. At the World Bank 5.5% of the governors are women and at the IMF 2.2% are women. At the level of the Board of Directors, the primary decision-making body of both organizations, the picture is even more bleak—of the World Bank directors only two are women and at the IMF there are no women with director status (see chart below).

Of the 159 trade policy experts selected in 1998 for the WTO roster of dispute, the body that settles trade related disagreements, 12 out of 159 (7.5 percent) were women. Of the country representatives who attended the fourth WTO Min-

**Gender Breakdown of Boards of Governors and Boards of Directors at the World Bank and IMF\***



\* Boards are appointed by national governments. At the IMF, women comprise 6.3% of alternates to the Board of Governors, and 4.2% of alternates to the Board of Directors. At the World Bank, women comprise 9% of alternates to the Board of Governors, and 16.7% of alternates to the Board of Directors.

# In the Newly Independent States, Women Take On Debt

BY OKSANA KISSELYOVA

FROM "EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL DEBTS OF THE NEWLY INDEPENDENT STATES: SOCIAL AND GENDER CONSEQUENCES" FACT SHEET; LIBERAL SOCIETY INSTITUTE; KIEV; 2001.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Newly Independent States sought the assistance of multilateral financial institutions and pursued market-oriented reforms such as financial stabilization, privatization, price liberalization and currency convertibility. The result has been chaos and crisis.

Although the reforms temporarily steadied national budgets and currencies, and helped mitigate inflation, they have failed to address essential local realities, from political structures to community attitudes. Designers of the reforms also neglected to support them with clear time frames and effective implementation mechanisms, and completely ignored the potential for social fallout.

It became obvious in the mid-1990s that market reforms carry drastic social costs, among them rising unemployment rates, persistent declines in paychecks, shrinking consumer baskets, the sagging quality of social benefits, increasing gender inequality in the labor market, and growing income gaps that create social tension.

Reforms have also dragged many of the Newly Independent States into perpetual debt, with survival largely dependent on regular foreign financial infusions. Government finances are often inefficiently managed,

and debt repayment absorbs more and more of national budgets. For example, the foreign debts of Tadjikistan and Turkmenistan have now exceeded their GDPs, while in Moldova, debt has skyrocketed from 54 percent of GDP in 1994 to 73 percent in 1999. Most economies cannot develop enough of an export capacity to keep up.

Governments sign loan agreements and are supposed to bear prime responsibility for repayment. However, loan repayments come from public funds, so the burden is actually borne by taxpaying citizens. Debt restructuring agreements, as a rule, only provide delays and pass the burden to future generations, while interest increases the total amount owed.

External debt repayment is also associated with growing State debts to all sectors of the national economy, including health and education. In Ukraine, for instance, the external debt has contracted recently by \$250 million to \$7.8 billion, while the internal debt has soared by \$2.8 million to \$3.9 million.

One result of this trend is that public sector workers often go unpaid, particularly in the Baltic states, Russia, Ukraine and across Central Asia. Money owed to workers in all economic sectors now touches \$784 million in Ukraine and \$1.13 billion in Russia. A direct violation of human rights, wage arrears account for growing poverty, restriction of access to public goods and benefits, devalua-

tion of the social importance of professional labor and an erosion of civil society's confidence in the government.

Sectors dominated by women—for example, light industry, health, education and culture—are most likely to be plagued by wage arrears. Given that women's wages during the reforms have dropped to 55-70 percent of men's, mounting arrears entrench and deepen existing discrimination.

Women suffer disproportionately from the debt crisis in other ways as well. The highest rates of unemployment are among sectors with the largest percentages of female workers. Unemployed women have less chance of finding a job than unemployed men and, despite high levels of education, have largely been forced out of many stable and well-paid positions. Those with a professional education in the most active age category, from 30 to 49 years old, comprise the majority of street merchants.

While willing to launch businesses, women confront a shortage of start-up capital, and report serious problems trying to keep afloat amid extreme corruption. In subsidiary farming—most city families have land on which they grow vegetables to supplement their diet—women play a dominant role, contributing a third of the average household income, but they suffer from a lack of machinery and equipment.

Much of women's time is spent hunting cheap food.

They do virtually all of the household work and generally cannot afford consumer services. Only two percent report using a laundry and six percent a dry cleaner and only six percent can pay for convenience food. To boot, social benefits for women having children and for disabled and retired women are far lower than the official survival minimum. And compounding all these problems is the low proportion of female public servants in top government bodies, which effectively excludes women's concerns from critical economic decision making.

Against this backdrop, it is urgent to take action to ensure democracy and gender equity become part of managing external and internal debt. Actions must include:

- \* The government's scope of authority must be clearly identified and supported by relevant legal provisions.
- \* Loan agreements must be made transparent through public participation and adequate reporting procedures to keep taxpayers informed.
- \* Debt restructuring agreements must be based on civil society agreement.
- \* The government should make allowances for the possible social and gender impacts of loans.
- \* An intersectoral agency with a fair representation of women must oversee public debt management.

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isterial Conference, held in Doha, Qatar in November 2001, 8.4 percent were women.<sup>18</sup>

Unless women are present in critical numbers and are able to share their different experiences and perspectives, their concerns will not be recognized in policy debates. This is true not only in governmental and intergovernmental institutions, but among civil society organizations as well. As yet women's concerns are not prominent in the international protest movement against financial globalization, which has been at the forefront of redefining approaches focused on promoting sustainable development and addressing income inequality. Women's activists must organize around and influence this struggle, placing themselves and their issues squarely on the agendas of all involved constituencies.

## The Challenges of Transformation

Women have recognized for decades that gender-sensitive policies and their implementation are critical not only to women, but to any plan for poverty eradication. Advocates have insisted that a sounder economic discourse, benefiting all people, would bring together: a plurality of development strategies; a political emphasis on accountability and transparency; a focus on local, national, and international arenas; the recognition that economics is about the interrelationship between private enterprise, the public sector and the care economy; the need to demystify economics so it is accessible to all; and the identification of the gendered nature of financial institutions and the macroeconomic policies they implement.<sup>19</sup>

## Global Public Goods: Controversy, Hopes and Fears

BY MARINA FE B. DURANO

Following the opening of national economic borders around the world, the traditional concept of public goods has expanded into the new arena of global public goods (GPGs). This could eventually encompass issues such as narcotics control, disease management and clean air—in other words, those areas where risks and benefits extend beyond individuals or separate countries.

During the discussions surrounding the International Conference on Financing for Development, the topic of GPGs became a prominent and hotly contested debate. Developing countries and many NGOs called upon donor nations to provide additional official development assistance (ODA) to finance GPGs, and to keep these funds separate from existing allocations.

This call was met with staunch resistance—the United States and Japan in particular insisted on deleting all references to the issue, which is what happened dur-

ing the final crunch of negotiations. The United States went so far as to denounce GPGs as “highly politicized (and) intellectually dubious.” While the European Union favored the idea of holding discussions to at least define what GPGs should be, it balked at the call for new funds.

In the meantime, NGOs offered their own list of items for consideration, including gender equality, sustainable development, poverty alleviation, and eradication of HIV/AIDS and other major infectious diseases.

Beyond the question of what constitutes a GPG, donor countries object to the notion out of fear that it will not only involve paying more money, but that it would also lessen their control over the distribution of ODA. To meet these concerns, a dual-track accounting system has been proposed to differentiate funds that travel through bilateral channels from those destined to benefit the whole world.

Within the development

community, the concept has received considerable support from the World Bank and the UN Development Programme.

Supporters contend that GPGs offer a possible solution to the failure of the mar-

ket to meet development objectives, providing the hope that market-orientation could be tempered by a desire to ensure mutually beneficial social outcomes, such as education for all.

At the same time, the GPG concept is rooted in mainstream economics, which emphasizes utility functions and efficiency as the standard of measurement. It is unclear, for example, how

lem of equity if efficient resource allocation becomes the primary consideration. Should GPGs become internationally acceptable, developing nations may also risk becoming the only motivation to provide assistance, which has already seriously declined. Yet it should not be necessary for governments and citizens to rationalize the pursuit of social objectives as the provision of public goods.

The matter of social choice, as articulated in national constitutions or in international agreements, is much broader than the determination of an allocation based on whether or not a public good should be financed, or whether or not a social outcome qualifies as a public good.

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The women's global economic justice movement has played a tremendous role in incorporating these principles and gender perspectives in general into various policies, institutions and decision-making processes. The impact is vivid, not only at the UN, but also at institutions such as the World Bank, which over the past decade has increasingly viewed women as active agents of economic, social and political change. Many transnational organizations and governments across the world, while lagging in terms of responsiveness, now recognize that gender equality is a goal in and of itself and must be integrated across all development frameworks.

Women's participation is now expected as part of UN negotiations, and references to gender, often bolstered by specific, time-bound targets for action, can be found sprinkled throughout the texts of many agreements related to socio-economic development.

A more complex challenge has arisen in translating these agreements into meaningful local and national actions. Most negotiations result in political promises, rather than legally binding obligations, making it convenient for governments to allow their words to lie fallow. Although lack of resources is a legitimate problem, particularly in very poor countries, lack of political will is a far greater concern. Still, women the world over have used international commitments to press forward with significant changes in domestic laws, policies and allocations of resources. To cite only a few examples, they have won quotas for political seats, set up new ministries for women, equalized inheritance laws, introduced gendered national budgets and brought millions of girls to school.

The quest for transformation has also found women's activists confronting transnational and private sector organizations, the largest investors in developing countries. Efforts have included various campaigns championing issues such as better compensation and working conditions for women factory workers, and consumer boycotts. These efforts have yielded some success, with many companies creating voluntary codes of conduct, which govern the social, environmental and labor impacts of their practices at home and abroad. Yet voluntary codes often suffer poor compliance, as they lack monitoring, accountability and enforcement measures. They are no replacement for national laws or workers rights. Women are thus backing stronger mechanisms to embrace the participation of developing countries' governments and civil society.

Women's achievements have not occurred without great difficulties. Activists have struggled to penetrate cultural and institutional structures, grappling with entrenched resistance to change. Huge amounts of work are often needed to

advance even by small steps and women's advocacy organizations face funding problems, which limit their ability to participate and diminish their potential impact.

## **Moving Forward: Strategies for a Better World**

It's time to implement agreements, save the environment, and end the globalization of poverty and injustice swelling beneath the current macroeconomic mess. Simply put: The world is in crisis and we have no more time to waste. Governments must go beyond Band-Aid legislation and meager financial assistance and start implementing development strategies aimed at the needs of the poor, not the wealth of the rich.

A rights-based approach to development makes guaranteeing human rights a primary objective. It ensures that development actions support internationally agreed standards for human rights, and contends that development is not exclusively an economic process, but is instead woven through all aspects of human rights—civil, political, economic, social and cultural.

Human rights approaches carry important guiding principles for international cooperation and national development strategies, and offer powerful tools for people, particularly women, to combat poverty and marginalization. Integrating human rights and development helps ensure that national, regional and international governance systems are transparent and accountable, in part through the strengthened participation of civil society. This overarching goal should guide all work towards the achievement of equitable and sustainable development.

During the FfD process, women's activists from around the world presented a clear and concise agenda for moving in this direction (see "Take Action!," pages 33 and 34). Other more general strategies and tools are listed below.

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### **1. THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

Over the past decade, UN conferences on a host of different issues have provided a comprehensive platform for transforming development. The results of these initiatives were brought together in September 2000, when 149 heads of state, a record number, gathered at UN headquarters in New York for the Millennium Summit, an integral part of the General Assembly's 55th session, also known as the Millennium Assembly. Collectively, they mapped out a concise blueprint for development, the Millennium Declaration. It includes eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that could significantly reduce the percentage of the world's people living in

**The world is in crisis and we have no more time to waste. Women activists at FfD showed the way with a clear and concise agenda for achieving equitable and sustainable development.**

poverty and improve overall standards of living.

Any discussion on attaining the MDGs must start with an understanding of the different positions of men and women, girls and boys in society.<sup>20</sup> Yet the Millennium Declaration is unsophisticated in its approach to gender equality as a means to eradicate poverty, taking into account few of the issues women have been advocating in recent decades. A saving grace is that it does contain some critical language that women can employ to monitor government actions for achieving the goals by the specified year, 2015.

The declaration resolves to “promote gender equality and the empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger, and disease and to stimulate development that is truly sustainable,”<sup>21</sup> and to “combat all forms of violence against women and to implement the Convention on

the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.”<sup>22</sup> It also addresses essential issues such as the education of girls and maternal mortality rates.

To influence the implementation of the MDGs, it is critical that women present their points of view, first to their own governments as they create policies and strategies. Women also must continue to push for engendered development aid, in terms of quantity and quality. Studies have already indicated that achieving the MDGs would require an annual increase of around \$50 billion in ODA.<sup>23</sup> And in working on the systemic level to restructure the macroeconomic framework, women must help ensure that both policies and financial assistance are directed towards achieving human rights and sustainability.

To monitor progress on the MDGs, the UN has set up

## Expanding the Debate on the Global Tobin Tax BY GIGI FRANCISCO

EXCERPTED FROM “EXPANDING THE DEBATE ON GLOBAL TOBIN TAX”; *DAWN INFORMS*; MARCH 2002.

Among those seeking to reform the global financial system, the debate around the proposed Tobin tax (also known as currency transaction tax), a multilateral financial transfer tax to reduce currency speculation, has now expanded to include talks on capital flow regulations and national controls. This trend enhances, rather than diminishes, the critical importance of the proposal. Discussions about domestic regulation of capital flows reveal important dimensions of governments' dealings with both undesirable flows and raising revenues from financial operations.

Today, there is a growing public awareness that national regulation of capital flows is a legitimate policy option within prevailing financial architecture, notwithstanding the IMF's current objection to regulatory measures. Strong politi-

cal will on the part of governments is needed to pursue autonomous economic policies and to withstand IMF censure.

Analysis of the feasibility and desirability of national capital controls has led to increased recognition of the need for coordination across countries, which would lessen pressure for competitive tax rate reductions that force countries to rescind regulations already in place.

Chile is a case in point: It was compelled to remove its non-interest bearing deposit requirement on short-term assets to compete against other countries for foreign investments after the Asian financial crisis.

Such coordination could be instituted at the regional level, where networks and associations of countries already exist. Groups of nations could explore a limited regulatory framework on capital flows for their collective benefit. Alternative methods of cooperation among developing

economies have become critical, given the disappointingly undemocratic process of decision-making in global governance mechanisms.

National taxation on financial flows and assets could apply to both domestic and foreign financial assets, removing local discrimination against foreign finance and expanding much-needed government revenues. Financial assets and finance corporations—whether foreign or local—can both act imprudently and take advantage of weak regulatory mechanisms in the global South, and governments need to deal more effectively with their own financial elites and corporations.

With national taxation, the debate on revenue utilization comes closer to the women and men who are directly affected by poverty, environmental degradation and economic crises spawned by unregulated and unaccountable financial behavior. Political will in implementing and sustaining a taxation

policy can be strengthened by a clear commitment to social benefits. Public finance must begin to prioritize chronic poverty and the underfunding of people's basic needs.

Many NGOs and social movements, including Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN), already advocates that revenue from any Tobin tax—whether global or national—be dedicated to eradicating poverty and achieving social development goals.

DAWN emphasizes the goal of supporting social reproduction based on respect for women's human rights and promotion of their equality, particularly in the poorest regions and countries.

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an initiative featuring research, reporting and campaigns to galvanize coordination and networking. The Millennium Analysis Project comprises 10 task forces covering a wide range of subjects related to innovative policies and practices. UN Development Programme country offices, in collaboration with national governments, the private sector and civil society, will compile country reports detailing advances and obstacles. A Millennium Campaign, undertaken mainly by civil society at both the global and country levels, will seek to kindle broad public and political support, but it is vital that women's perspectives and representation are integrated into this critical process. And, women will have to develop independent monitoring processes to ensure their needs are fully met.

## **2. STAYING ENGAGED, MAKING IT MEANINGFUL**

The UN initiative specifically invites the engagement of civil society, and it is vital for women to participate in this, as well as in following UN activities in general. Active involvement leads to greater transparency, accountability and civil society inclusion in all decision-making arenas. Unlike the Bretton Woods institutions (BWIs) and the WTO, the UN is relatively open to NGOs, (although some activists have begun to question the real depth of their access to decision-making there, given the restrictions some governments have sought to impose on them in recent conferences).

Both in Monterrey and in the first event of the follow-up process, the April 2002 meeting between the Economic and Social Council and the BWIs, NGO representatives noted that while they gave statements and took part in discussions, their contributions were given little weight. Summaries of round-table talks, for example, rarely contained the content of NGO interventions. More common was rhetorical lip service to the significance of civil society participation.

Women in particular have called for exploring ways to make NGO input more meaningful, since for many women's NGOs, institutional limitations are only one of a series of barriers to participation, starting with low levels of financial and human resources. The lack of women in economic decision making also narrows the scope of attention given to women and their positions. This trend continues despite various international agreements to support equal representation.

And it was obvious in Monterrey, where references to systemic changes or gender analysis that would make a real difference to women were absent from the outcome document. Women were greatly distressed by the "consensus" that emerged, especially given their dedicated involvement

throughout the two-year process. As activists develop new strategies to continue working on FfD, the MDGs and follow-up on UN debates in general, continuous assessment of the impact of this work must be done. Women have the knowledge and experience and it will be impossible to reach any of these targets without their meaningful participation.

## **3. MAINSTREAMING AND MONITORING**

Despite the long and on-going struggles of women to engender the way governments approach macroeconomics decision making still involves only a tiny percentage of women, and concludes with little or even no acknowledgment of gender, resulting in strategies and action plans that further fetter women and stunt poverty eradication efforts.

Women have demanded gender mainstreaming and the integration of gender analyses in all economic decision-making; they have challenged governments to recognize women's roles and contributions to national

economies beyond the micro-level. While the much touted micro-credit initiatives are important measures in broadening women's resources and capital, they alone will not eliminate the barriers women face in accessing markets and financial resources. Macroeconomic policies involving trade and loan agreements, agribusiness, land distribution and tax administration must incorporate consideration of gender implications.

An important place to start advocating for gender-sensitive policies is by monitoring what different macroeconomic players have promised to do, what they say they are doing, and what they are actually doing. Women's monitoring activities accelerated after the 1995 conference in Beijing but there is now a need to coordinate these efforts more cohesively (see "Take Action!," page 33).

Tracking the implementation of measures necessary to meet the MDG targets provides advocates with a further opportunity to pressure governments and inter-governmental bodies to mainstream gender, creating indicators and mechanisms that reveal the true scope of the impact of macroeconomics on women and girls.

## **4. BREAKING DOWN THE NUMBERS**

One tool needing more attention is gender-disaggregated data as an indicator of gender equality. Without this kind of data, it is not possible to measure and monitor the impact fiscal and economic policies have on women compared with men.

In the labor market, for example, gender-disaggregated numbers could help improve women's prospects for jobs and financial services by funneling public funds towards

**Women demand gender mainstreaming and analyses in all economic decision-making, and government recognition of their vital contributions to national economies beyond micro-level.**

building women's economic capacities and assuring their rights. For governments trying to increase economic growth under socially responsible conditions, this data is essential, and should be applied in analyses of policies at all levels—national, provincial and local.<sup>24</sup>

### 5. TRACKING BUDGETS BY GENDER

Since the Beijing conference, women have focused closely on the importance of gender-sensitive approaches to budget allocations. Gender budgets examine the impact of government policies on women and girls in comparison with men and boys within any given socio-economic grouping. National budgets are of key concern, as they indicate how the bulk of public resources are mobilized and distributed, and the ways in which governments are meeting

**Gender budget initiatives help activists hold their governments accountable by connecting expenditures with commitments made to women's rights and gender equality.**

their social and economic responsibilities.<sup>25</sup>

By connecting expenditures with commitments governments have made to women's rights and gender equality, gender budget initiatives help women hold their governments accountable. Ideally, national budgets seek to eradicate poverty and redress inequalities in resources—gender budgets are

a crucial step towards calculating whether or not this is taking place. Countries that have conducted gender responsive budget initiatives have already begun reaping the benefits,<sup>26</sup> since the practice helps to remove gendered constraints on the macro-economy, to the benefit of all society. Economic growth and human development performance improve

## Put Power in the Communities BY DEVAKI JAIN

**FROM "IN SEARCH OF EQUITABLE AND JUST DEVELOPMENT: A ROUND TABLE ON 'FINANCING FOR DISTRICT LEVEL DEVELOPMENT,'" MAY 19, 2001; INDIA.**

Support is growing in some quarters for devolving power, especially for financial decisions, to the local level. If the power to raise, spend and manage funds is developed it may be a more efficient process and may yield a larger sum than when money comes from states or departments. Knowing where the money goes will stimulate raising revenue locally. With national and international resources for social development growing scarcer, local representatives are ideally placed to understand the needs in their communities and how best to fulfill them.

The idea of devolving domestic resources for development is being put forth, strongly and frequently, even by some international groups. For example, the High Level Panel of eminent persons set

up by the UN Secretary General for the International Conference on Financing for Development took this stance. They argue that too much dependence on official development assistance and borrowing is unhealthy, encroaches on sovereignty, and creates dependence and indebtedness—apart from the possibility such funds may not be forthcoming in coming decades.

FfD also made a case for reclaiming some space for the United Nations in international economic governance, a more democratic alternative to the current system being run by developed countries under the guise of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. This call offers hope because it is in line with the belief that lowering dependency on wealthier countries and a degree of self-reliance leads to greater sovereignty. Several major figures from

the world of finance, policy and politics have firmly supported this dictum including Manmohan Singh, a former Secretary of India's Ministry of Finance, the late Arun Ghosh, former member of India's Planning Commission, and the late Julius Nyerere, former President of Tanzania.

Another argument for developing local powers to raise and spend funds is that there is no longer an alternative. Management of the macro-level fiscal picture is not working. There is immense potential in unleashing the energies available among the people—but this can only be done through local organizations given space and a stake in the process.

In India, there is a legal dimension to devolution, on top of the ideological and practical reasons. The Indian Constitution has mandated local forms of governance—even if this has not been

absorbed into the consciousness of our political leaders, whether chief ministers of states or central ministers of rural development or finance.

The National Steering Committee on Empowerment of Women and Development of Children, an initiative of India's Planning Commission, has strongly suggested local self-government institutions be used as conduits for design and implementation of development plans. It has also encouraged setting up women's committees, comprising elected women representatives. With the right support, they can design, implement and monitor new and appropriate plans for improving their communities, rather than merely implementing existing ones handed down from above.

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simultaneously in ways that continue to foster the empowerment of women.<sup>27</sup>

## 6. REACHING OUT TO THE WORLD

Outreach strategies play an important role in linking women's advocacy efforts, civil society organizations and policymakers. Future initiatives must promote sustainable and gender-sensitive economic policies, improve the economic literacy of women's groups and the general public, and advance women's participation in economic decision-making. Efforts should also be made to train policymakers on the critical role women's economic rights play in the larger economy, and to conduct more research and increase gender-disaggregated data.<sup>28</sup> These activities must take place not only at the national level, but also within the international financial and trade institutions—World Bank, IMF, WTO—and the United Nations through the FfD follow-up processes.

## Conclusion

Women have always been at the forefront of advocating alternatives to the current neo-liberal framework. Monitoring, gender mainstreaming, disaggregated data, gender budget initiatives, multifaceted outreach strategies, participation, policy recommendations, and continued pressure for new approaches are all avenues that women have taken to transform mainstream economic theory and practice.

While the alternatives are on the table, the women's movement must grow stronger to push governments to take action for a better world. It is necessary to continually build and bridge women's organizations and networks within and across regions, and to become increasingly multidisciplinary, threading women's advocacy for economic justice through expertise in human rights, the environment and the political arena. Women must stay engaged in the United Nations to safeguard our gains and civil society's scope and effectiveness to foster more meaningful participation. With their rich experiences and comprehensive strategies drawn from a deep understanding of sustainability, equality and human rights, women have a unique role to play in creating a development paradigm that is not compromised by market omnipotence. *Nadia Johnson is WEDO's Economic and Social Justice Program Associate.*

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Elson, D. and Cagatay, N. "The Social Content of Macroeconomic Policies." *World Development*. Vol. 28, No. 7. p. 1347.

<sup>2</sup> Antrobus, P. and Christiansen-Ruffman, L. "Women Organizing Locally and Globally: Development Strategies, Feminist Perspectives." *Feminists Doing Development*. Zed Books. London and New York. 1999. p. 183.

<sup>3</sup> Johnson, N. "Systemic Issues: Women's Consultation Briefing Paper." February 2002. New York.

<sup>4</sup> UN Division for the Advancement of Women and Division of Economic and Social Affairs. *1999 World Survey on the Role of Women in Development*. New York. 1999. p. 21.

## Take Action!

Throughout FfD women highlighted some critical economic and social issues confronting our lives, and offered strategies and alternatives to transform globalization. Building on the research developed and advocacy conducted leading up to Monterrey, here are some concrete ways to put our ideas to work in efforts to promote gender equality and social justice at both the national and international front.

### Country level:

- **Push for the inclusion** of all sectors of civil society, particularly women, in the design and application of trade, fiscal and financial policies
- **Undertake and disseminate** gender research and analysis of macroeconomic policies including taxation, trade, public expenditure, investment and financial policies
- **Conduct economic literacy trainings** for women's advocates, and **convene public hearings** to ensure that the concerns of women's economic capacity and rights are taken into account in all national policymaking forums
- **Develop gender-sensitive analysis** of national, provincial and local budgets and taxation policies in order to restructure the collection and allocation of public funds towards promoting women's economic capacities and rights, and engendering governance and leadership
- **Lobby for an independent, transparent arbitration process** to negotiate debt cancellation that ensures losses and gains are shared equally, and to devise ethical lending and borrowing policies to prevent future debt crises
- **Collect sex-disaggregated data** and identify and address gaps in information, including on unpaid work
- **Carry out further research** on gender equality and poverty eradication as global public goods (GPGs)
- **Build links** with women's groups across all levels—national, regional, and global

### Global level:

- **Advocate for the primacy of the UN** in addressing the lack of institutional democracy and transparency in the Bretton Woods institutions and the WTO, and push for more meaningful involvement of women's advocates at the UN
- **Monitor global economic conditions**, policies and institutions to attain overall development goals, including poverty eradication and gender equality, as established in the UN Charter, Millennium Declaration and all UN conferences of the past decade
- **Create a gender monitoring group** to create a more coordinated approach to monitoring the collective negotiations of key international (*continued*)

stakeholders—the UN, World Bank, IMF, and WTO—in effect promoting a more concrete and cohesive gender-sensitive policymaking and the mainstreaming of gender throughout institutional operations

- **Carry out a gender review** (parallel to the WTO Trade Policy Reviews or TPRs) of bilateral, regional and international trade negotiations and treaties in order to identify gender biases in terms of access to productive resources, earning levels, job security, workers' rights and unpaid work burdens
  - **Develop a comprehensive, gender-aware framework** that enhances the social impact assessment of financial flows as part of any international financial stability planning
  - **Advocate for the set up a UN Convention** on Corporate Accountability, comprised of legally binding agreements—as opposed to voluntary compliance, and reinstate the UN Center on Transnational Corporations with a broader mandate and necessary resources to monitor and address violations by corporate entities
  - **Promote the establishment of a standard code of conduct** for foreign direct investment and for transnational corporations that is transparent, equitable and enforceable and includes attention to gender perspectives and other social equity issues
  - **Advocate for a system of mandatory transfers** from the richest to the poorest regions of the world to include the CTT, global carbon tax and unitary global tax and ensure that these funds are allocated through the global fund schemes for women's empowerment and for meeting the needs of poor women
  - **Push for the elimination structural adjustment policies** that serve the interests of developed countries while undermining sustainability and growth in developing and transition economies
  - **Support research on the gender dimensions of macro-economic policies**, on recommended approaches towards gender mainstreaming, on gender equality and poverty eradication as global public goods, on the link between financing for development and the attainment of the goals in the Beijing Platform for Action and the Millennium Declaration
  - **Advocate for gender-balanced representation** and participation of civil society, including women's groups and networks, in the follow-up mechanisms and activities in the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus
- A better world is possible!**

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. p. 53.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. p. 54.

<sup>7</sup> Johnson, N. "Systemic Issues: Women's Consultation Briefing Paper." February 2002. New York.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. p. 193.

<sup>9</sup> Johnson, N. "Mobilizing Domestic Resources: Women's Consultation Briefing Paper." September 2001. New York.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Goodson Foerde, J. "Mobilizing International Resources: Women's Consultation Briefing Paper." September 2001. New York.

<sup>12</sup> Williams, M. and Riley, M. "Trade: Women's Consultation Briefing Paper." September 2001. Washington, DC.

<sup>13</sup> Kerr, J. "Official Development Assistance: Women's Consultation Briefing Paper." September 2001. Canada.

<sup>14</sup> Lerner, G.; Lozada, R.; and Torres, V. "Debt: Women's Consultation Briefing Paper." September 2001. New York and Philippines.

<sup>15</sup> UN Department of Public Information. Platform for Action and the Beijing Declaration. New York. 1996. Para. 47.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. Para. 58.

<sup>17</sup> United Nations *Final Outcome of the International Conference on Financing for Development; Monterrey Consensus*. A/CONF/198. 1 March 2002. Para. 64.

<sup>18</sup> WEDO. Women in Economic Decision-Making fact sheet: "The Numbers Speak for Themselves." New York. 2002.

<sup>19</sup> Bakker, I. "The New Global Architecture, Gender and Development Practices." *Feminists Doing Development*. Zed Books. London and New York. 1999. p. 214.

<sup>20</sup> Zeitlin, J. and Johnson, N. "Women Push Their Development Demands on the Financing Front." *Social Watch Report 2002*. Montevideo, Uruguay. 2002. p. 75.

<sup>21</sup> United Nations Millennium Declaration. Para. 20.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid. Para. 25.

<sup>23</sup> *Report of the Zedillo Report to the Secretary-General*. United Nations. 26 June 2001. A/55/1000. Shantayanan, D., Miller, M., and Swanson, E. *The Costs of Attaining the Millennium Development Goals*. World Bank. February 2002.

<sup>24</sup> Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *Gender Mainstreaming: An Overview*. United Nations. New York. 2002.

<sup>25</sup> Conference Communique: "Towards Gender-Responsive Budgeting." Brussels. 17 October 2001.

<sup>26</sup> UNIFEM, Commonwealth Secretariat, IDRC. "Gender Budget Initiatives."

<sup>27</sup> Budlender, D.; Elson, D.; Hewitt, G.; and Mukhopadhyay, T. *Gender Budgets Make Cents*. Commonwealth Secretariat. London. 2002. p. 43.

<sup>28</sup> Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *Gender Mainstreaming: An Overview*. United Nations. New York. 2002.

*Financing for Development Gender Policy Briefing Kit*

Download at [www.wedo.org](http://www.wedo.org)

*Gender Budget Initiatives: Strategies, Concepts and Experiences*

[www.unifem.undp.org](http://www.unifem.undp.org)



# Resources

## NGOs

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**Center of Concern**  
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**Development Alternatives With Women for a New Era (DAWN)**  
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www.genderandtrade.net/  
(See website for regional contacts in Africa, Asia, Caribbean, Europe, Latin America, North America, Pacific)

**International Institute for Cooperation Amongst Peoples (IICP)**  
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info@wcc-coe.org/  
www.wcc-coe.org/

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- Women's Consultation Briefing Papers (available in Spanish)
- Is the FfD Investing in Women?
- Report from the Day of Dialogue on Gender and Financing for Development
- Financing for Development Gender Policy Briefing Kit

### Statements:

- Women's Declaration of the Global Forum, NGO Global Forum, 03/14-16/02
- An Equitable World is Possible and Necessary Women at the FfD Declare, Statement by the Women's Caucus 03/19/02
- Women's Caucus Statement on Partnerships, Ministerial Roundtable, 03/19/02
- Women's Caucus Statement on Looking Ahead, Summit Roundtable, 03/21/02

## ...and on

Contact the publishers for availability/to order copies

### Publications:

- "Introduction: Gender, Adjustment and Macroeconomics" By Nilufer Cagatay, Diane Elson, and Caren Grown (*World Development*, Vol. 23, No. 11, 1995)
- "Financial Crisis, Gender and Power: An Analytical Framework" By Maria Floro and Gary Dymski (*World Development* Vol. 28, No. 7, 2000)
- "Introduction: Growth, Trade, Finance and Gender Inequality" By Caren Grown, Diane Elson and Nilufer Cagatay (*World Development*, Vol. 28, No. 7, 2000)
- Social Watch Report 2002 (No. 6, 2002)
- *Progress of the World's Women 2000: UNIFEM Biennial Report (2000)*
- *The World's Women 2000: Trends and Statistics*. UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2000)

## Institutions

### World Bank

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### International Monetary Fund (IMF)

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[www.un.org](http://www.un.org)

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