



**Political Ecology and Sustainability**

# Recovering What Went Under in Copenhagen

COP 15 failed to produce a legally binding document and clear targets for emissions reduction. Instead its general assembly simply noted the existence of a “Copenhagen Accord” which was negotiated by just a small group of big polluter countries that included the USA, EU, China, India and Brazil. Many countries of the South, including small island states, mountain states, and land-locked countries were cut out of the Accord’s drafting. Through the words of four of our DAWN Training Institute alumnae, we resurrect these countries’ views and demands hoping to keep their politics and spirit alive to COP 16 in Mexico City next year.

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**The Pacific Islands by Nani Kairangi**

Our Ancestors used to be able to predict weather patterns from changes in the environment. The excessive number of breadfruits on the one branch and the twisted leaves on a banana tree were warnings for a cyclone while the noisy chatter of crickets meant rain and therefore, relief from the droughts. The different phases of the moon identified which food crops to plant and what type of fish were plentiful. Our peoples knew then what type of hooks or nets to use when fishing.

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**Eastern Himalayas by Tara Dhakal**

Eastern Himalaya (central and eastern Nepal; Sikkim, the northern extent of West Bengal in India including Darjeeling District; Bhutan and the northeastern Indian states of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Meghalaya, and Nagaland) is confronting slow but gradual climate change (increase in ambient temperature, flash floods, glacial retreat and glacial lakes outbursts). Although climate experts say that its impact can be known quantitatively only after rigorous study of

▶ *Himalayas* / [P10](#)

**Bolivia by Carmen Capriles**

Over the last years we have witnessed the most important environmental crisis that humanity has faced in its history; economic development and financial growth have finally reached a threshold where humans are guilty, not only of destroying a great part of our natural heritage but also our future by affecting the only characteristic that differences our planet from the rest, the only thing that gives this blue planet the possibility of life; our atmosphere and the climatic system it holds within.

▶ *Bolivia* / [P2](#)

**Ghana by Bernice Appiah-Pinkrah**

The current conference in Copenhagen has had so much media attention and has generated debate all over the world from the scientific accuracy of climate change to the actions that should be taken to combat the effects already altering our daily lives. Where the summit has succeeded, is in bringing to the forefront a long overdue conversation. It has exposed, not addressed, the unique difficulties faced by countries in the south. In our context, a coastal country where many people rely on the

▶ *Ghana* / [P10](#)

## **P1: Pacific**

The old people lament that they are no longer able to predict weather patterns based on nature – a mango tree fruits 3 months earlier than normal, there is a lack of breadfruits on the tree and still the cyclones come...the crickets chatter noisily – yet the rain refuses to fall.

The Pacific islands Draft Communiqué to COP 15 focused on 5 interventions, namely: (a) commitment to a rapid course of action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; (b) for the Kyoto protocol to continue beyond the first commitment period; (c) development of a new legally binding instrument so that key greenhouse gas polluting countries that do not have commitments under the Kyoto Protocol are able to take binding targets to reduce emissions; and (d) strong commitment of finance and resources to support vulnerable countries build their resilience to the impacts of climate change; and (e) reduction of emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and the protection of the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities.

## **P1: Bolivia**

Under this dark panorama, we have to do something worthwhile. As long as we keep on employing short-term solutions to a long term problem, we are doomed to undertake a planet that not only carries a dramatic history of social inequity, but also a shameful scheme of nature's mismanagement.

These problems were debated at the international scenario in Copenhagen in the 15<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. We had hoped our leaders would make binding agreements where the Heads of States of the Annex I countries commit themselves and their countries to reach sustainable levels of GEIs, for example reducing CO<sub>2</sub> to a concentration of 350ppm in our atmosphere. We also hoped that leaders would promote other alternatives and not support Market Mechanisms or Carbon Credits, solutions that diminish nature into yet another commodity.

The Plurinational State of Bolivia went to Copenhagen with three major proposals, as follows: (a)

A particular area of concern was the lack of reference on gender and climate change mitigation and adaptation, the overriding assumption being that climate change affected both sexes equally. Where we come from, men are mainly the catchers of fish and society dictates that a great man is a great fisherman. When men aren't able to catch parrotfish even though the "phase of the moon" – says that parrot fish is plentiful, or when the crops that they had planted have not matured as dictated by the "phase of the moon" – this means that men are unable to provide food for the home. Women are responsible for ensuring that food is readily available for serving to the household members. When men aren't able to provide food for whatever reason, women are blamed for not having it available – in such a patriarchal society, this is just another trigger for further abuse of women. Women are not consulted in rebuilding as a result of cyclones, in cyclone shelters women and girls are extremely likely to be more vulnerable to sexual assaults and all types of abuses and harassment. ■

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Promotion of Climatic Justice; (b) Recognition of Climatic and Ecological debt; and (c) Rejection of Carbon Markets and Clean Development Mechanisms. Bolivia also called for the inclusion and participation of indigenous and *campesino* movements because climate change is already altering their lives, forcing them to adapt and leave behind traditional ways of life.

Today our challenge is how to achieve a "good life" in ways that are in harmony with nature. This means leaving behind the temptation of classical development, for example investing in megaprojects like big dams or clearing forests for the cultivation of export crops, both of which carry high environmental and social costs. We need to think of a new system, one based on fair development mechanisms, promotion of clean and adequate technology, articulating the efforts of minorities like women and youth as they participate in decision-making, recognizing all living organisms with whom we share this planet and overall respecting our Mother Earth. ■

## Political Economy of Globalization

# Universal Social Security Is a Woman's Human Right!

Much of the work performed by Indian women is unpaid. Even if they perform regular work in the informal sector, this is seen as part of their marital duties. Their work is viewed as having less or no value when compared to men's work. Despite this reality, the dominant discourse on social security has come to be understood in a limited sense as a right of workers. If there is

*Excerpt from the presentation made by Priti Darooka of Program for Women's Economic Social & Cultural Rights at the DAWN Workshop "Human Rights Law and Economic Policies in Agriculture: Engendering People's Economic Rights and Empowerment", held during the Asia Pacific NGO Forum on Beijing Plus 15, Quezon City, October 24, 2009.*



### Strengthening Automatic Macroeconomic Stabilizers to Finance Social Protection while Minimizing Output Volatility

**Debates on the role of monetary and fiscal policy in growth and development continue to characterize approaches to crisis mitigation and resolution. Alternative approaches point to a re-orientation towards focusing on output stability rather than price stability (Spiegel, 2007). Part of the discussion is to look more closely at automatic macroeconomic stabilizers that raise more money as the economy grows, thus helping to finance social spending that is expected to expand during a downturn. The automatic nature provides the added benefit of protection from political capture.**

~ Marina Durano, PEG  
Research Coordinator

a break in the work, one is given temporary social protection such as unemployment pension, food subsidy, accident benefit, or a health insurance. If the policy for social protection is only for workers, then a host of ordinary women whose work is unpaid will be left out. In this way social security is discriminatory to a social group. As a human right, social security must be applied to all. A policy based on human rights follows the principle of universality. Its access cannot be based on a distinction between those who work and those who do not work.

In a poor household, there are several individual members. A human rights approach demands that the human rights of all household members must be guaranteed. In India and in many countries of the south, most of the social benefits go to households and not to individuals. A household is headed by a male breadwinner with the woman and children as dependents. Women are primarily seen as dependents and vulnerable

members who need to be taken care of. They are not considered as engaged economic agents imbued with rights. Moreover, access to social security benefits often depend on household income. Principally, household income is measured against the income of the male breadwinner. This institutionalized practice masks relative deprivation and poverty among some members of the household. A poor 65 year old widow in India who had been neglected by her son could not qualify for widow pension or food subsidy because officially she is a declared dependent of her son who is in the armed forces.

Moreover, more poor women than poor men experience barriers to social security benefits by requirements such as having a physical address (when many women are not property owners and often move from one abode to another) or communicating social security benefits through written leaflets (when many women are illiterate).

► *Universal Social Security/* [Pg 9](#)

# At Least, Market Mechanisms Were Not Endorsed!



I am no expert on gender and trade but I have been fortunate to learn from people like Mariama

Williams and Gigi Francisco in that wonderfully overlapping space of place, DAWN and IGTN. I am also no expert on climate change. I can follow the science up until they talk about fertilizing oceans with iron to capture carbon; I can follow the economics of climate change until they head off into the complexities of new carbon trading system, known when I was just getting my head around Clean Development Mechanism; and I can follow the technologies proposed to mitigate climate change until they begin to speak about building coal and solar power plants in developed countries to suck carbon out of the air.

But, we do need to get our heads around this because from the various places I call home in the Pacific (the Cook Islands, Papua New Guinea and New Zealand), the experience of climate change is ever present. From the carbon cowboys running loose through PNG trying to buy carbon, to the cooler and wetter weather patterns in the tourist-dependant Cook Islands to the gutless dropping of carbon tax in NZ because it was 'too costly'.

The links between international trade and climate change are very

*Former DAWN Pacific Coordinator, Yvonne Underhill-Sem, represented DAWN at a seminar on International Trade and Climate Change sponsored by KULU-Women and Development, Greenland House, December 17 2009.*

clear for developed countries: the deep cuts in emissions necessary to honor their Kyoto commitments will require structural economic adjustment. Low carbon economies will not emerge otherwise. Tinkering with small changes is no longer an option unless one wants to keep their heads in the ground.

But the road to a low-carbon economy is not an easy one to walk – or to cycle. Unsustainable consumption practices, a perverse sense of privilege and a wavering respect for multilateralism continues to distort the simple call for honoring historical climate debts.

Having committed over the last two decades to neo-liberal economic policies that among another things, welcome a greater role for profit-based 'partners', many developed countries have turned a blind eye to the resulting inequalities that are painfully evident. The primacy of the domestic policy base is a key principle behind these actions of developed countries; so concerned citizens there must continue to do their bit – protest, vote, replace current politicians, and demand a more equal world. Funds were found when the financial sector 'hurt' during the 'economic crisis'. The 'economic crisis' that persists in

the informal and low wage sectors clearly is of less value.

Gender perspectives are too often silent in these debates in developed countries – except perhaps in the leadership of the Green Parties worldwide, but they cannot be silenced in the global south.

The diverse livelihoods that sustain many women, children and men in the global south owe a lot to the innovative and tenacious actions of women – women who are still largely responsible for maintaining family well-being. Women, who on a daily basis get up in the morning, find water, fire, and food for their families. Women, whose bodies are compromised by multiple pregnancies, infectious diseases, less than nourishing and often insufficient food and often frequent violence from intimate partners and other men. Yet despite this, they are not just living, they are making a living. There is no doubt either that women are still largely responsible for maintaining well-being.

There is also no doubt that climate change is affecting our resource base and therefore, our livelihoods; so where can we innovate with different crops and crop growing practices? In Samoa,

▶ *At Least, Market Mechanisms / [P11](#)*

## Political Restructuring and Social Transformation

# Rethinking Democratic Governance: Partnerships in Research and Activism

“Democratic governance” is not only a familiar developmental byword. It has also become developmental orthodoxy. (WRC: 2009) On one hand, the term “democracy” often resonates across socio-political and cultural boundaries when invoked alongside movements for social justice and other libertarian causes. Yet, the same term is also associated with colonial hubris and neo-liberal market expansion projects when used in reference to the reorientation of states to primarily enable and bolster up markets. In the first sense democracy is still closely related to its principles of fairness, justice, equality and freedom. In the second sense the same principles tend to be muddled by technocratic standards which tend to measure democratic governance in purely market-based terms.

The WRC-IDRC commissioned five thematic background papers that provided the guiding framework for the global research initiative on Democratic Governance. Each of the five papers focused on regions in the global south and analyzed the impact of democratic structures on citizen’s lives, especially women. These papers were presented and discussed at the meeting and served as the think-pieces for the workshops where the overlapping

*Report by Carol Ruiz who attended for DAWN a workshop on Democratic Governance, Women’s Rights and Gender Equality,” convened by the Women’s Rights and Citizenship (WRC) Program of the International Development Centre (IDRC), Ottawa, December 1-2, 2009.*



themes of linking research and policy; engaging political constituencies and processes and making knowledge accessible to both academic and grassroots constituencies were critically engaged. The five regions covered so far were: West Africa, Eastern and Southern Africa, South Asia, the Middle East and North Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean. Rawwidah Baksh, Program Leader of the WRC recognized that background papers for the remainder of the global south including the South Pacific and Southeast Asia are currently still missing and will be the subject of WRC’s upcoming projects.

Unlike past initiatives by development agencies wherein the terminology of “democratic governance” (and its related concepts like citizenship) are invoked without as much as a second thought or acknowledgement of both its historic, cultural and political origins, the meeting placed the contested meanings of the terms, front and center. This refreshing take on hotly debated concepts opened up the space for a more profound

engagement of not only the terms themselves but the very notion of “development work” as well.

Rather than regarding the concepts as value-free, the discussants stressed how democratic governance and women’s citizenship in the global south ought to be based on historicized accounts of the “democratization” process which is taking place in the context of globalization, but is at the same time informed by a history of colonization. Participants also pointed out that the emergent movements around sexual rights and the political recognition of plural gender identities posed both opportunities and challenges around the incorporation of gender in development work and democratic governance strategies. For instance, while the popularity of quotas for women in electoral politics has made a significant difference for women’s empowerment in some select cases, in many contexts the advancement of elite women (often maintaining their class interests) was the immediate result. Meanwhile, a widespread trend of resistance

► *Rethinking Democratic Governance/* [Pg 9](#)

## Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

# Practicing Pluralist on Feminist and

Fifteen years ago, women's groups fighting for women's sexual health and sexual rights successfully negotiated for the inclusion of women's right to control their sexuality in the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA). Though the terms "sexual orientation" and "sexual rights" were eventually excluded from this historic UN document, the inclusion of matters related to "sexuality" paved the way for discussing sexual health and sexual rights in feminist agendas. Fifteen years later, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) activists ask if the recognition of sexual orientation and gender identity as legitimate concerns of feminists has moved beyond symbolic recognition to concrete action.

In the Asia Pacific Forum for Beijing +15 last October 2009, a group of feminist and LGBT activists created a space for a discussion on "Practicing Pluralist Politics: Implications for Feminist and LGBT Organizing". The workshop was sponsored by the Kartini Asia Network, the International Lesbian & Gay Association (ILGA), Isis International and Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN).

As we organized the workshop, our premise was that heteronormativity still exists in feminist movements, a hegemony that privileges heterosexual women's concerns. Such heteronormativity marginalizes the issues of lesbians, bisexual women, and transgendered people and reinforces their

social, cultural, political, and economic invisibility. It seems that there is a need to learn about the sexual hierarchies that not only exist in dominant mainstream cultures, but also the sexual hierarchies that exist in 'alternative' subcultures, such as feminist and LGBT movements.

The workshop attracted a handful of women from diverse geographic locations. Wanting to create an atmosphere of openness, a circle was formed and all were asked to freely share their experiences related to issues of sexuality, within and outside political movements. The sharing started with the three assigned 'speakers' who jumpstarted the conversation. Because a number of attendees of the workshop expressed concern about the confidentiality of their identities, all names are kept in confidence – in solidarity with those who cannot come out for some reason.

### Identity as facilitating and hindering my politics

The first speaker, identifying as a lesbian traced her experience with sexuality as far back as when she was six years old. It was then that she realized that she was attracted to girls and not boys, unlike most girls. For years she had to secretly deal with these same-sex attractions. She recalled how the process of naming her experience was important to her selfhood. Coming out and embracing her lesbian identity during her teenage years was part and parcel of her struggle for social acceptance and self-



*Excerpt from the reflection of  
Casal de Vela (left photo  
(right photo) at the ISIS  
DAWN sponsored Workshop  
held during the Asia Pacific  
Beijing +15, Quezon City*

### Beijing Platform for Action, P

**"The human rights of women in  
over and decide freely and res  
their sexuality, including sexual  
coercion, discrimination and  
between women and men in r  
reproduction, including full re  
person, require mutual re  
responsibility for sexual behavior**

affirmation. However, now that she is very much identified as a lesbian activist, she has found this same identity as limiting her political involvement. She finds that her lesbian identity becomes her prime and often sole political identity.

### Affinity with the marginalized identity of others as my politics

The second speaker talked about her strong empathy and commitment to addressing the issues and concerns of those from marginalized identities and locations, despite or because of her own identity as a heterosexual, white, middleclass woman. She talked about her work with men and women of diverse sexualities, as well as her development work with black Africans as a cultural artist-activist. But this empathy and

# Politics: Implications LGBT Organizing

*ive report made by Tesa  
oto) and Mira Ofreneo  
S, KARTINI, ILGA and  
orkshop of the same title  
acific NGO Forum on  
City, October 24, 2009.*



## Paragraph 96:

**clude their right to have control  
responsibly on matters related to  
and reproductive health, free of  
violence. Equal relationships  
matters of sexual relations and  
respect for the integrity of the  
spect, consent, and shared  
or and its consequences.”**

commitment and not necessarily been enough for some of the circles she moved in. She experienced her own share of being perceived as belonging to a privileged socio-economic position and therefore, often found herself having to explain why she did the work she did, why she believed in the politics that she did.

### **Identity as not having the space to be expressed nor discovered**

The third speaker did not label her identity and instead went into how, in her culture, there is no opportunity to express, explore, or even discover one's sexual identity. She described that the degree of socio-political repression in her culture was such that sexuality was not a matter an individual could control or even think

about. Rather, heterosexuality was dutifully performed. Women like herself get married and have children, growing old without exploring who they are as sexual beings or what they really want or desire. Exploring homosexuality could have consequences of criminalization, even death. It was only through her activist work outside the country was she able to learn about sexual rights and sexual identity.

### **A sharing of and from multiple identities**

An open sharing of experiences from the small group of women ensued. Many women talked about coming out as a lifelong struggle in their personal and political lives. Within this safe space, a young woman activist came out though she has not carried a lesbian identity in her own country. One lesbian activist felt marginalized within the larger feminist space of the conference. But the women acknowledged that they could not obligate a movement to be open and inclusive, they could only advocate. Still, the feminist movement was seen as having a duty to take on the struggles of women with marginalized sexual identities. An older heterosexual feminist posed the idea that women had multiple identities, with sexual identity being only one of these. And in certain situations within political organizing, women may project one identity over the other, making sexual identity not necessarily always the prime in a given political space. She likened this

process to wearing different masks. But a young lesbian feminist begged to differ. While she agreed that women had multiple identities, she did not think these identities could be taken off that easily when engaging in political work. She believed her multiple identities were pieces of one mask, a mask that she could not take off because it was who she was.

### **Towards pluralist politics**

Surfacing differences within LGBT activists and feminists should not be a threat to collective political action. Rather, our alliance can be strengthened if we organize not because of the same identity or an essential sameness but rather because of a shared commitment to freedom from all forms of oppression. Hence, pluralist politics is a politics informed by multiple, conflicting identities and locations. It means living in tension but being comforted by a shared commitment to fight for the freedom from oppression, even if these oppressions are diverse. It means embracing conflict and contradiction but moving towards continually articulating and rearticulating the social movements' agenda. Pluralist politics then allows for the recognition of specificity and difference without letting go of the dream for equal rights for lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and transgenders, within and beyond the feminist movement; and the vision for freedom for people of diverse genders and sexualities. ■

# Crosscutting Issues: Gender Equality, Human Rights and Financing

In a period of financialization, financing has become a major cross-cutting issue linking the silos that have been generated by issue-focused work within the United Nations and the larger multilateral complex. Members of the WWG on FfD follow financing issues within and outside of the FfD process. Singly or in unison, its members are involved in advocacy work around the Paris Declaration and Aid Effectiveness process that is singularly focused on international financial and technical cooperation for development. The WWG had also connected with the other platforms including the UN Meeting on the Impact of the Financial and Economic Crisis on Development which covers the continuing work of

*Slightly revised excerpt from the intervention made by Gigi Francisco at a public forum, "No Steps Back on the Hard Gains Won: Strategies to Leverage Financial and Political Support for Women's Rights and Gender Equality," convened by HIVOS, MAMA Cash and AWID with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Hague, December 03, 2009.*

the Sitglitz Commission, as well as the G20 meetings especially their responses to the global financial crisis through the allocation of SDRs and lodging this in the International Monetary Fund. Finally, almost all of the WWG's members have been engaged in longer-term campaigns around the World Trade Organization and the Bretton Woods Institutions.

In our interaction with these processes, WWG members repeatedly remind governments of existing commitments to gender equality, advocate strongly for a larger human rights approach to

international development, and emphasize on the need to match development rhetoric with financing. We remind governments that while we understand considerations in allocative efficiency and outcomes, essential social reproductive needs of people must not be sacrificed. Moreover, the need for evidence-based indicators that are sensitive to gender remain seriously challenged in many countries where there is no sex disaggregated statistics that is regularly maintained. Everywhere we go, we raise the issue of the need to regulate financial markets or for policy space particularly in public finance management systems of developing countries, so that monies that could be used by countries for their internal development particularly to support social reproductive needs and care, are not siphoned out in search of profits.

For instance, DAWN and the WWG are happy to note that the Dutch government's commitment to financing MDG 3 included ownership of assets and property rights by women. However, we hope that gains realized in this area are not eroded by disadvantages felt by

**DAWN has followed and engaged in inter-governmental discussions around the Financing for Development and its Review process. For the FFD we have formed with others at an AWID convened meeting the Women's Working Group on Financing for Development (WWG on FfD) that is made up of several groups, such as, AWID IGTN, FEMNET, WIDE, NETRIGHT, FTF-GCAP, ICAE, REPEM, ANND, GPF, and ITUC. Together, we follow inter-governmental processes that concern the six areas found in the FfD agenda, namely:**

- (a) Mobilizing domestic financial resources for development;**
- (b) Mobilizing international resources for development: foreign direct investment and other private flows;**
- (c) International Trade as an engine for development;**
- (d) Increasing financial and technical cooperation for development;**
- (e) External Debt; and**
- (f) Addressing systemic issues: enhancing the coherence and consistency of the international monetary, financial and trading systems in support of development.**



women in other areas. For instance, we found out that in some instances landless women farmers who had become beneficiaries of land reform programs, have sold off their land because they did not have access to farm support infrastructure such as seeds, pest control, farm to market road and the like. Why because some governments could not mobilize resources to support such social infrastructure due to a number of finance management related problems including conditionalities and tied aid, restrictive Public Financial Management systems and procedures that are linked to World Bank prescribed standards, or simply due to unsustainable debt that until now the international community is unable to resolve with more justice.

The Women's Working Group on Financing for Development, recently released a report stating that the financial and economic crisis represents "a critical political opportunity to make significant structural changes in the global development, macroeconomic and financial architecture that reflect rights-based and equitable principles."

## **P5: Rethinking Democratic Governance**

against the recognition of LGBT rights was observed even as many states have begun pushing purportedly "gender friendly" policies which more often than not merely reinforces traditional women's roles alongside religiously-based customs. And while it has been important to recognize cultural and historical specificity in taking political action, how do we begin addressing movement building across sectors and cultural divides? In the end the issue of citizenship, particularly women's citizenship, surfaced as one of the geopolitical paradoxes of our time – how are some women enabled and empowered while others in turn marginalized? Indeed without necessarily resolving these broad issues, there was a consensus that the continuing challenge of feminist inclusion needs to be rearticulated as the challenge to empower the most marginalized.

The IDRC-WRC initiative is expected to be launched in March of 2010. ■

For us, the emphasis must be placed squarely on the need to effect significant structural changes in the financial architecture. DAWN and the WWG see the need for a globally coordinated response to the crisis – the question is where to lodge such response. Who should be included in the design of the response? We think that a democratized and accountable United Nations should be the site of this response and that rather than place the monies elsewhere where there are non transparent and exclusionary managerialist processes, that governments especially donor countries should place their monies behind supporting the UN better perform its central role in global political and economic governance.

In order to free up money for development where it matters, the international community should support a real and expanded debt relief for the least developed countries as soon as possible.

Financing should be directed at supporting poor women's assets, entitlements and jobs in ways that promote food security, local markets and solidarity exchanges so that they could be given alternative options to rise out of poverty, rather than depend on severely tumultuous markets and value chains where often they are unprotected, lowly paid, invisibilized and dispensable. ■

## **P3: Universal Social Security**

Contribution-based social security schemes, however small the contribution might be, will often place women at a disadvantage when compared to poor men. Why? Because women undertake unpaid work; they do not control the money in the household; and they do not work continuously because their work cycle is broken by their reproductive role, including pregnancies. To realize a human rights approach to social security, governments need to be able to provide a non contribution-based benefit to ensure a minimum level of the right to social security.

A feminist framework in economics can help in questioning inequality and discrimination in women's access / non-access to social security. ■

## **P1: Himalayas**

at least thirty years, consequences of increased ambient temperature, erratic rainfall patterns, drought, landslides, floods and flash floods have increased their vulnerability and have posed serious threat to mountain food security and livelihood. Unpredictable weather pattern as a result of climate change has affected water resources in the Himalayas.

The gendered impact of climate change cannot be ignored in the region. We infer from our preliminary survey in rural Sikkim and eastern Nepal that perennial streams are the major sources of water for agriculture. Gradual drying up of the stream water has caused water shortages for many farmers who are now forced to keep their agriculture land fallow in seasons other than the monsoon. Drought have caused water scarcity for both drinking and agriculture purposes. Women farmers reported that they could not grow homestead vegetables in bulk due to shortage of water and the infestation of diseases and pests. Major cash crops such as the large cardamom, orthodox tea and ginger have also suffered serious decline as a result of pests and diseases infestation. Women farmers in Chichila, eastern Nepal reported that their tea and large cardamom business suffered serious loss due to water shortage and sun-burn of tea buds and cardamom spikes.

Mountain women are active in household and agricultural activities and invest most of their productive life in land based production process. Women are responsible for homestead gardening that produce diverse food and vegetable products, which they sell in local/weekly market. Women respondents in the weekly market in Gangtok, Sikkim use the earned cash to buy necessary food items such as oil and salt and school materials such as notebooks and pencil for their school going children (Dhakal, 2009).

Decrease in homestead production means that either there will be no surplus to sell or selling the products could have negative impacts on the nutrition of women, children, elderly and other family members in the household. A conflict at home may rise and women's bargaining power may lessen and mobility restricted.

Many women involved in marketing of homestead products receive acceptance from family members to travel to distances because they earn but when such mobility is constraint, women will be, once again, pushed to the confines of household.

In Nepal, out-migration of men from rural areas in search of employment women have already forced women to shoulder responsibilities of that of men's as well of their own which makes them highly vulnerable. Add to it, decrease in agricultural production. All these will make mountain farmers and particularly, women much vulnerable to new transition. Perhaps to cope with such socio-economic/environmental dilemma, mountain women have begun a variant switch forcefully to other alternative livelihood options (only if it exists) such as employment outside, which increases her vulnerability to exploitation.

Adequate empirical studies to understand gendered impact of changes in agriculture and water sector, has not yet been done in the eastern Himalayas. Thus, there is a critical need for policy makers to allocate budgets to finance climate change empirical research. A gender dimension focusing on vulnerability assessment needs to inform scientific analysis that seek to understand impacts so that future interventions could address "real" gender concerns in the climate change in the Himalayas. ■

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## **P1: Ghana**

sea and agriculture for livelihood, this conversation has yet to have a major affect on policy making. Regarding attitudes toward consumption, it is quite difficult to assess the situation here in Ghana the way you would in other parts of the world, particularly in the global north. This is primarily because in many areas where people are able to conserve resources, there are preexisting insufficiencies. This is true of water, electricity and other necessities. The bulk of the burden falls upon women to fill the gaps left by these inadequacies.

In one of the communities where I worked, Oshiyie, the fisher folk do not discuss "climate ([p11](#))

## **P4: At Least, Market Mechanisms**

organic coconut oil production increased and now over 200 women and their households are contributing to Body Shop product line on coconut oil – despite the recent tragic tsunami. Climate changes are also changing disease patterns so malaria is now more prevalent as breeding patterns of mosquitos have extended into higher altitudes. And with women being the primary care givers, this not only affects their ability to remain healthy, but also the health of their families. And so we need to be vigilant about ensuring the availability and affordability of essential medicines when and where they are needed.

When there is room to move, we might be able to move to manage the changing resource base. But as we know, increasingly this is not the case. Conflicts over resources especially land has intensified over the years and this has had a huge impact on livelihoods.

These resource conflicts stem from long-standing disputes but the climate change/international trade nexus has added new ones, especially in the form of agro-industrial farming in the South for consumption in the North. Bio-fuel production is squeezing local production for food security. Labour employment practices in these new complexes are also problematic. New labour flows of mostly men to the formal economy and women into informal economies.

(p10) change” using the jargon of non-profit organizations. However they were and are very aware of the negative consequences of climate change and of the mismanagement of the environment. A decline in the number of fish caught, erosion, and conflicts caused by trawling are just a few of the results. In the absence of state and international intervention the condition of such communities could be dire.

For the women of this community the effects go even deeper. Because women manage most of the activities in the production chains found in the fishing and agricultural sectors, it has been particularly difficult for them. Left to manage the effects of climate change on their livelihoods, the women’s situation of

Despite the claims of green technologies, green business and philanthro-capitalism, we remain skeptical of the incentives – the often perverse incentives – which are also recognized in REDD Plus under discussion in COP 15. The name of the game is still about new market mechanisms. But these come at the cost of local marketing practices. Of dealing with surplus production through sharing, of exchanging special products and services on a reciprocal basis or through in-kind payments

Fundamental to this nexus of climate change and international trade is the scaling back of women’s rights to the ownership of assets on fair terms. Tinkering with systems is not an option. Major structural adjustment is needed in the North to change consumption patterns. Major structural adjustments must continue in the South to ensure that women’s rights are not just recognized and respected but are also supported. Repaying the historical climate debt of the North to the South, can and should provide resources to do this.

Although the Copenhagen Accord disappointed many, at least market mechanisms were not endorsed. At least, the small Pacific nations got the attention they deserve. At least it is now much clearer that this climate conference was actually about the funding of energy! ■

poverty and subordination gets further compounded. There are however, civil society organizations that are attempting to address these issues. The approach to combating the myriad problem associated with climate change should be a collective effort including citizens, CSOs and national and state and inter-governmental structures. In a recent BBC interview a young Ghanaian student summed the matter up into very few words, "I think it would be good for the world to get together on something that affects all of us... After all, the climate is no respecter of country size or their riches." ■



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