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The Montevideo Consensus

Learning and Reflection on the Montevideo Consensus

Cai Yiping (China)

First and foremost, the Operational Guide for implementation and follow-up of the Montevideo Consensus sets up a comprehensive, human rights-based framework to achieve gender equality and women's human rights with focus on action and implementation, linking the International Conference on Population and Development Program of Action (ICPD, 1994), the Beijing Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women (1995), the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW, 1979) and the sustainable development goals (SDGs, 2015).

Especially the Operational Guide develops the roadmap for implementation that facilitates the translation from policy to action. The only way to close the gap in the implementation of the ICPD Program of Action is to take action with a clear roadmap, from laws and policies to national action plans and adequate investment – monitored and reviewed with appropriate indicators and with strong institutional support.

What is the role of the regional documents, such as Montevideo Consensus and the Operational Guide? How can they be linked with the commitments made at the global level and the implementation of these commitments at the national level? What do they do with the transparency and accountability? How can they be instructive to lift the bar higher?

For example, Agenda 2030 adopted by UN General Assembly in September 2015 agreed, as did the ICPD Program of Action more than twenty years ago,

these goals are the common minimum floor. Governments should be free to implement higher and more ambitious targets. In this context, we should not undermine commitments already made and achievements that have been made at the regional level in the previous review process. Because commitment is commitment, no matter where you made it, on national, regional or global level. Therefore, we need to strongly reaffirm these commitments and build the future actions and policies on this foundation and move forward.

After more than twenty years it is time, not only to renew the commitments of ICPD, along with ICPD reviews, but also to comprehend and redefine these commitments that are deeply and firmly embedded in the spirit of narratives, and inspired by the ICPD Program of Action and the Beijing Platform for Action, which are still relevant nowadays. For example, the recognition of sexual and reproductive health and rights; indispensable link of rights to development and human rights; country-led implementation and sovereign responsibility of state in the context of acceleration of implementation, not the excuse for not implementing it.

The Montevideo Consensus promotes measures aimed at subverting structural inequalities and multiple discriminations based on gender, age, race-ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, territory and immigration status, and at promoting empowerment and autonomy of women and girls. Therefore, the monitoring indicators should respond to these policy objectives. In this sense, in order to be consistent with the human rights approach promoted in the Montevideo Consensus, the capacity to measure availability, accessibility, acceptability and quality of services as well as indicators to measure the protection, promotion and fulfillment of sexuality rights should be created. For example, through population surveys it is possible to monitor the percentage of the population (disaggregated by different categories) that makes free and informed decisions about sexuality. Unsurprisingly, this is echoed in the theme of 49th session of UN Commission on Population

and Development (CPD49) in April 2016, which is "Strengthening the Demographic Evidence Base for Post 2015 Development Agenda".

Sustainable development cannot be achieved without evidence-based policies, programs, and governance.

Good statistics will help to monitor progress and to hold leaders accountable for their activities and achievements. Investing in statistical capacity in demography, public health, human rights, migration, economic growth, employment and climate change makes it possible to understand their linkages and impact on sustainable development and to shape the policy process.

Data and indicators should respond to the policy objectives. Civil society, especially women's and youth organizations, plays an important role in collecting and evaluating gender statistics and data.

Reaching consensus and agreement is only the first step of a long journey and it doesn't solve the problems we need to tackle. It shows that we are ready to take the challenges along the rocky road to gender equality and realisation of women's human rights. ✎



Cai Yiping is a member of DAWN's Executive Committee and is on DAWN's Sexual Health and Reproductive Rights (SRHR) team.

Implementing the Montevideo Consensus on SRHR

by Lourdes Bascary (Argentina)

The challenge of complying with the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development, adopted at the First Regional Conference on Population and Development held in August 2013 in Uruguay, is huge. It involves the need to create spaces for agreements and coordinated efforts between all state actors involved and, of course, feminist organizations and social movements that supported it and witnessed its birth with great hope. It becomes strategic to make efforts to use the Operational Guide¹ for implementation and follow-up of the Montevideo Consensus on population and development in order to improve the conditions for its effective compliance.

The reality of our region shows that changes in political administrations of our countries or governments often impact, although they should not, the human rights achievements that might have occurred during the previous administration. Therefore, strengthening the policies required to guarantee the rights that result in an adequate level of development and growth, with good institutional frameworks and processes of accountability, is a priority.

Consider how compliance with the Consensus is achieved in each reality and how applicable the goals and indicators presented in the Implementation Guide are to these institutional structures and contexts.

The first step is to identify the concepts that are considered relevant to the general scheme concerning the Montevideo Consensus (MC) and its monitoring and evaluation process relate to the most important aspects, that is, the institutional framework. Some central concepts of this institutional framework are: **public policies with a human rights based approach.**

The next step is to define the relevance of the indicators for a process that refers to the functioning of the state in the establishment of public policies (Additional Protocol to the American Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, called Protocol of San Salvador). Perform an analysis of its relevance to examine the state of progress in a particular case study for this case: Tucuman, a province



of Argentina, a federal state. Specifically, aim at doing the exercise of trying to analyze what institutional capacities should be generated to achieve that goal and test how to measure progress.

For example, with **Priority Action (PA) 11**: “Ensure the effective implementation from early childhood of comprehensive sexuality education programmes, recognizing the emotional dimension of human relationships, with respect for the evolving capacity of boys and girls and the informed decisions of adolescents and young people regarding their sexuality, from a participatory, intercultural, gender-sensitive, and human rights perspective”.

The Operational Guide sets out some Targets:

1. All public and private education institutions to have programmes of comprehensive sexuality education aligned with the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development and international standards.
2. Increase the number and proportion of children, adolescents and young people with information and knowledge about sexual and reproductive issues, appropriate to their ages.
3. Increase the number and proportion of children, adolescents and young people who take informed decisions in sexual matters with a degree of autonomy consistent with their age.

And the following tentative indicators were identified for these targets:

1. Consistency of the official curriculum for comprehensive sexuality education with the criteria of the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development and with international standards.
2. Percentage of children, adolescents and young people who have completed an annual comprehensive sexuality education course for each school level.
3. Percentage of children, adolescents and young people who have information and

knowledge about sexual and reproductive topics adequate for their respective ages. Given the institutional design of Argentina the Federal Board of Education would need to determine which are the adequate contents under the terms of the PA. This has already been done in Argentina since the Comprehensive Sexual Education Act (ESI) and its contents were approved by the Board, where the ministers of education of the Nation and the 24 provinces are present, and is in effect. This means that target number 1 and its indicator would be achieved.

However, in the Province of Tucuman, not all schools provide this content. The reasons (or excuses) are diverse in nature², but the most relevant are: a) the lack of training of the teaching staff, b) the scope of action of each school, especially private ones, to establish their contents despite receiving state funding, c) to allege the right of parents to choose the education they give their children, d) the lack of effective control over compliance with ESI from areas of government to each of the educational establishments.

When analyzing this situation and observing the other goals and indicators, it can be seen that if these situations are not reversed, despite having achieved goal 1, we will not achieve goals 2 and 3 and, in the process, we will not have data on what is going wrong.

We must recognize that, at least with regard to Argentina, in the provision of Comprehensive Sexuality Education the State is not the only one involved as a uniform subject and with an unambiguous will. Therefore, the aim is to establish **which is the institutional mechanism that can achieve this goal, together with state actors and at the same time, limiting the spaces for any possible resistance.**

The first step for a national state in this context is, for example, **to improve its coordination and motivation capacity for the provinces to comply with ESI national law and, at the same time, make efforts to achieve the effective provision of these contents in provincial schools.**

Given this situation, we can think of new targets and indicators aimed at paying attention to the institutional frameworks engaged in comprehensive sexuality education:

Target: Generate the mechanism that does not leave to the discretion of a province to implement or not the ESI.

Indicator: incentive system (budget or resources of various kinds) for compliance with the ESI Act.

Target: Generate a mechanism for compliance evaluation and monitoring with ESI from the State but with the participation of non-governmental actors, and especially adolescents.

Indicator: reporting system on non-compliance with ESI.



² There may be more examples, but the idea is to identify those causes which are also structural issues

Target: Generate institutional frameworks that improve the control capacity of the authority of each province.

Indicator: survey system of educational institutions and sanctions for non-compliance.

At the same time, it can also be considered how compliance with goals 2 and 3 can be measured, given that in order to realize these objectives there is a need to generate capacities to measure them.

Although the recognition of rights at the constitutional level is clear and the prevalence among standards is clear, the resistance seen in practice makes it vital that there be policy coherence until the level of control and monitoring is improved. In fact, as the theme often puts into question “the dominant moral”, the existence of specific legislation on the subject becomes pertinent.

Therefore, it may be important to focus on establishing the recognition of these programs, policies or regulations on: conscientious objection; informed consent; confidentiality; or the limits of parental authority over the rights of adolescents, just to give some examples.

At this level it is worth noting the importance of expressly recognizing, in the design of the public policy, the respect for the diversity of populations, the obligation to comply with the principle of universal access or level of coverage, as well as the formal occasions of civil society participation, the establishment of opportunities to favor enforceability and accountability, especially of the most neglected populations. And to determine very specific indicators about them.

With this example we seek to highlight the importance of filling those spaces that the Guide left when defining what the mechanism to operationalize and monitor compliance with the MC would be. These spaces that the States established in the Operational Guide regarding the targets, and especially the tentative indicators, are an opportunity for non-governmental organizations to underpin this process, seeking an institutional design suited to reality and the peculiarities of each territory which will be the basis for consolidating state apparatus committed to the realization of human rights.

Above all, institutional dynamics that will be more effective both to address those access barriers that come from specific social dynamics and to generate outcome indicators to capture the needs of the target populations. ✎



This article is a summary excerpt of a paper written for DAWN by Lourdes Bascary. It is available in English and Spanish on the DAWN website.

Advances and Challenges in Implementing the Montevideo Consensus – experience from Caribbean region

by Julia Terborg
(Suriname)

Before I look at challenges and advances related to the implementation of the Montevideo Consensus, I think it is good to reflect first our experiences in the past 20 years as civil society on the monitoring of the Program of Action (PoA) of ICPD and how this impacted on our current country position. Based on these experiences I will shed light on challenges and advances with respect to Montevideo Consensus.

Suriname experiences

In Suriname, the monitoring of the implementation of the PoA of ICPD started in 1998, when civil society in Suriname joined forces with the Latin American and Caribbean Women's Health Network (LACWHN) to develop a collective instrument and database, named Athenea, for the monitoring of ICPD., which Dutch speaking Suriname was the only Caribbean country in this regional

team, which was further composed of 6 Latin American countries: Chile, Argentina, Mexico, Nicaragua, Colombia and Bolivia. For Suriname's active participation, we had to overcome long distance and language barriers, but based on our common commitment to this project we were very successful in reaching our objectives. In Suriname this regional project resulted in a comprehensive NGO country report for ICPD+10, in which the period 1994-2004 was reviewed. Even when the regional monitoring project was finalized we continued with a second civil society review of ICPD+15 and were also closely involved in the global review and country report on ICPD+20.

The close collaboration with the women's health movement in the region, and the production of country reports were strong instruments in educating and raising awareness among both government and the general public on the comprehensive issue of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), and strengthening linkages with other activists working in the areas of gender equality and human rights and monitoring other agreements, in particular CEDAW, Being, Belem do Parra and Convention on Rights of Children (CRC).

Developing detailed knowledge and expertise on SRHR, provision of detailed data, based on statistics but also on qualitative studies, positioned us as SRHR experts, who were recognized by the government and involved in the development of national policy on sexual and reproductive health and rights.

This involvement in policy and follow up actions, combines with active advocacy, had created opportunities for

civil society to be included in national delegations to the high level UN and other intergovernmental regional meetings, in particular to Commission on Population and Development (CPD) and Commission on Status of Women (CSW). We are happy to see that our investment in monitoring ICPD in the past 20 years significantly contributed to the consistent progressive position of the Suriname government in reaffirming not only the PoA of ICPD but also to be in full support of Montevideo Consensus, the most advanced SRHR agenda in the world.

Challenges

Taking along our rich experiences with the monitoring of the PoA of ICPD we will continue with the monitoring of SRHR agenda with regional specificity, and at the same time integrated with a larger 2030 agenda. The monitoring of the implementation of the Montevideo Consensus poses some challenges that we are familiar with and some challenges that are relatively new and which will need our special attention.

Some of the **old challenges** are mainly related to structural gaps in government. All over the Caribbean, governments are constantly faced with increasing economic challenges and liable to shocks due to lack of diversity in the economy. The weakness in the government institutions is also reflected in a weak, fragmented and slow response to population issues, including SRHR, and challenges in the monitoring of PoA of ICPD:

1. Barriers with respect to data collection, analysis and the translation of such analysis into policies and programs. 



2. Lack of human resources and research capacity.
3. Lack of national structures and mechanisms for effective monitoring

The Montevideo Consensus poses **new challenges** due to its advanced agenda but also because our region is going through important political and economic changes. The challenges I would like to highlight are:

1. Conservative forces are on the move disseminating misinformation on concepts as sexual rights and deliberately creating and propagating distorted views on the language used in the Montevideo Consensus.
2. We are increasingly faced with many emerging issues in the area of SRHR that were not included in our earlier monitoring e.g. sexual trafficking, sex work in the goldmines, new and less visible forms of sexual exploitation of women and girls through internet, social media and modern cell phone and video technology, intimate partner violence and femicide.
3. Decreased access to financial and technical support from our traditional partners, in particular UN agencies UNFPA, UNWOMEN and UNICEF. A critical reason for this is that the Caribbean region has been categorized as middle income. Many UN offices have been downsized or fully closed and this has had significant consequences and repercussions for our work.
4. Weakening of the feminist health movement in the Caribbean region. There are indications that the women's and feminist movement as a whole, and in the health sphere in particular, lost some of its previous its strength, which can also be attributed to decreasing funds for CSO and retiring of the previous vanguard.

My expectations are that there are still a lot of actions that need to be taken before the required conditions are in place for using the Operational Guide as a working document in monitoring the Montevideo Consensus. On the other hand I'm very positive and convinced that this Montevideo Consensus will eventually lead to transformative changes with regard to the promotion, protection and fulfillment of sexual and reproductive rights in our region.

Way forward

I wish to emphasize and state categorically that CSOs played a major role in, and will continue to do so in the monitoring of the implementation of Montevideo. Despite our setbacks, we still have an experienced existing network of women and feminist organizations and individual experts across Latin America and the Caribbean, that has a great history of collaboration. The main challenge will be to find effective strategies to keep CSOs closely involved and actively participating in the design of the final monitoring instrument, in particular in defining the specific indicators for measuring the implementation of the paragraphs related to SRHR, gender equality and women's empowerment, and to guarantee that Montevideo feeds into the 2030 agenda, both at the regional and at the national level. Furthermore, of course, CSOs have a critical role in raising awareness on the close interconnection between SRHR and the right to development, especially among high level political authorities, who tend to keep SRHR in the private/ domestic spheres and are reluctant to acknowledge SRHR as public issues, which are critical for national development.

The feminist- and SRHR networks at the regional level, including experienced and widely recognized organizations

such as the 'Articulation of Civil Society Organizations from Latin America and the Caribbean', the 'Latin American and Caribbean Women's Health Network' (LACWHN) and 'International Planned Parenthood Federation' (IPPF), Western Hemisphere Region' already took important initiatives to ensure effective monitoring of Montevideo and will continue to lead and strengthening civil society at all levels including at the national level in their monitoring and advocacy efforts.

The time is now, as the governments are in the middle of follow up discussions on the methods of work and determining of indicators. It is crucial that, in accordance with the Operational guide of Montevideo, which speaks explicitly on the participation of civil society in the monitoring, that CSOs remain alert to ensure that appropriate structures and mechanisms for transparency and accountability are in place to facilitate implementation. ✨



Julia Terborg is a longstanding member of the Latin American and Caribbean Women's Health Network, a sociologist and SRHR activist in particular in the area of monitoring the ICPD PoA. She was a member of the Suriname delegation at CPD49.

Why regional agreements can go further than global ones?

by **Oriana López Uribe (Mexico)**

We have common challenges, common technical bodies, a common desire or vision of what development looks like. In Montevideo, governments were up to the task: they had political will; they were responsible with the information of policies that we know work and the ones that don't. They were ready to commit and go further, they were respectful and trusted the process and leadership. The articulation of CSOs and the feminist movement were crucial to push the political will and also

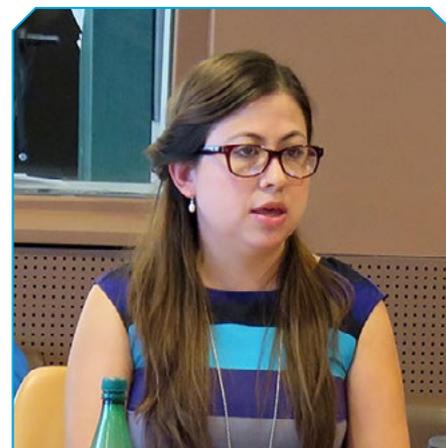
to contribute technically to the consensus, we finally got the governments we deserved and not the ones we end up with.

Given the Montevideo Consensus is an ambitious agenda that goes beyond the 2030 agenda, for the Latin America and Caribbean region, our goal must be to fulfill the Montevideo Consensus and not the Agenda 2030. By achieving Montevideo Consensus, we will achieve more than the 2030 agenda. The Operational Guideline is very robust and will support the implementation and follow up.

The advocacy opportunity is still with the indicators and we need to work to make them in line with the Agenda 2030 to strengthen the relationship and motivate governments to take action in the right direction.

For me the highlights of the Montevideo Consensus are: the definition of sexual rights: sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) in the context of social justice; access to all services for all people; eradicate discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identities (SOGI); addressing the specific needs in the SRHR services; comprehensive sexuality education (CSE); and quality services for

abortion where legal and revision of laws on abortion to improve the quality of life of women. The Montevideo Consensus is fully committed in addressing the structural inequalities and aims to achieve a development that is both sustainable and inclusive, in the framework of human rights. There is still the need to push for the financial resources to actually implement it. ✨



Oriana Lopez is deputy director of "Balance" and member of RESURJ. She was on the Mexican delegation to CPD 49.

Montevideo Consensus: Side Event at CPD 2016

by **Kumudini Samuel (Sri Lanka)**

The Permanent Mission of Uruguay and DAWN co-sponsored a side event at the 49th session of UN Commission on Population and Development (CPD49) on the 14th of April 2016. The event discussed "Meeting the SRHR of all people: Advancing the Montevideo Consensus Agenda".

It addressed the implementation challenges and explored how advances can be made to respect, protect and fulfill sexual and reproductive rights as a core component of human rights with reference to the Montevideo Consensus adopted by the governments of the Latin America and Caribbean region at the First Regional Conference on Population in August 2013 in Montevideo Uruguay.

The panelists also discussed the Operational guide to facilitate the implementation and monitoring of the Montevideo Consensus

“ Meeting the SRHR of all people: Advancing the Montevideo Consensus Agenda ”

which was developed in October 2015, at the Second Regional Conference held in Mexico City.

The event was chaired by Kumudini Samuel, Executive Committee member of DAWN and comprised of a panel of four speakers: Cecilia Stapff from the Uruguay official delegation; Oriana Lopez, deputy director of "Balance" and member of RESURJ, and a member of Mexican delegation to CPD49; Julia Terborg, an official delegate from Suriname delegation at CPD, a sociologist and a SRHR activist in particular in the area of monitoring the PoA of the ICPD and a longstanding member of the Latin American and Caribbean Women's Health Network; and DAWN executive committee member Cai Yiping from China.

The panel generated a rich discussion on how to strengthen the Montevideo Consensus in the region and how to continue to develop the Operative Guidelines, particularly indicators. There was also a call for the continued strong engagement of feminists and CSOs in the rebates around the Operative

Guidelines and indicators and a strong commitment from CSOs and feminists to continue to work together in the region to further the implementation of the Montevideo Consensus. ✨



Kumudini Samuel is a member of DAWN's Executive Committee and is on DAWN's Political Restructuring and Social Transformation (PRST) team.

Kumi was the Chair of the side event at CPD49, photos and full story are on page 12.

Political Economy of Globalization (PEG)

The role of secret financial jurisdictions in undermining gender justice and women's human rights

from the PEG Team

As part of the follow up of the Financing for Development agenda, DAWN is exploring some of the links between tax justice and gender justice at the global level. PEG team members are researching the role of financial secrecy jurisdictions and global networks of facilitators in enabling the illicit financial flows resulting from trafficking in women. The preliminary findings were presented in three main fora with experts on tax and feminism.

In April, PEG associate and expert Veronica Grondona presented the findings at the Research Workshop on Corruption and the Role of Tax Havens organized by the Association for Accountancy & Business Affairs, City University of London and the Tax Justice Network in London. In May, DAWN Executive Committee members, Nicole Bidegain and Corina Rodríguez presented the key messages of the research at the ECLAC Expert Group Meeting on "Violence against women and its interlinkages with economic autonomy" in Santiago, Chile. Nicole also shared key insights of the research at the Dialogue on Fiscal Policy, Human Rights and Inequality in the Andean Region organized by the Centre for Economic and Social Rights (CESR), Dejusticia and the Latin America and Caribbean Tax Justice Network in Bogota.

The DAWN paper called "The role of secret financial jurisdictions in undermining gender justice and women's human rights" will be published in collaboration with Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung in the coming months.¹

¹ https://www.dawnnet.org/feminist-resources/sites/default/files/articles/20160818_iff_grondona-bidegain-rodriguez.pdf

“ Trafficking in persons is both a consequence and a cause of women's rights violation. ”

The paper will present a review of existing literature and evidence, and provides new insights from more in-depth qualitative research for the case of Argentina.

Illicit Financial Flows can be defined as cross-border movements of money or capital that is illegally earned, transferred, and/or utilized. The main sources are: commercial tax evasion, trade mis-invoicing and abusive transfer pricing; the laundering of the proceeds of criminal activities, and corrupt payments; the theft of state assets (Cobham, 2014 and Baker, 2005) and; capital flight.

It is important to notice that among the international crimes generating IFFs is that of human trafficking, which impacts heavily on women. The proceeds of such exploitation appear to be laundered using the same structures, mechanisms, jurisdictions and enablers as those of tax evasion and avoidance. Human trafficking is combined with transfer pricing mechanisms applied with the objective of cross-border tax abuse and capital flight. Such structures are organized with the knowledge and skills of tax and legal advisors, with banks, acting as enablers.

Therefore, confronting and dismantling the global enablers and secrecy jurisdictions will be beneficial not only for transparency and global equality but also to achieve greater gender equality and to respect, protect and fulfill the human rights of women and girls.

What has recently become known as the "Panama Papers" regarding the leak of information on companies and entities set up by the legal firm

Mossack Fonseca for financial secrecy and tax avoidance purposes, is a reminder of the size of the problem implied by such secrecy jurisdictions.

Trafficking in persons is both a consequence and a cause of women's rights violation. The lack of resources to deliver proper public policies that guarantee access to basic living standards is one of the roots of women's vulnerability to human trafficking networks, as well as to labor and sexual exploitation.

Facing this severe injustice requires political will and practical action in several levels. For instance:

- Review all global tax and financial policies, treaties and agreements compliance with human rights, gender equality, labour and anti money-laundering standards.
- Agree on an international standard to sanction global enablers/facilitators of tax abuse and human trafficking with special focus on banks, secrecy jurisdictions, shell companies, legal advisors and firms and corrupt government authorities.
- Establish a UN intergovernmental tax body with universal membership and equal voting rights, which is adequately resourced, providing it with gender expertise and mandating it to review national, regional and global tax policy according to gender equality and human rights obligations.

Enlarge political space to implement progressive taxation on income and wealth. This will imply a radical change in tax burden and tax structure shifting the burden of taxes away from women, people living in poverty and other marginalized groups towards highly profitable sectors that currently are benefiting from tax incentives and subsidies and using strategies of tax evasion and avoidance to shift their profits to low-tax jurisdictions. Progressive tax systems should also remove gender indirect and direct bias including by publicly review harmful tax incentives and exemptions especially to MNE's.

- Establish systematic coordination mechanisms between Finance intelligence units, tax authorities, Central Banks, customs, women machineries and human trafficking prosecutors in order to eliminate illicit financial flows, human trafficking and gender based discrimination. ↗



DAWN Alumnae

DAWN's training institutes and meetings have provided tools to many young feminist tools around the world to apply feminist and interlinkage analysis in their everyday work, which takes place at local, national, regional and global level. The following articles provide some examples.

Transforming the world by 2030: the challenge for women

by Carmen Capriles (Bolivia)

For the last five decades an agenda to guarantee women's rights and achieve gender equity has been put on the multilateral table with very few results. This is mainly due to a lack of political will to implement a transformative agenda that will guarantee women's basic rights, nevertheless there has been progress made as a result of people movements, out on the streets.

The lack of action to reduce the global gender gap leading to poverty and extreme poverty in a great part of the world, especially in the global economic South where the majority of the population living in poverty, especially in rural areas, are women. This will be the destiny of millions of girls unless authorities start dealing with the root cause of the problem, and stop taking short term measures that in the long term creates more problems and leave women trapped in the poverty self-feeding loop.

The new Sustainable Development Agenda Post-2015 brings back issues that should have been solved long ago, some before this new century began, but after 15 years of this new era we still feel the gender gap in many parts of world is not only prevailing but growing, this wider inequality range leads to a feminization of poverty.

For most of the global North the great challenge of this new agenda will be to establish policies of sustainable consumption and production. It is important to educate populations on local production and consumption with a proper reuse of material, avoiding the big chains of logistic madness that globalization has bred, for example the Transatlantic-Pacific Treaty, to have one

product provided to the whole world at a very high environmental cost. Furthermore, regions have to be empowered to be self-sufficient in most of their domestic products, especially food production, especially when women are involved.

One of the great achievements of the Post-2015 process was that for the first time issues formerly considered taboo to discuss, either because they are too painful or shameful, like child marriage and genital mutilation, were put in the table, as well as acknowledging new stakeholders like ageing people, people living with disabilities, people living with aids, LGBT etc but many of these issues are still unsolved under the shadow of hidden agendas.

Greater efforts need to be made at national and local levels to enforce a new sustainable development agenda that not only relies on the established 17 goals and their targets and indicators, but have to be structured to respond to local realities. This is the greatest challenge for women, facing not only inequalities but also the negative impacts of bad environmental management and a lack of access to the benefits of resources exploitation, recognizing these elements is crucial to creating sustainable development policies meant to reduce the poverty gap.

Despite the fact that the challenges for each country are different certain issues have not been properly acknowledged in the sustainable development agenda, for example transportation is a sector that does not take into account women as users or service providers, we cannot talk about sustainable transportation if the needs of women have not been analyzed and solutions have not yet been found, in most regions women still depend on men for transportation and this will need to change in the years to come.

It is also important to acknowledge that the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) represent a major step forward for developing States, even though the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have not been met, parties have negotiated a new agenda, not only for developing countries to achieve but also for developed countries to do their homework far beyond financing agendas

in developing countries and to work more on accountability, equality, and so on.

In this sense the challenge is not only for the Governments to be held accountable to these new commitments but civil society to help the achievement of these goals, acknowledging that women are key to solving the poverty issue is one big step forward, and understanding that reducing the gender gap will also contribute to a better governance not only for the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda but also to have stronger States that can deal with poverty issues more confidently.

The new sustainable development agenda is far from being the needed tool to solve the problems that the world is facing, but one thing is true, a new era has begun. A new era where the major barriers for women are no longer invisible and in that sense a new challenge lies ahead: to defeat these barriers once and for all. This can only be done by empowering women at all levels while achieving equality in spaces that are still new for women and by pushing for a strong political will from Governments to guarantee women's rights and to participate in developing this complex agenda in order to have a less inequitable world and at the same time a healthier planet. ✨



Carmen Capriles is a founder and coordinator of Reacción Climática, a non-profit organization formed to advance the participation of the youth of Bolivia in finding solutions to climate change. She also is an environmental activist and campaign coordinator for 350.org. She attended DAWN Training Institute in 2007.

Women's Rights to Greater Access to Adequate Basic Social Services

by **Sophearet Roth**
(Cambodia)

The People's Policy on "Women's Rights to Greater Access to Adequate Basic Social Services" proposed by Cambodian grassroots women from the garment and sex industries aims for dialogue between the government and relevant stakeholders.

This Policy creates opportunities for women at the ground level to highlight common problems, and develop strategic solutions and recommendations to address their needs, particularly the rights to basic social services, including housing, utilities, health, safety and security.

Campaign Background

The initial stage of the campaign began with the Community Forum on 29th March 2015 as part of the celebration of the International Women's Day. The development process of this policy will take one year, and the first draft is expected to be made by March 2016.

Women's issues and rights, in the last decades, have been promoted to world development agendas, such as the Sustainable Development Goals. However, these global policies and agendas are not set by women, and most women are left behind in their development, despite being the key contributors to the sustainable development of society.

Cambodia has put women's issues and rights in its national strategic development plan under gender equality, and equity promotion and enhancement programs. Yet gender inequality remains high in almost every sector. There is no or limited access to free and/or affordable quality basic social services and basic needs of women. Without essential social services, women cannot fully and freely exercise their rights, and especially cannot access the same opportunities available to men.

Privatisation of social services, including healthcare, education, and electricity was imposed by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund in 1980s through their overseas development aids under the Structural Adjustment Program as well as the Poverty Reduction Strategy Plan.

Privatisation is made through public administration reform which takes away public investment in social services, promoting private investment

in the name of partnership with private sector in operating services. The bank believes it is an effective and sustainable way to strengthening quality of services. Consequently the private sector has a stronger role than the government in operating services that Cambodians need. Privatisation of public services also removes the commitment, role and responsibility of the government to ensure that every Cambodian citizen has access to basic needs and adequate services.

In Cambodia, the United Sisterhood Alliance (US), comprising of four local women organizations: Social Action for Change, Worker's Information Center, Women's Network for Unity, and the Messenger Band, has been working directly with women garment, entertainment and sex workers, and indirectly working with farmers to support their struggles. Their demands for the right to access to basic social services, improving working conditions and living wage and the right to livelihood as the fundamental rights to all. During the Community Forum in March 2015 was a stepping stone that US brought 250 participants, aside from the workers there were also people living with HIV/AIDS and most at risk populations, land communities, fishery and forest communities, health activists, and youths to discuss their problems.

Collective initiative, voice and demands for common needs are the key to advocate against privatisation. Women workers and communities, through the coordination of US, were able to identify and understand the gap between government and citizens, as well as the absence of or limited participation of people in the process of policy making. Therefore, the People's Policy is what women from the ground are examining as the possible process that women could work on together, using their rights to hold the government accountable and act in collaboration.

After the Community Forum, US conducted consultation workshops analysing existing laws and policies and providing strategic recommendation that involve relevant stakeholders such as the government at the national level and local authorities, private sector, unions and communities. US aims to organise another mini forum in the IWD 2016 to review the concrete demands and strategic recommendations.

An important part of protecting of women's rights and enhancing gender equality and equity, is to ensure that women are involved in strategic solutions and policy development. The People's Policy will be a simple format with all strategic solutions and recommendations proposed by women presented to the government and relevant stakeholders. The Policy intends to make the inclusiveness of women a priority for the government, targeting the 6th National Election Mandate in 2018.

The People's Policy Development Process

Participation from grassroots, particularly women, is very important for the development of People's Policy. The development process will take one year, and there are three main phases including local consultation with women at the ground, consultation with other women's organizations and groups, and the second community forum in 2016.

Local consultation is a five-month process from August to December 2015. US will analyse the relevant existing national policies and laws on social services and basic needs and consult with women garment, entertainment and sex workers to produce first draft. During this phase, women workers will be given the space and chance to learn more about these national policies directly impacting their lives, and they will also have the opportunity to share their concerns, their analysis on the gaps of all laws and policies, and give their recommendations and propose solutions to put in the draft. This consultation is aiming to engage with around 400 women workers

The consultation with other women's organization and groups will be made in December 2015. US will have a formal consultative meeting with identified partners from local and international women organizations to seek their participation and support on the development of the Policy, and to draw a joint action plan if common interests are found.

The second community forum will be conducted in 2016 with about 500 participants from local consultation and the previous community forum, other women's organizations, farmers and health activists. The expected outcome from this forum is to get the final draft of the Policy and a joint action plan getting it to the government.

The whole process of the People's Policy development is to empower grassroots women with full ownership of the recommendations. They are active citizens and change makers in creating essential public services a reality for all. ✨



Chansophearet Roth is a young Cambodian activist working for various women's organizations and groups. She attended DAWN's Training on Gender, Economic, and Ecological Justice (GEEJ) in 2012.

DAWN Forum in Montevideo



José Luis Cancela, Deputy Foreign Minister of Uruguay, opened the forum with a speech highlighting the active Uruguayan participation in the drafting of the The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, which establishes an action plan of 17 main goals with 169 associated targets.

Monday 9th November 2015 - Public Forum

Uruguay 2030 : Towards sustainable consumption and production patterns and equitable distribution

DAWN members from four continents met at the headquarters of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Montevideo to discuss key feminist issues on economics and women's human rights in the new UN agenda for Sustainable Development by 2030.

The forum was organized by DAWN and cosponsored by the International Council of Adult Education (ICAE) and the Gender Commission of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Uruguay. Feminists from Argentina, Brazil, South Africa, India, China, Nigeria, Ethiopia and Fiji joined forces to continue supporting Uruguay as the great bastion of rights agenda before the intense battle of conservative forces that threaten the progress made in the region.

There was standing room only.

The forum was moderated by Nicole Bidegain, a member of the DAWN Executive Committee, the speakers were:

- José Luis Cancela**, Deputy Foreign Minister
- Claire Slatter**, Chair of the DAWN Board (Fiji)
- Gita Sen**, General Coordinator of DAWN (India)
- Gabriel Papa**, Advisor to the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MIEF)
- Pablo Alvarez**, coordinator of the Office of Planning and Budget (OPP)
- Pablo Mazzini**, National Secretariat for Care of the Ministry of Development (MIDES)
- Senator Constanza Moreira**



Claire Slatter, the Chair of DAWN's Board, officially thanked everyone for coming on behalf of DAWN, for what is hoped to be a collective reflection and a productive and meaningful exchange



Gita Sen, General Coordinator for DAWN, referred to Uruguay as an exemplary country in relation to progress in their policies of social rights. This forum was also an opportunity to launch the Spanish version of "The Remaking of Social Contracts: Feminists in a Fierce New World" co-edited by Sen and Durano, in which the relationships between the neoliberal economic agenda, ecological problems including climate change, the struggle for sexual and reproductive rights and for progressive policies and social transformation are enmeshed



Gabriel Papa, Ministry of Economy and Finance, shared the overview of the macroeconomic situation of Uruguay and expressed willingness to start incorporating the gender perspective in its portfolio.



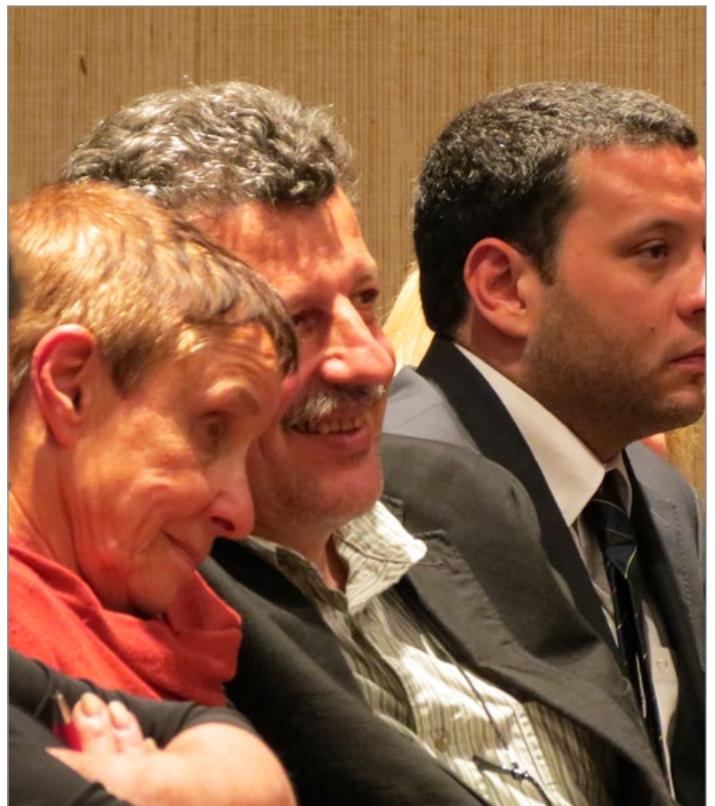
Pablo Alvarez, Office of Planning & Budget, stated that his institution is working on a rigorous commitment to planning the development of ten prospective axes facing Uruguay in 2030.



Senator Contanza Moreira reflected on the recently approved 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of the UN and defined it as "a list of good intentions."



Pablo Mazzini, National Secretariat for Care, referred to the care system, a new public policy of the current government that is driven from the secretariat.



DAWN at CSW 60

Monday, 14th March - Side Event

Sharing the Care: How to Recognize, Reduce, and Redistribute

Event co-sponsored by UN Women, Permanent Mission of Iceland to the UN, Government of Sweden, MenEngage Alliance.

Recognizing and valuing unpaid care work has been broadly recognized as a strategy to advance gender equality as well as economic development. Although this aim has been outlined in declarations and global goals – solutions have fallen short.

The event included the launch of a new MenCare parental leave platform.

Speakers:

Shahra Razavi, Chief, Research and Data Section, UN Women (moderator)

Diane Elson, Emeritus Professor,
University of Essex and Chair of the UK Women's Budget Group

Eygló Harðardóttir, Minister for Social Affairs and Housing, Iceland

Åsa Regners, Minister for Gender Equality, Sweden

Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations

Gary Barker, International Director, Promundo, MenCare's Co-coordinator

DAWN representative: Corina Rodriguez, Executive Committee Member (DAWN).



Corina Rodriguez, executive committee member, Development Alternatives for Women for a New Era (DAWN).



Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations



Corina Rodriguez; **Gary Barker**, International Director, Promundo, MenCare's Co-coordinator; **Antonio de Aguiar Patriota**; and **Shahra Razavi**, Chief, Research and Data Section, UN Women (moderator)

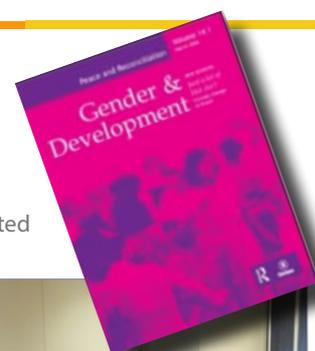
Monday, 14th March - Side Event

Gender and the SDGs: The Outcome, the Processes, and the Prospects

Event co-sponsored by RLS, UNRISD, Gender & Development, and Oxfam

DAWN representative: Corina Rodriguez, Executive Committee member (DAWN).

The speakers were contributors to a special issue of the open access Oxfam journal Gender & Development devoted to gender and the SDGs, launched at this event.



Emily Gillingham, Gender and Development Journal, and **Shahra Razavi**, Chief, Research and Data Section, UN Women.



Corina Rodriguez, executive committee member, Development Alternatives for Women for a New Era (DAWN), and **Jessica Woodroffe**, Director of UK Gender and Development Network.



Operational Guide of Montevideo Consensus: Emphasis on Gender and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Chapters.

Event co-sponsored by Permanent Mission of Uruguay, UN Women and Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN)

DAWN representative: Cai Yiping, Executive Committee member



Cai Yiping, Ms. María Nieves Rico and Chair Elbio Rosselli



Cai Yiping, Mariella Mazzotti and Ms. María Nieves Rico



Panel left to right: **Cai Yiping**, Member of Executive Committee of DAWN, China; **Ms. María Nieves Rico**, Director of the Division of Gender of CEPAL; Moderator Permanent Mission of Uruguay to the UN **Elbio Rosselli**; **Mariella Mazzotti**, Director of the National Institute of Women, Uruguay; **Luiza Carvalho**, Regional Director UN Women for the Americas and the Caribbean

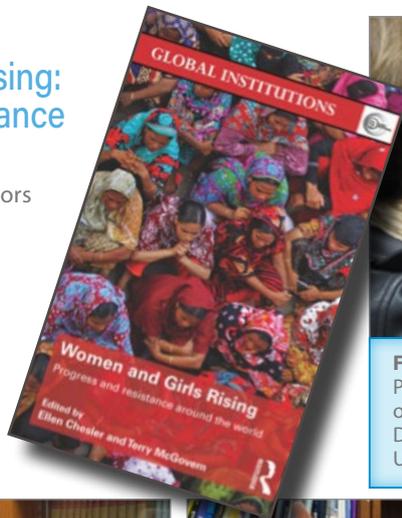
Thursday, 17th March - Parallel Event

Women and Girls Rising: Progress and Resistance around the World

A conversation with contributors to the new book edited by Ellen Chesler and Terry McGovern, in which DAWN has multiple chapters.

DAWN representative:

Cai Yiping, Executive Committee member



Farida Shaheed, Executive Director of Shirkat Gah – Women's Resource Centre in Pakistan, former UN Special Rapporteur on Cultural Rights, and founding member of the Women's Action Forum, and **Cai Yiping**, executive committee member, Development Alternatives for Women for a New Era (DAWN), and member of the UN Women's Asia-Pacific Regional Civil Society Advisory Group.



Terry McGovern (Moderator), Professor of Population and Family Health at Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health, where she directs the Health and Human Rights Certificate and teaches human rights and environmental justice.



Charlotte Bunch, Founding Director and Senior Scholar at the Center for Women's Global Leadership and Board of Governor's Distinguished Professor in Women's and Gender Studies, Rutgers University.



Noelene Nabulivou, member, Diverse Voices and Action for Equality in Fiji and Associate of Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN); organizing partner, the Women's Major Group on Sustainable Development.

DAWN at CPD 49

Thursday, 14th April - Side Event

Meeting the SRHR of All People: Advancing the Montevideo Consensus Agenda



Speakers Julia Terborg, Oriana Lopez, Cecilia Stapff, Chair Kumudini Samuel and Cai Yiping

The Permanent Mission of Uruguay and DAWN co-sponsored a side event at the 49th session of UN Commission on Population and Development (CPD49) on the 14th of April 2016.

- Chair: **Kumudini Samuel**, DAWN (Sri Lanka)
- Speakers: **Cecilia Stapff**, Representative of the Uruguayan Delegation for CPD (Uruguay)
- Julia Terborg**, Center for People's Devt and member of the official delegation (Suriname)
- Oriana Lopez**, RESURJ (Mexico) and member of the official delegation
- Cai Yiping**, DAWN (China)



Speakers Julia Terborg and Oriana Lopez



Cecilia Stapff, Kumi Samuel (Chair), Julia Terborg and Cai Yiping



Kumi Samuel and Cecilia Stapff with attendees

Political Restructuring and Social Transformation (PRST)

Innovation, Transformation, and Sustainable Futures in Africa

by **Ayesha Imam**
(Senegal)

Innovation – not the same tired old ways of doing things.

Transformation – implication of change for the good.

Sustainable – able to continue, not going to run out or run down.

I thought about a major and terrifying social transformation that at least in the presentations and abstracts I've read so far has not been a theme in this conference

The spread of religious conservatism, shading into fundamentalisms, and extreme violence

Social transformation in growth of fundamentalisms – Muslim, Christian and neo-traditionalist – across Africa.

Religious Extremist Coercion

There are increased initiatives to codify religious extremist ideology in legislation and public policy, giving legal force to discrimination, and blocking proposals for equality and choice. Laws criminalizing blasphemy, apostasy and defamation of religion are current in 47% of all countries, which are frequently used by religious extremists.¹ Examining blasphemy laws in Pakistan, Indonesia and Nigeria, Khan² argues that legislation against blasphemy gives religious extremists legal cover to engage in acts of intimidation and violence against both dissenting members of their faith communities and non-members. For example, Nigeria has many incidents of extremist violence directed against alleged blasphemers, including the incarceration in a psychiatric hospital and continuing death threats against an atheist man from a Muslim family³ notwithstanding the constitutional right to freedom of

opinion or to change religion. Similarly, a state prosecution in Kano State recently resulted in nine people sentenced to death for unfavourably comparing the leader of the Tijanniyya to the Prophet Mohammed.⁴

Many initiatives are designed to curtail women's rights and autonomy. In 2009 a Family Code raising the minimum legal age of marriage for girls, improving women's inheritance and property rights and removing a requirement for a wife's obedience to her husband, which had already been passed by the Malian National Assembly, was withdrawn because of pressure from Muslim conservative and fundamentalist groups. The Nigerian Senate (members of which are both Muslim and Christian) has recently approved a Sexual Offences Bill, which whilst imposing sentences for sex with minors, lowers the age of consent for sex to 11 years of age.⁵

Commonly, these initiatives, backed with explicit reference to religious fundamentalist discourses on sexuality, also violate the rights of people on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, and, rights to freedom of expression. In 2014 Uganda and Nigeria signed into law the Anti-Homosexuality Act and the Same Sex Marriage Prohibition Act respectively, which impose prison sentences on LGBTQI people (lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, trans, queer and intersex individuals), as well as for those organising to support gender identity and sexuality rights. In Uganda especially, the legislation was justified with reference to Christianity. Liberia, Kenya, DRC, Zimbabwe and Chad are also either considering or have passed even more strict laws. This type of legislation has widespread implications for freedom of information, association and expression. As activists against the Same-Sex Marriage Bill [now Act] in Nigeria pointed out "the implications and effects of the [Act]... go far beyond the prohibition of same sex marriage (which is discriminatory in itself), and will result in widespread human rights violations, censorship,

impediments to open and democratic process, fear, repression and the break up of family relationships... for all Nigerian citizens irrespective of their sexuality."⁶

Religious violent extremisms

Africa now has the dubious honour of hosting two of the most deadly terrorist organisations in the world – BH in Nigeria (and Cameroon etc) and al-Shabab... with BH having killed more people than Daesh (ISIS)...

As elsewhere in the world, religious violent extremism, including terrorism, is currently widespread in Africa. The GTI reports that Boko Haram,⁷ an Islamist group based in Nigeria but also active in Cameroon, Chad and Niger, is one of the four deadliest terrorist groups in the world over the past fifteen years. Between May 2011 and February 2015, Boko Haram has been directly responsible for the deaths of over 10,000 civilians,⁸ including burning schoolboys to death in their dormitories, as well as abducting of hundreds of schoolgirls and women. Over 2.5 million people have been displaced within Nigeria whilst another 200,000 have fled to Niger, Chad, and Cameroon.⁹

The Christian Lords' Resistance Army (LRA) and the Islamist Al-Shabaab¹⁰ are in the GTI's list of the ten deadliest groups. Since 2006-7, the LRA has been forced out of Uganda and become a regional threat in the border regions of the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Central African Republic and South Sudan. Human Rights Watch has documented the killing of over 2,600 civilians and abductions of over 4,000 others, as well as the displacement of over 400,000 people as a result of LRA attacks in this region between 2008 and 2012.¹¹

Al Shabaab (initially in Somalia but active also in Kenya) continues to control much of rural Somalia, killing those accused of spying or who do not conform to their interpretation of Islam, targeting children for armed recruitment and forced marriage, attacking schools and imposing a restrictive



4 <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-33283261>, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jul/03/nigerian-man-insane-atheist-bala-islam>

5 The Senate also passed over 40 other Bills that week. There is some debate over whether this was an oversight or not. The original Bill stated the age of 18 as consent – it was changed in committee. The House of Representatives has not at time of writing passed it, so it has not yet gone to the President for assent. <http://www.nigerianwatch.com/news/7106-senate-inadvertently-makes-11-the-age-of-consent-with-new-sexual-offences-bill>, <http://www.ibtimes.co.in/nigerian-senate-lowers-age-consent-sex-18-11-faces-backlash-635241>, <http://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/185030-nigerias-proposed-sexual-offences-law-obnoxious-falana.html>

1 <http://brianpellot.religionnews.com/2013/12/19/journalists-face-religious-straitjackets-half-countries> (Note: Subscribers Only)

2 http://www.harvardilj.org/wp-content/uploads/Anti-blasphemy-Laws_0608.pdf

3 <http://www.irinnews.org/report/76570/nigeria-deadly-sectarian-riot-over-alleged-blasphemy>, <http://www.instituteforfricaffairs.org/home/?p=2646>

6 Nigerian CSOs et al 2011

7 Jam'atu ahl al-Sunna li'l-Da'wa wa'l-jihād i.e. the Association of Sunnah People for Proselytisation and Armed Struggle, commonly referred to by the Hausa phrase Boko Haram, 'secular education is forbidden.'

8 <http://www.cfr.org/nigeria/nigeria-security-tracker/p29483>

9 UNHCR in <http://www.unmultimedia.org/tv/unifeed/2015/09/chad-boko-haram-displaced/>, <http://newirin.irinnews.org/lost-in-the-city>

10 Formally Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahidin – Movement of Striving Youth.

11 <https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/01/09/qa-lra-commander-dominic-ongwen-and-icc>

code of behaviour on women and men, stoning mostly women. Al Shabaab also continues to attack both government targets and civilians in Mogadishu, as well as in neighbouring Kenya, such as at Westgate Mall and Garissa University.

Through the links with Al Qaeda of Ansar al-Dine, Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, and the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa, Mali has also been a site of activity by religious terrorist groups (Al Qaeda and affiliates are the world's second most deadly terrorist group), which have sidelined the secular separatist National Movement for the liberation of Azawad whose action to take over northern Mali sparked the 2012 crisis. They imposed an ultraconservative form of Muslim laws, enforced by public amputations for theft, whippings and executions. They forced head-to-toe dress codes on women, banned music, smoking, alcohol and even playing or watching football.

The Christian Anti-Balaka (anti-machete) group in the Central African Republic, reacting to political killings and atrocities by the Seleka opposition group (whose membership is majority Muslim), has killed, mutilated and displaced thousands of Muslim civilians, with the stated intent of eliminating Muslims from the country.¹² At that time, approximately 24% of the population were Muslim.

The UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, Rashida Manjoo, has noted an alarming growth of gender-based violence, including targeted killings of women and girls, which are most often justified by reference to religion, culture and tradition. Particularly at risk of violence are women human rights defenders for their defence of women's rights and because they are women.¹³ Similarly, Zainab Bangura, the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, has pointed out that sexual violence against women and girls is part of a wider pattern of women and girls being deliberately targeted by interlinked extremist groups, who share an ideological opposition to the education, rights and freedoms of women. In this context, sexual violence is not merely incidental, but integral, to their strategy of domination and self-perpetuation.¹⁴

The increase of religious extremist violence has resulted in a greater incidence of sexual violence (including rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, trafficking

and forced marriage) across communities of all religions. The great majority of those targeted by sexual violence are women and girls. However, boys and men have also been victimised, and, especially in the context of increasing homophobia promoted by all religious fundamentalisms, often find it particularly difficult to divulge sexual violence against them or to access support.

Social transformation, innovation, sustainability for whom and for what?

Of recent a couple IMF and Worldbank researchers are announcing that 'perhaps neo-liberal macro-economic policies have been 'oversold' and they are not nearly so effective at producing growth as had been insisted upon, that they contribute directly to producing inequalities.

"Instead of delivering growth, some neoliberal policies have increased inequality, in turn jeopardizing durable expansion.

-The benefits in terms of increased growth seem fairly difficult to establish when looking at a broad group of countries.

-The costs in terms of increased inequality are prominent. Such costs epitomize the trade-off between the growth and equity effects of some aspects of the neoliberal agenda.

-Increased inequality in turn hurts the level and sustainability of growth. Even if growth is the sole or main purpose of the neoliberal agenda, advocates of that agenda still need to pay attention to the distributional effects." (IMF Research dept)¹⁵

In some quarters this has been hailed as a breakthrough, an innovation in thinking about and analysing neo-liberal economic policies and practices.

For many of us the reaction is rather different.

We have been pointing this out in Africa since the 1980s.

Is it only now that it is hitting Europe that its inadequacies are being recognised?

Under current economic policies and processes, growth in GDP not only coexists with inequality, but perpetuates it.

WB's Poverty in Africa Rising report, points out that Africans living in poverty fell from 56% in 1990 to 43% in 2012. The report argues that the poverty rate may have declined even more if the quality and comparability of the underlying data are taken into consideration.

However, because of population growth many more people are poor, the report says. The most optimistic scenario shows about 330 million poor in 2012, up from about 280 million in 1990.

Even as there has been some improvement within the ranks of the poor, the gap

¹⁵ <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2016/06/ostry.htm>

between the rich and the poor has grown wider. In 1988 the richest 20% had 79% the world's income but by 2014 only 8.6% of rich people owned 85.3% of the world's wealth. Regionally, the share of world total household income in North America and Europe has increased from 64% in 2000 to 67% in 2014, even as their percentage of world adult population has declined from 21% to 18%.¹⁶

The world's 10 richest people, according to Forbes, own \$505 billion in combined wealth, a sum greater than the GDP of Nigeria which has largest GDP in Africa.¹⁷

Seven of the 10 most unequal countries in the world are in Africa, most of them in southern Africa. Excluding these countries and controlling for GDP levels, inequality is still extremely high.

The number of extremely wealthy Africans is increasing.

During the past 14 years, the number of high-net-worth individuals in Africa has grown by 145%.¹⁸

So – growth in the numbers of people at each pole - the poor and the very rich. Which means that using averages like per capita income is even more misleading.

For a more accurate picture of what life is like we should be using modes and medians, not averages.

Feminist analyses and activists, including in Africa¹⁹ have recognised that we can't challenge patriarchy without challenging other systems which produce injustice and inequality. But the reverse is also true: we can't challenge poverty and other inequalities and marginalisations effectively without challenging patriarchy. ✎

¹⁶ Davies et al 2008, Credit Suisse 2014, Oxfam 2015, <http://inequality.org/global-inequality/>
¹⁷ <http://inequality.org/global-inequality/>
¹⁸ <http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/datablog/2015/jul/31/africa-wealth-report-2015-rich-get-richer-poverty-grows-and-inequality-deepens-new-world-wealth>
¹⁹ http://awdf.org/wp-content/uploads/Charter_of_Feminist_Principles_for_African_Feminists.pdf



Ayesha Imam is a member of DAWN's Executive Committee and is on DAWN's Political Restructuring and Social Transformation (PRST) team.

This article is an extract from a keynote speech given at the inaugural joint conference of the American Anthropological Association and African Studies Association "Innovation, transformation and sustainable futures in Africa" in Dakar, Senegal, June 1-3, 2016. Hosted by the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) and the West African Research Center (WARC).

DAWN Research

Mapping the political economy of conflict and gender based violence

by Kumi Samuel

DAWN is currently engaged in a research project to map the political economy of conflict and gender based violence. The research will focus on the political economy of violence/terror (with special reference to the violence of armed conflict and war) and gender based violence against women (with special reference to sexual violence).

We decided to look at armed conflict and gender based violence as political violence with a range of political and economic dimensions “connected to both private patriarchy and the differential gender impacts of economic globalisation.” We thought such an analysis can potentially further illuminate the dynamics of gender and social relations within war-torn and conflict affected polities.

“ ...rape has resulted in women losing access to property through multiple means... ”

The impact of armed conflict and violence on gender relations, gender equality and social justice is a critical concern. This includes specifically the nature and impact of the armed conflict related gender-based violence against women. While there have been studies of the causes and consequences of such violence on the lives of women, the gendered analysis of the political economy of conflict and the ways in which political, economic, social and ideological processes intersect to impact and shape the gendered impact of conflict-

related gender-based violence against women has received less attention.

The link between the causes of conflict and sexual violence need to be discussed in the context of structural inequalities mediated by patriarchy at the level of the household or the community, and in national and global political economies during or in the aftermath of conflict. This project will cover not only sexual violence in conflict but also other forms of violence against women, such as the endemic nature of domestic violence or economic violence, or the ways in which violations of socio-economic rights in ‘peace’ heighten in armed conflict and situate women in conjunctures of vulnerability to gender-based violence.

A political economy analysis compels us to understand how the multiple crises generated by economic globalization and development, resultant macro-economic policies, trade liberalization, economic de-regulation and the financial and climate crises, and militarization, pose new challenges. This requires a gendered analysis of political, economic and social processes as they impact on violence against women in conflict. It must be understood that women’s security is also inseparably linked to the material basis of relationships that govern the distribution and use of resources, entitlements

and authority within the home, the community and the transnational realm¹. It also calls for analysis of how women’s political, economic and social subordination makes women (in differentiated strata) vulnerable to violence and an understanding that violence against women is not merely a consequence of men’s aggression in the private or public sphere. For example, rape has resulted in women losing access to property through multiple means because due to rape they have

been rejected by their families and lost access to or have had their property confiscated, including through bogus marriages, such as in Rwanda.

This research will use a political economy framework or lens, to discuss gender-based violence against women in conflict situations (including, but not limited to sexual violence), by taking structural inequalities into account, contributing thereby to a nuanced and better understanding of, and therefore means of addressing not only direct armed conflict related gender-based violence but also in relation to the elimination of violence and the construction of social justice, and specifically equal and equitable gender relations.

The analysis will seek to juxtapose three inter-related components – the politics of economics; the struggle for political power and the gender order in the discussion of the Political Economy of Violent Conflict and Gender-Based Violence Against Women.

The research case studies and issue papers will relate to conflicts in the Great Lakes Region, Africa; Sudan and South Sudan; Nigeria; Egypt, Libya and Iraq; Columbia; North East India; Indonesia; Papua New Guinea. ✎



Kumudini Samuel is a member of DAWN's Executive Committee and is on DAWN's Political Restructuring and Social Transformation (PRST) team.

¹ True, Jacqui (2010), The Political Economy Of Violence Against Women: A Feminist International Relations Perspective, The Australian Feminist Law Journal, Volume 32, P. 40.

Equality, Quality and Accountability in Advancing SRHR in China, India and Indonesia

by Cai Yiping

A planning workshop was held on January 21-22 in Bangkok, Thailand to discuss the next phase of DAWN's contribution to advancing the sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) agenda: the EQA (Equality, Quality and Accountability) Project.

Following on from the twentieth year reviews of ICPD and Beijing, and the Post 2015 Development Agenda, DAWN hopes to chart a fresh course to focus on instigating and promoting changes at the policy level and programmatically on the ground.

DAWN's recent work on SRHR has included an assessment of the MDGs in relation to SRHR in Mexico, India and Nigeria¹, a review of key SRHR issues in terms of what's been achieved and what lies ahead², and a set of regional advocacy tools across six regions for use in the review process³. Based on research and advocacy during the recent regional and global processes in collaboration with key partners, DAWN and partners pinpointed gaps in Equality – Quality – Accountability (EQA) as needing critical attention in the next phase.

These three gaps reflect fundamental failures by governments and their development partners to understand and act in accordance with the human rights foundation of the ICPD PoA. Successfully integrating SRHR into the

post-2015 development agenda requires attention to remedying these gaps and re-positioning SRHR within a framework of human rights as articulated in the PoA. This project will focus on the three largest Asian countries – China, India and Indonesia. These are countries of great size and diversity, so a multiplicity of issues and challenges can be addressed. The differences by region, age, ethnicity, religion, and other features, as well as significant variations in legal and policy-making processes, provide rich variation for the study of challenges and advances. It will be important to include not only the approaches and actions of national governments but also of international agencies, private foundations, non-governmental organizations and social movements, as well as of regional and local governments and other bodies where possible.

In the planning workshop, researchers from the three countries discussed the current status in each country of issues related to SRHR, specific services and rights to be focused on, and challenges to be addressed in the research. ✓

1 DAWN, 2012. Breaking Through the Development Silos. Sexual and Reproduction Health & Rights, Millenium Development Boals & Gender Equity. Experiences from Mexico, India and Nigeria. Available online at https://www.dawnnet.org/feminist-resources/sites/default/files/articles/breaking_through_the_development_silos.pdf

2 Available online at <http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rgph20/10/2>

3 Available at <https://www.dawnnet.org/feminist-resources/archive/dawn-regional-advocacy-tools-srhr-cairo20>



Cai Yiping, Hu Yukun, Gita Sen, Mridula Shankar and Sapna Desai at the workshop in Bangkok



On DAWN's Website

www.dawnnet.org

DAWN Regional Advocacy Tools on SRHR for Cairo@20

The DAWN Regional Advocacy Tools for Cairo @20 are analysis and advocacy papers from six regions of the global South – South Asia, Southeast Asia, the Pacific, the Caribbean, Latin America and the MENA region are available as PDFs to download for free from our resources section at:

<https://www.dawnnet.org/feminist-resources/archive/dawn-regional-advocacy-tools-srhr-cairo20>

Summary of The Remaking of Social Contracts: Feminists in a Fierce New World

This is a free pdf download, a summary of the book "The Remaking of Social Contracts: Feminists in a Fierce New World" (eds for DAWN) Gita Sen and Marina Durano (London, Zed Books, 2014). It is intended for the purposes of advocacy and training by social movements and other organizations.

<https://www.dawnnet.org/feminist-resources/article/summary-remaking-social-contracts-feminists-fierce-new-world>

Collation of interventions of representatives of CSOs @ FfD Dialogue, Incheon

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN ESCAP) held the First High-Level Follow-up Dialogue on Financing for Development in Asia and the Pacific on 30-31 March 2016 in Incheon, Republic of Korea, a collation of the CSO interventions can be read here:

<https://www.dawnnet.org/feminist-resources/en/20160331/collation-cso-interventions-incheon>



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