



CONCEPT PAPER

DAWN Regional Consultations and Training Institute on

*“Strengthening Policy Analysis and Advocacy on
Gender, Economic and Climate Justice in the Pacific”*

**Holiday Inn & Suva Civic Centre, Suva Fiji
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I. Proponents

Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN) in collaboration with the Pacific Network on Globalisation (PANG)

DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVES WITH WOMEN FOR A NEW ERA

Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN) is a network of feminist scholars, researchers and activists from the economic South, working for economic and gender justice, and sustainable and democratic development. DAWN provides a forum for feminist research, analyses and advocacy on global issues (economic, social and political) affecting the livelihoods, living standards, rights and development prospects of women, especially poor and marginalized women, in regions of the South. Through research, analyses, advocacy and, more recently, training, DAWN seeks to support women's mobilization within civil society to challenge inequitable social, economic and political relations at global, regional and national levels, and to advance feminist alternatives.

DAWN's feminism entails countering the material bases for social, economic and political inequalities, injustices and exclusions. DAWN envisions processes of economic and social development that are geared to enabling human rights and freedoms. DAWN draws strength from, and is committed to further empowering, the women's movement in the South. Its various activities include: developing and disseminating analyses of the economic, social, cultural and political processes which cause and perpetuate inequalities of gender, class, race and other forms of unfair social ordering and discrimination; engaging in global and regional inter-governmental and non-governmental forums and processes to challenge and change mainstream thinking, policy and practice which hurt poor women in the South; co-sponsoring global civil society initiatives aimed at achieving sustainable, equitable and gender-just social, economic and political development; contributing to selected reform initiatives instituted in response to feminist or civil society demands for global institutional or policy changes; and providing training in analysis and advocacy skills to young feminists from the South who are engaged (or interested) in working on global issues covered by the four DAWN themes.



PACIFIC NETWORK ON GLOBALISATION

The Pacific Network on Globalisation (PANG) plays the role of the Pacific regional “peoples’ watchdog on trade issues”. PANG was established in 2001 by regional NGOs concerned that Pacific civil society was being left out of the debate on trade liberalisation and that the free-trade agenda lacked a focus on key goals of human development and poverty reduction. PANG is a research, advocacy and campaigning organisation. PANG provides considered research and analysis on trade issues, and regular media input – on trade and human development – across the region. PANG also plays a very important campaigning role, lobbying to have the concerns of Pacific civil society heard in fora where the Pacific’s economic future is increasingly determined.

Ultimately, PANG aims to improve effective and democratic governance in the Pacific, by empowering Pacific civil society and private sectors to engage the decision making process around trade and economic planning.

II. Global Context: A Fierce New World & Its Challenges

DAWN has described the first decade of the 21st century as the painful birthing of a “fierce new world” in light of the paradigmatic shifts induced by a run-away neoliberal globalization; a militarized and financialized political economy; a crisis in climate and other natural systems; a deepening food crisis; an energy crisis from fossil-fuel dependence; the decline of the nation-state and the reconfiguration of the geopolitical context.

While governments acknowledge some of these converging crises they have failed to recognize the inter-linkages between them and that at their core lies the unsustainability of the capitalist model of production and consumption. The grossly skewed distribution of wealth and its social and political iniquities, and the domination and destruction of nature have never been more evident to the peoples of developed and developing countries.

These crises have generated heated debates on the restructuring of global governance. Pressures to respond to these challenges in all their complexities have come to preoccupy sovereign nations and the peoples they govern. At the same time, these nations and peoples struggle to uphold values associated with sustainable livelihoods, poverty eradication, human rights promotion, freedom of expression and mobility, respect for identity and sexuality.

DAWN recognizes this developing multilateral terrain as part of a fierce new world that is replete with complicated contradictions, serious fractures, severe backlash, broken promises, and uncertain outcomes for the world’s women, especially women from the economic South. There is an urgent need for women’s and civil society organizations to critically engage with these debates and advocate strongly for a world where economic and climate justice coincide with gender justice.



Three challenges are highlighted in the global governance debates (see Appendix 1). The first challenge is the existence of double standards in the response to the triple crisis. An unequal playing field in key policy areas is a major obstacle to coordinated response. The second challenge is the search for a sustainable model of economic recovery, growth, and development. The focus on financing climate change mitigation and adaptation is too narrow given the significant resource flows needed for developing countries to shift from high carbon, fossil-fuel energy to low carbon, renewable energy sources; to address the food crisis exacerbated by extreme and frequent climate events, floods, droughts, storms, loss of arable land and biodiversity; and to provide social protection for groups most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change including disease, landlessness, migration, poverty, and much more. Thus far solutions to all these challenges have tended to be market- or technology-oriented and driven by corporate interests, which have created new inequalities between the North and the South. The third challenge is the inconsistencies between international trade rules (both WTO and regional trade mechanisms) and international environmental agreements.

III. The Pacific Context: Rife with Tensions from the Triple Crises and More

The concept of a triple crisis is both relevant and inadequate to the Pacific, where nation states are experiencing a period of heightened intra-regional tension as they variously respond to the triple global crises of finance, food and climate change, in a period of increased intra-state conflict and militarisation (Solomon Islands, Fiji, Tonga, etc) and extreme weather events and natural disasters (floods and two cyclones in Fiji in 2009-10, an earthquake and tsunami in American Samoa, Samoa and Tonga in September 2009, and the early January 2010 earthquake and tsunami in the Western Solomon Islands). (UNESCAP, 2010).

Pacific Island Forum countries (minus Fiji that has been suspended due to a 2007 military coup) are engaged in complex, tense and often contradictory negotiations toward a regional free trade agreement between Pacific island countries and Australia and New Zealand (PACER-Plus). Activation of this agreement was built into a framework agreement called the Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations. PACER guarantees negotiations for a Forum-wide trade arrangement if the islands began similar negotiations with the European Union through EPAs. Papua New Guinea has already started to provisionally apply its IEPA while Fiji has just signed the Interim EPA agreement. In February 2010, the PNG and Fiji IEPA were submitted by Council to the EP for the consent procedure. The EU is now awaiting notification of provisional application from Fiji.

Pacific Island countries experience an almost 6:1 ratio of trade imbalance with Australia and New Zealand (OXFAM, 2009) and a poor trade agreement will likely widen the trade deficit even further and worsen economic performance. There is concern about the human rights and social justice implications of PACER-Plus and EPAs including rights relating to food, health, work and land (Morgan, OHCHR Pacific, 2010). Given the impacts of the global financial crisis, Pacific Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) are of the view that this is an inappropriate time to be

signing agreements that tie the hands of governments and remove the flexibilities that are essential to respond to domestic priorities. The negative impacts of the global recession on Forum Island Countries would be deepened by the projected government revenue losses from PACER-Plus¹ and the other ‘adjustment costs’.

These problematic free-trade negotiations are occurring while Pacific island states are also addressing the adverse effects of climate change and sea level rise. Climate change presents significant risks to the sustainable development of Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs) and already threatens the very existence of smaller atoll states. PICTs’ global priorities and needs in the area of climate change are reflected in various international documents, outcomes of the UNFCCC Conferences of the Parties and the outcomes of related international meetings.

At a regional level, PICTs’ priorities and needs have been reiterated for over a decade in relevant documents such as Forum Leaders Communiqués, regional policy frameworks and action plans of regional intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. At the national level, PICTs are also addressing climate change through their national sustainable development strategies. However, there is rising concern about individual country positions on natural resource use (Environment Act amendment, PNG 2010, unsustainable logging in Solomon Islands, and land alienation in Vanuatu and PNG).

The triple crisis framework, on the other hand, may be inadequate, in the face of high levels of gender-based violence and societal discrimination, as well as intra-state conflict and militarization in the region. Rises in intra-state conflict have been experienced in a number of countries (Tonga, Fiji, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, West-Papua/Indonesia, Bougainville/PNG), while across the Pacific there are high levels of gender based violence (UNDP Human Development Report 2010, Amnesty 2010 (PNG)) and the world’s lowest levels of women in national parliament (CDI, 2010). All these require equal, intersecting and focused policy attention as given to the triple crises.

IV. Policy Responses from Pacific Governments & Civil Society Organizations

While there has been progress by some Pacific governments and civil society groups to slow down the PACER-Plus process while better assessing the impact of a proposed free trade agreement on fragile Pacific Island economies, there is an urgent need for generation of viable alternatives (PANG, 2010). A survey undertaken by Oxfam in 2009 found that the impacts of the global economic crises on families in Vanuatu had been negligible. The biggest impact reported by families was in fact from the global food crises which affected urban families reliant on imported rice and flour for daily sustenance, and rising transport costs resulting from the

¹ A report commissioned by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, and completed by Washington-based consultants *Nathan Associates*, found that under PACER-Plus, Pacific countries stand to lose tens of millions of each year.



global fuel crises. As the Oxfam report notes, one of the principal reasons for this is the very low level of integration of the great majority of the population in the cash economy which demonstrates the resilience of “traditional economies”.

Evidence regarding the state of our island economies and their performances in regards to addressing poverty and inequality are well documented. What has not been highlighted nor mainstreamed are the local traditional economic and ecological initiatives that are developed from within the local communities such as environmental conservation by villages, “green” developmental projects by churches, as well as alternative financial systems such as the *kastom ikonomi* of Vanuatu.

Meanwhile, the Pacific Island Forum, the peak representative body of PIC countries has recently seen claims of undue influence and unfair advantage by Australia and New Zealand, for example in the establishment of an independent office of Chief Trade Advisor, and climate change negotiations. Australia is the current Chair (2010) of the Forum.

Along with the known problems of Small Island state capacity to negotiate and implement local-global coordinated responses to climate change, there are worrying examples of regional double-standards such as small island state trade/aid reliance on Australia and New Zealand and their impact on climate change policy responses. At the August 2009 Pacific Islands Forum in Cairns, Australian officials drafted the 'Pacific leaders' call to action on climate change'. Some PIC Ministers came to the meeting with strong targets following their Smaller Island States (SIS) meeting. However, the Communiqué they drafted was never tabled at the larger Leaders meeting (Eighteenth Smaller Island States leaders Meeting, Cairns Australia, 4 August 2009), and the resultant Call to Action reflected Australian policy on greenhouse gas emissions. Only weeks later at a Meeting of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) in New York, Pacific leaders signed onto a much stronger position (Maclellan. 2009). Therefore Pacific island forum nations participated in the COP15 summit in Copenhagen in December 2009 with contradictory, confusing national and regional stances.

With the upcoming Forum Leaders meetings to be held in Vanuatu in August 2010, the 2nd Climate Vulnerable Forum in Kiribati in October 2010 (TBC) and the COP16 meeting in Cancun Mexico in November/December 2010, the potential for a stronger Pacific position is possible, but faced by substantial pressure for PIC conformity with Australia and New Zealand climate change positions.

V. Objectives

- To provide a forum for raising emerging issues and challenges for gender, economic and climate justice, brought on by the world systemic and multiple crises and their inter-linkages;

- To share information on the range of global and regional responses to the world multiple crises, including new initiatives that challenge hegemonic thinking and systems in finance, trade and monetary, and environmental policymaking;
- To map current measures, mechanisms and programs at national and regional levels in the Pacific and discuss possibilities, constraints and contradictions that bear on policy space and choices as governments act to mitigate the impact of the multiple, interlinked crises;
- To encourage young feminists and women's rights activists, to increase their engagement in transforming global economic and climate change governance structures and processes toward expanding developing country policy space;
- To build the capacity of participants in policy analysis and advocacy on key gender, economic, and climate justice issues, and their inter-linkages;
- To contribute to policy proposals and social movement activism toward and during regional and global policy advocacy targets including the Second Climate Vulnerability Summit (Kiribati, October 2010), CBD COP 10 (Nagoya, 27-29 October 2010), UNFCCC COP 16 (Mexico, Nov 29-Dec 10, 2010), Rio+20' Earth Summit (New York, May 2012), UNFCCC COP 17 (South Africa) etc.

VI. Expected Outcomes

- Increased number of Pacific policymakers, academics and women's rights activists with knowledge of linkages between gender, economic and climate justice;
- Increased preparedness of Pacific policymakers, academics and women's rights activists for effective advocacy engagement in regional and global policy processes;
- Increased number of young feminist analysts and advocates in the Pacific actively participating in DAWN's DTI/RTI network, to increase intergenerational capacities in South women's movements.

VII. Impact

- PANG, DAWN's Regional Reference Group for this event, together with trained policymakers, academics and women's rights activists become more effective actors in multi-stakeholder policy dialogues at country and regional spheres, as these produce sharper analysis and advocacy on equity and gender equality dimensions of technical policy prescriptions, using a DAWN inter-linkages perspective.
- Global advocacy is enhanced through enriched collaboration on analysis and advocacy across actors in the economic south.
- The learning and generative capacities of the global network of young women's rights activists equipped with the DAWN analysis and engaged in advocacy, are promoted.



APPENDIX 1: Discussion Note on the Triple Crisis

1. Double Standards in Triple Crisis Response

The current global crisis is so severe and encompasses so many areas – finance, climate, food, energy – that countries have been forced, willy-nilly, to coordinate with each other. The question is who has benefited from such coordination? What about the most vulnerable, especially those countries that already faced severe fiscal constraints even before these converging crises? How much have they been helped by the collective actions taken? Sadly, the responses thus far at the international level point to the existence of **double standards in all key policy areas – fiscal policy, trade policy, and monetary / liquidity policy.**

One global inequality is the **fiscal stimulus available to developed countries while developing countries face fiscal constraints** and are often advised by creditor institutions and aid-giving countries, to use fiscal discipline and keep low budget deficits. In the area of international trade, developed countries have been able to subsidize industries that are unable to cope with the recession while developing countries can only use temporary defensive measures, such as increases in tariffs, use of non-tariff measures, or other trade-restrictive measures. Finally, access to liquidity is also differentiated. Member countries of the G20 have identified the possibility of using Special Drawing Rights allocations as a way of shoring up international reserves balances. Developing countries, however, face credit constraints in the commercial markets or with their external debt burdens.

Given the challenges being presented by a global environment that perpetuates an unequal playing field, countries and peoples of the South may use the crisis as **an opportunity for re-imagining international financial, trade and monetary systems and architectures** that are cognizant of global inequalities and which respect policy space for all countries. In particular, the global crisis has highlighted the need for regional (South-South cooperation) and national responses that not only focus on the reduction of inequalities, including those based on gender, race, ethnicities, sexuality, among others, but also contribute to breaking down the hegemonic institutions, systems and structures in the current unjust architecture.

2. Financing Development with Climate Justice and Women's Empowerment

Additional challenges are created by the **interconnections between finance, food and climate**, all of which need urgent attention. These three interconnected challenges are separately **addressed in their distinct policy silos**, against the backdrop of the continuing lack of political will to take public action on global problems at a global level. The growing distrust of development aid and the sluggish pace of international cooperation on climate change illustrate this critical failure in global governance.



Macroeconomic Policies

Macroeconomic policy determines the allocation of resources in the economy. For instance, the financial flows that the South needs can be encouraged/ discouraged through multiple macroeconomic instruments, incentives or disincentives. These constitute a powerful array of tools for influencing, controlling and shaping policies and actions of poor countries in virtually all domains, including those having to do with climate change and sustainable development. Moreover, as feminist economists have underlined, **macroeconomic policies are not gender neutral and have differentiated impacts on men and women.**

From the perspective of climate justice, **macroeconomic policies need to ensure policy space and flexibility for developing countries to achieve their development goals and adapt to climate change.** In particular, the policy parameters for the design of macroeconomic policies must provide policy space for developing countries in the areas of investment promotion and regulation, industrial and trade policy, and finance regulation. This implies the need to address several outstanding issues that are briefly discussed below.

Chief among these are the structural drivers of the present global growth model, which has proved to be environmentally unsustainable, as evidenced in the body of scientific knowledge which clearly links climate change to the last 200 years of economic growth in the industrialized countries of the North. While the economic recession may reduce global carbon dioxide emissions by 3 per cent (IEA 2009), **economic recovery in the absence of the adequate policy changes will bring about an upward trend in greenhouse gas emissions** as the use of fossil fuels grows again.

Thus, some analysts have underscored that recovery from the financial crisis will exacerbate the climate and food crises, if there is no significant and sustained shift to low-carbon models of growth (Addison et al, 2009). Whether the global recovery sustains itself or not, poor countries and their peoples are likely to be negatively affected: “if the recovery from the global financial crisis stalls, then poor countries and poor people will suffer another macroeconomic shock (the recovery in trade, remittances, and commodity prices will all stall) (Addison et al, 2009). But if the global recovery sustains itself, then **food-prices and energy prices will continue to climb**, delivering fresh shocks to energy and food importers” (ibid.) This points to the **vital importance of a new, global food architecture and comprehensive social protection systems.**

External Debt and Climate Debt

The **external debt burden** that most poor countries continue to bear is a major impediment for their adaptation and development strategies. In particular, it is a cause for major concern that the debt relief mechanisms are linked to the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) processes, most of which overlook both gender and environmental issues.

Climate justice advocates have raised the **notion of climate debt**, which addresses the historical responsibility of industrialized countries that created the climate change crisis, to not only drastically reduce their own emissions but also assume the greatest burden of adaptation and mitigation costs. At present countries with the highest cumulative historical emissions from over 500 years of inequitable industrialization, through the destruction of nature and the extraction of resources, continue to deny their climate debt and pass the burden of mitigation and adaptation onto developing countries.

Fiscal policy

The fiscal effect of climate change on the budgets of poor countries is substantial, and will **make those countries more aid-dependent** (Jones et al. 2008; Addison et al., 2009). On the expenditure side, there is the heavy burden entailed by the public actions required for flood-control; assistance to displaced populations; health services to deal with the spread of diseases; social protection to cope with more vulnerable livelihoods; etc. On the revenue side, the tax base is eroded by the economic downturn caused by climate change (Addison 2009b; Heller 2003, cited in Addison et al., 2009).

As underlined by the IPCC in its 2007 Synthesis report on Climate Change, fiscal policy can and should provide for **non-climate taxes/subsidies and/or other fiscal and regulatory policies that promote sustainable development**. Taxation and fiscal policy can also be designed so as to be more gender responsive.

3. Incoherence between Trade, Environmental and Gender Policies and Agreements

As a result of the reduction of global demand and trade finance due to the global financial and economic crises, world trade has experienced its sharpest decline in decades, exceeding that of the Great Depression (Eichengreen and Kevin O'Rourke, 2009). Against this background, the actions that governments have to take at the national level to meet the agreed emission reduction targets under the Kyoto protocol will affect the costs of production of traded goods. The competitive position of producers in world markets will change and affect international competitiveness. As countries develop their national response strategies to “level the playing field”, trade measures are likely to play an increasingly important role. In this context, **any measures taken to reduce emissions will have to take into account the disciplines of the various World Trade Organisation (WTO) agreements**.

Coherence between the regimes that govern world trade and climate change is therefore of primary importance, especially since the UN convention on climate change does not specifically provide for any trade related environmental measure, and the Kyoto Protocol states that measures to combat climate change should not constitute “disguised restrictions on international trade”. Parties are to implement policies and measures in such a way as to “minimise adverse effects on international trade”.



The challenge from a trade policy perspective – and for the WTO in particular - is to draw the line between legitimate measures to restore competitiveness and those designed to create an unfair advantage to local producers in the countries that have the necessary financial and technological resources. Already, carbon and energy taxes have been introduced in a number of European countries. These all include some form of compensatory measures including total exemptions for certain sectors, reduced rates for most energy-intensive processes, ceilings for total tax payments and subsidies for energy audits.

More generally, issues at the **interface between trade and environment have attracted increased political and market attention**, even before climate change came on top of the international agenda. Such issues include “market access, agriculture, traditional knowledge, transfer of environmentally sound technology, environmental goods and services, environmentally preferable products, and issues concerning eco-labelling and certification costs” (UNCTAD, 2006:3). Thus, WTO member countries agreed to include trade liberalization in EGS (environmental goods and services) in the negotiations agenda (paragraph 31(iii) of the DMD) “with a view to enhancing the mutual supportiveness of trade and environment” (UNCTAD, 2006:3), in spite of the complex nature of the mandated negotiations, which pertain also to tariffs and NTBs (non-tariff barriers). This is compounded by the **lack of clear definitions and specific criteria for environmental goods and services**. Against this background, many developing member countries have called attention to the potential imbalance in the share of environmental and trade gains between developed and developing countries.

In this connection, of note are the EU plans to build on its expertise in green technologies and to promote the idea that “the Kyoto Protocol, and whatever global agreements will follow it,” should be seen “as investment and trade agreements”, and to “create an open global market in environmental technologies... that allows green technology and investment to move freely” (ref) through the WTO along with the regional and bilateral trade agreements. In addition, environmental provisions and/or specific governance structures focused on environmental issues have been part of a number of recent bilateral trade and investment agreements (UNCTAD, 2006). An increasing number of developing countries, in turn, are focusing on **the integration of environmental issues into economic and social policies**. The involvement of many developing countries in biofuel production – which potentially tightens the link between food and fuel prices - is an example of such efforts to seize opportunities for promoting trade in products derived from the use of biodiversity.

Because of their crucial dependence on environmental resources, together with their central role in the management of these resources, the stakes are very high for women in this context of increasing marketization of climate change. The emerging issues around trade and environmental measures (TREM), together with the governance of the global agenda for addressing climate change constitute additional layers on top of the host of issues that women



face in relation to trade policy, including the emerging global regime for protection of intellectual property and knowledge, trade-related investment measures, standards, etc.

It is evident that **the global food crisis continues to deepen and affects women disproportionately**. It exemplifies in a dramatic way the inter-linkages between the international trade regime, food availability and pricing, and the extreme **vulnerability of many poor countries and poor people to both price volatility and climate change**. Experts predict that cereal production will fall in 65 countries due to climate change (FAO, 2009), while global and regional trade agreements have created “a global competition among consumers” (Murphy, 2009: 22) whereby poor consumers are the main losers.

At the same time, **the food crisis has triggered the so-called “land grab”** by corporations and rich countries in several developing countries, many of which are characterized by high levels of chronic hunger and poverty. These along with other false solutions to climate change, such as geo-engineering, nanotechnology and synthetic biology, are part of capitalism’s response to the climate, food and fuel crises. Yet they are not neutral in their design or effect and are likely to increase the existing imbalances between countries, undermine food sovereignty, threaten to appropriate the biological resources and livelihoods of peoples and disrupt the systems of ecological balances for the entire planet.

The **increased deregulation of international trade in agricultural commodities** has played a significant part in the global food crisis. However, the international response to this crisis does not seem to address the need to regulate speculative demand in agricultural commodities future markets. Nor does the push for the completion of the Doha Round of negotiations (HLTF, 2008) take into account the dramatic changes in global trade in terms of levels of commodity supplies and the related issue of the contribution of the global credit crunch; trade positions among major food exporters; and other political economy issues that bear on the final outcomes of the proposed response to the food crisis.

As happened with the global food crisis, speculation in the expanding carbon markets is also bound to become a key factor in global responses to climate change.

Given the complexity of the issues under consideration, the challenge from a feminist perspective is to ensure that both policy makers and women’s rights activists have all the facts in hand. In this respect, information and training are much needed to better understand all the issues at stake and devise appropriate responses, especially informed advocacy, given the decisive influence of corporate lobbying groups on both trade and environmental policy outcomes.

Development
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