



Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD)

It is an independent, non-government, non-profit organization.

It is committed to enabling women to use law as an instrument of social change and promoting women's human rights for equality, justice and development.

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Module on Globalisation and Women



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Women, Law and Development (APWLD)

Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development
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Manual on Globalisation and Women

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ISBN 974-94092-3-x

Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD)

APWLD is an independent, non-government, non-profit, regional organisation.

It emerged out of dialogues between women activists, lawyers and academics during and after the Third World Conference on Women in Nairobi, Kenya (1985). APWLD is committed to enabling women to use the law as an instrument of social change and to promote women's human rights for equality, justice and development.

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Published by the Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD)
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MODULE ON GLOBALISATION AND WOMEN

For whom

Organizers, animators, facilitators of Asian rural and indigenous women organizations

Aim

To develop a common understanding of globalisation, its impact on rural and indigenous women of Asia and the need for local, national, regional and international organizing and mobilization against globalisation.

Objectives

By the end of the training, participants would have

- ♦ shared their situation as poor rural and indigenous women living in a Third World country and would have linked this situation with other poor rural and indigenous women in Asia;
- ♦ examined the meaning of globalisation, its various ramifications (policies, actors, winners and losers) and related the impact of globalisation on poor rural and indigenous women, their peoples and countries;
- ♦ traced the history of globalisation and related this to their country and their lives
- ♦ shared their responses to globalisation and discussed the responses of other rural and indigenous women in other parts of Asia
- ♦ come up with a list of follow up actions and activities related to addressing the problems brought about by globalisation

Outline

- ✕ Our realities: Nightmares and Dreams
- ✕ Globalisation: A “Borderless World” of Wealth for a Few and Poverty and Suffering for the Many
- ✕ The Continuing Past
- ✕ We Won’t Take it Lying Down
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OUR REALITIES : NIGHTMARES AND DREAMS

Aim

To draw out an overview of the situation of poor rural and indigenous women in Third World countries

Objectives

By the end of this session, participants would have:

- ♦ Shared their situation
- ♦ Linked this situation with those of other poor rural and indigenous women in Asia
- ♦ Arrived at an initial realization that the situation of poverty and want is not natural

Method

- Sharing of participants: My life: Who am I? What do I do? What are my problems? What are my dreams?
- Sharing of other rural and indigenous women's lives, problems and dreams
- Drawing out commonalities

NOTES

The majority of rural and indigenous women belong to poor farming families. They have little or no land and have to rent land from rich land owners or/and they have to find other means of ensuring their livelihood and their families' survival. Like poor rural and indigenous men, peasant women suffer from the problems of lack of land to till, high land rental payment to the owners of the land in the form of the share of the harvest or in cash and increasing costs of inputs such as fertilizers and pesticides. While the produce they sell usually fetches low prices, the prices of commodities they buy such as food, salt, fuel continually increase.

Case Study 1:
Farmer in the Philippines
(South of Manila)

Land: 0.5 hectare of Riceland

Cost of fertilizers, seeds, pesticides : P7,600
 or US\$152.00

Price of unhusked rice : P 8.00
 or US 16 cents

Deducting the production costs and land rent to the landlord, the farmer earns only P44.16 or US 88 cents a day

Wages for farm workers in rice lands:
 P122.35 or US 2.44/day

Wages for farm workers in corn land:
 P96.86 or US \$1.93/day

Source: AMIHAN-GABRIELA Position Paper on Food Sovereignty for the Asian Social Forum, India, January 2003
 "Women Unite! Defend our Rights to Food and Life"

The produce from the land is not enough to support the family. Traditional sources of food such as fish from rice paddies have disappeared because of the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides. To survive, the farming family has to resort to borrowing from the landowner or from merchants at very high interest rates. They also search for waged work within the community or outside the village.

Education and health services are limited as government allocation for these have been severely reduced in the past two decades.

	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
World	82	87	77
East Asia and the Pacific	91	95	88
South and West Asia	58	71	45
Bangladesh	43.1	53.9	31.8
India	61	70.2	48.3
Indonesia	87.9	92.5	83.4
Kyrgyzstan	98.8	99.3	98.1
Nepal	48.6	62.7	27.6
Philippines	92.6	92.5	92.7

Table 1.
Adult literacy (age 15-and over)
by gender and region, 2000-2004
 Source: <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/bg.html#People>

However, poor peasant women suffer additional burdens on account of their low position in the community relative to men and on account of their roles as wife and mother.

In general, women work longer hours than the men. While both women and men do farm work and housework, women generally wake up earlier and sleep much later than the husband.

With the destruction of communal forests and community sources of firewood in many villages, women have to travel further to fetch water or firewood for family use. They are also responsible for child rearing and the care of the elderly leaving them little or no time for leisure.

Waged work for women is limited and usually would involve service work such as doing the laundry for better off families or domestic servitude in the landlord's house. In many cases they receive very low wages and are vulnerable to sexual abuse.

Poor peasant women dream of a better life for their children, having land of their own and good health for family members: simple dreams, not even for themselves, but for their loved ones. But many have lost hope that these dreams can be realized in their lifetime.

The fatalistic belief that the situation of peasant families is natural and cannot be changed is generally shared by both peasant men and women.

Case Study 1: Rural Women in Pakistan

In addition to their work at home, Hindu women participate in nearly all work in the land. In the summer, work in the fields includes cotton and onion seed sowing as well as cutting the wheat harvest. In winter, work includes cotton picking, sowing wheat seed and cutting sugarcane. In addition, women are also responsible for clearing the land after cotton picking, sowing wheat seed, cutting sugarcane, and picking vegetables. Generally, women go to the fields around 6 in the morning and return by noon. They are paid Rs500/US\$ 8.34 for sowing onions on one acre of land and Rs20/US\$ 0.3 per bag of onions harvested. Women are also involved in drying chillies after picking them from the field. They keep half of the dried chillies and the rest goes to the landlord.

From: Roots for Equity, "The Impact of Liberalization and Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) on Food Security for Rural Women of Pakistan" in Empty Stomach, Empty Promises. Impact of the Agreement on Agriculture and Trade Liberalization on Food Security, Pesticide Action Network (PAN) Asia and the Pacific, March 2002

In addition, the long working hours, a traditional belief that women are weak and their place should be in the home, and subordination in the family have contributed to poor women's reluctance to participate in organizing and in actions towards bettering their situation even at the community level.

Change is inevitable, however. The experiences of increasing numbers of poor peasant women in countries such as Pakistan, India, Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia have shown that peasant women, together with peasant men, through organisations and actions can make changes in the village and society. For this to occur, it is important to understand what are the causes of our nightmares and problems: Who and what are the obstacles to the realisation of our dreams?

KEY FACTS

Key Facts: Bangladesh

- Bangladesh's population is 48.6% female and 51.4% male.
- Women have a nearly 50% lower adult literacy rate than men.
- Women constitute 45.6% of the farming population.
- Women have extensive work loads with dual responsibility for farm and household production.
- The role of women in rice production is already substantial and expanding further.
- Women are actively involved in forestry, fisheries and livestock production.
- Women contribute considerably to household income through farm and homestead production and wage labor.
- Women have a central role in home gardening and homestead food production.
- Women's contribution to agriculture, which is counted as unpaid family labor, is grossly underestimated.

Source: <http://www.fao.org/sd/WPdirect/WPre0104.htm>

Key Facts: Philippines

- The literacy rate for women and men is almost the same 93%.
- In 1998, Female labor force accounted for 45% of the total labor force.
- In 1999, 40% of employed adults were women working the agricultural, sales, services sectors.
- In 1992, 27% of women were working in the agricultural sector.
- In the sale and service sectors, there are more women than men.
- Agriculture is the largest employer of women, where they perform all kinds of tasks except tillage. However, men are considered 'farmers' and 'fishers', while women are perceived as playing an incidental or a secondary role. Agriculture accounts for 12% of the GDP but one third of the jobs.

Source: <http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca>

Key Facts: Nepal

- Nepal's population is 50.1% female and 49.9% male. More than 90% of the population lives in rural areas.
- The literacy rate for women is 25.0%. This is less than half the rate for men (54.5%).
- 90.5% of women are engaged in agriculture as against 74.9% of men.
- Women have extensive work loads with dual responsibility for farm and household production.
- Women's work is getting harder and more time consuming due to ecological degradation.
- Women play an active role in livestock production and forest resource use.
- Women contribute considerably to household income through farm and non-farm activities.
- Women are active as informal traders.

Source: <http://www.fao.org/sd/WPdirect/WPre0110.htm>

Key Fact:

Indonesia

- In 1998, the labour force participation rate was 83% for men and 50% for women (UN Social Indicators).
- 45% of the total workforce constitutes the farming population, of which 46% is women.
- Agriculture is still the backbone of Indonesian economy, hiring the largest number of women workers. Besides agriculture, the majority of women work in trade, manufacturing and the services sector, while construction and transportation are mostly occupied by men (CIDA).
- In 1997, 38% of employed adults (15 years and over) were women (ILO, Laborsta).
- Agriculture is the sector with the lowest wages while low wage sectors are predominantly employing women.
- Women's salaries amount to 67% of the men's salaries (CIDA).

Source: http://www.acdicida.gc.ca/cida_ind.nsf/i/LUallDocByIDEn/D05D652CD5FCA2AF85256B48005A1B2F?OpenDocument

Key Facts

Kyrgyzstan

- It is a country with a predominantly agricultural economy
- Women literacy rate is 98% and that of men is 99%
- 55% of the total labour force constitutes the farming population, of which women constitute 53.3%
- The problem of searching a job for women from rural area is partly softened due to agrarian reforms in the result of which there is a higher need for family labor
- In the year 2002 the average earnings of women comprised 65% of men's

Source: <http://www.jica.go.jp/english/global/gend/back/pdf/e04kyi.pdf>

Key Facts:

India

- Indian population is 48.1% women and 51.9% men.
- Female illiteracy is 62% whereas the male illiteracy rate is 34%.
- The labor force participation rate of women is 22.7%, less than half of the men's rate of 51.6%.
- In rural India, agriculture and allied industrial sectors employ as much as 89.5% of the total female labor.
- Women have extensive work loads with dual responsibility for farm and household production.
- Women's work is getting harder and more time-consuming due to ecological degradation and changing agricultural technologies and practices.
- Women have an active role and extensive involvement in livestock production, forest resource use and fishery processing.
- Women contribute considerably to household income through farm and non-farm activities as well as through work as landless agricultural laborers.
- Women's work as family labor is underestimated.
- There are high degrees of inter-state and intra-state variations in gender roles in agriculture, environment and rural production.

Source: <http://www.fao.org/sd/WPdirect/WPre0108.htm>

GLOBALISATION : A “Borderless World” of Wealth for a Few and Poverty and Suffering for the Many

Aim

To provide participants with an overview of globalisation, the policies, players, and events, their manifestations at the national level and how these related to their local and individual realities and problems.

Objectives

By the end of the session, participants would have:

- ♦ explained the meaning of globalisation
- ♦ enumerated the key players, policies and events leading to globalisation
- ♦ related the role of national governments and elites in supporting the policies of globalisation
- ♦ spelled out the impact of globalisation and listed the winners and losers in the process of globalisation
- ♦ linked their problems to globalisation

Method

- Using a globe, ask participants to point out their country and to point out what other countries they know or have heard of.
- Introduce to them the layout of the globe, showing which ones are part of Asia and the Pacific, which ones are considered belonging to the South and those belonging to the North.
- Ask the participants what is your understanding of the term globalisation?

The Meaning of Globalisation

At an immediate level, globalisation is associated with faster interconnection among countries because of advances in transportation and communication. Globalisation is also identified with a “borderless” world as goods, services, cultural products and ideas travel across borders with relative ease. It can also refer to the global effects of initially local or national problems such as the degradation of the environment, the spread of the drug problem, the transmittal of AIDS and other contagious diseases; problems which do not recognize national boundaries.

But globalisation is more than this. Beyond faster communications, cultural homogenization and rapid spread of diseases, globalisation is first and foremost an economic process. Globalisation means the reduction in the role of governments in regulating trade and production, and in providing services. It adheres to the belief that the market is the most efficient and effective determinant of what should be produced and what would be consumed.

Transnational corporations or TNCs -- those corporations which operate in more than one country or nation at a time -- have become some of the most powerful economic and political entities in the world today.

Key facts :

- ◆ Of the 100 largest economies in the world, 51 are corporations; only 49 are countries. Walmart - the number 12 corporation — is bigger than 161 countries, including Israel, Poland, and Greece. Mitsubishi is larger than the fourth most populous nation on earth: Indonesia. General Motors is bigger than Denmark. Ford is bigger than South Africa. Toyota is bigger than Norway.

- ◆ The combined sales of the world's Top 200 corporations are far greater than a quarter of the world's economic activity.

- ◆ The Top 200 have been net job destroyers in recent years. Their combined global employment is only 18.8 million, which is less than a third of one percent of the world's people. The world has just over 5.6 billion people. 6 Of these, around 2.6 billion are in the workforce. Hence, the Top 200 employ less than three-fourths of one percent of the world's workers. Of the world's top five employers, four are U.S. (General Motors, Wal-Mart, PepsiCo, and Ford), and one is German (Siemens). If one also includes the public sector in these calculations, the U.S. Postal Service is the world's biggest employer, at 870,160, roughly 160,000 more workers than GM's 709,000 workers.

- ◆ The Top 200 are creating a global economic apartheid, not a global village. The top eight telecommunications firms, for example, have been expanding global sales rapidly, yet over nine-tenths of humanity remains without phones. Television ads for AT&T and GTE give the impression that the telecommunications giants are bringing the world closer together. And yet while the top eight firms in this sector enjoyed sales of \$290 million in 1995, 90.1 percent of all people live in a household that is not connected to a telephone line.

Source: <http://www.globalpolicy.org/socoecon/tncs/top200.htm>

For example, under globalisation, what is to be planted by farmers in one country is not to be determined by the needs of that country, but instead by how competitive that product is in global trading. Meaning, if you are a rice farmer in the Philippines, then your products should compete with the rice products of an American company or a Thai company. If your price is higher compared to them, then you will lose and you should find another crop to plant. The Philippine government should not impose taxes on Thai rice or California rice because that will be interfering with the free operations of the market.

Another example, under globalisation a hospital or a school should be able to show profit so that it can continue to operate. If it keeps on losing money or is dependent on government subsidies or support, then it should be closed because it is inefficient. Only those schools and hospitals which are earning money should remain in operation.

A further example, with globalisation the prices of important products such as oil or petroleum which are basic to the running of the economy should not be regulated by government; meaning its price should be determined by the oil or petroleum companies. If government dictates the price of the gasoline, then again, it is interfering with the smooth flow of the market, and this will supposedly lead to inefficiencies.

In sum, globalisation is reflected in three major policies, which many governments in Asia have adopted. These are the policies of liberalisation, privatisation and deregulation.

While ostensibly globalisation promotes development of poor countries this, in reality, is not the case. Globalisation, as the integration of national economies into the world market, represents the interest of advanced industrialized countries to facilitate the easy entry and exit of transnational corporations into or out of developing countries for cheap labor and greater profits.

Liberalisation --- the reduction and eventual removal of barriers to the flow of goods, services and capital from one country to another. Example is the reduction or removal of tariffs or taxes on imported agricultural products such as beef, wheat or corn.

Deregulation--- the removal of government intervention in setting or regulating the prices of goods and services regardless of whether this benefits the consumers or not. Example is the deregulation of the oil industry in almost all our countries.

Privatisation -- the total or partial sale of government-owned or controlled corporations or institutions to the private sector. Example is the sale of formerly government owned and managed water and electricity companies to private businesses.

NOTES

The Key Players, Policies and Events Leading to Globalisation

● Globalisation did not happen overnight

Colonial powers such as England, the United States, France, Germany, Netherlands and Japan exploited their colonies in Asia, Africa and Latin America through unequal trade and utilization of cheap labor. The economies of the colonies remained basically agricultural as, on the one hand, landlordism was supported and expanded by the colonial powers, and on the other, the dumping of finished products from the West stunted the growth of local manufacturing. Even with independence, there was no structural change in the economies of the former colonies. The developing countries remained exporters of raw materials such as sugar, coffee, precious metals and importers of finished products. Under these conditions, the developing countries remained poor, as the earnings from exports were generally not sufficient to pay for their imports.

To be able to pay for their imports, developing or poor countries resorted to international borrowings from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and from international commercial banks owned by Western powers. The borrowings intensified when oil prices increased four times in 1973, which aggravated the money problems of developing countries. From the early 70s to the early 80s, international lending to developing countries proceeded at a dizzying pace averaging \$20 billion a year from 1973 to 1981.

● SAPs: Earn more, spend less, work hard, eat less

Structural Adjustment Programs or SAPs became the prescription from the World Bank (WB) and other lending institutions for indebted developing countries. According to the World Bank, developing countries are poor and cannot pay their debts simply because of bad domestic economic policies. These supposedly wrong economic policies principally involve emphasis on production for meeting local needs instead of competing in the global market. The World Bank also reproaches governments for spending too much on social services, and for intervention in the economy.

The prescriptions of the World Bank have included the following:

- wage control
- reduction of government spending hence removal of government support for agriculture (for example buying of farmers' products), reduction of government budget for education, health and other social services
- increase in government income through imposition of higher and new taxes such as the VAT
- emphasis in dollar-earning economic activities, such as expansion of export crop production, tourism and encouragement of foreign investors through incentives given to them in industrial enclaves or export processing zones

● Key Players

The **World Bank** and the **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** were organized in 1944 purportedly to assist in post World War II reconstruction of Europe and in the development of countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

The IMF extends short-term loans to countries experiencing balance of payments problems, meaning they are short of foreign currency (usually US dollars) to finance their imports. In exchange for the loans, the IMF imposes conditionalities regarding exchange rates, credit ceilings, taxes, government spending and other finance-related matters. In other words, it acts as a super International Ministry of Finance that sets financial policies for Third World countries undergoing financial difficulties. While the IMF Executive Board is composed of 22 member countries, the United States single-handedly has effective veto power as it has the largest percentage of votes within the Board.

In April 2002, the IMF declared that Bolivia has not implemented one of the fund's conditions - passing a new tax code. The IMF thus withheld a planned loan. This triggered the cancellation of US\$170 million loans from the Fund, the World Bank and other donors.

Source: Alex Wilks "World Bank, IMF still calling discordant tunes" in Third World Resurgence, No. 165/166 May/June 04

The World Bank, on the other hand, is mandated to extend financial loans for longer term "reconstruction and development efforts" as opposed to the IMF's short-range programs.

Until 1979, the Bank's focus was on project lending as in the financing of dams. By 1980, the World Bank would go into structural adjustment lending or policy lending as opposed to project lending. In summary, the IMF provides loans to countries short of US dollars and the World Bank provides loans for projects.

While they are separate institutions, they have a joint committee, the Development Committee, which discusses the loans to developing countries. The World Bank will not extend any structural adjustment loan to a developing country until it has reached an agreement with the IMF. And while the actual amounts loaned by the two international institutions are relatively a small percentage of loanable money, it is a vital last recourse for poor countries. In addition, the grant of IMF loans is a sign of good housekeeping and international commercial banks such as Morgan Trust or Citibank would only lend to governments of developing countries after agreements have been reached with the IMF and WB.

World Trade Organization

The World Trade Organization (WTO) is the third, after the IMF and World Bank, of the big three international institutions which determine the economic, financial and trade policies of our countries.

The WTO was formally established on January 1, 1995 although it traces its roots to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) formed in 1948 which provided the framework for the conduct of international trade. The main objective of GATT, and now the WTO, is to open up (liberalize) trade among its member countries by reducing tariffs (taxes) and quotas (volume or number) on traded products. Since 1995, the WTO has expanded its coverage to include not only traded goods such as agricultural products, textiles and clothing but also trade in services (such as health, education or banking), trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights and trade-related investment measures.

Of particular importance to rural and indigenous women is the **Agreement on Agriculture (AoA)** of the WTO. The AoA basically opens up a country to agricultural products from other countries through the reduction or removal of taxes for imported agricultural products; the reduction or removal of restrictions on the number/volume of imported agricultural products; and the reduction or removal of government support to local farmers and their products.

Impact of trade liberalization on women farmers in Asia

Thailand: Small scale farmers of soybean and cassava (two important cash and export crops) have come under heavy economic pressure (from cheap imports of soybean, export barriers and the development of alternative sources of cassava in western markets). Women farmers growing these two crops have to work longer and harder in the farms and also face greater health risks from increased use of pesticides to increase production.

Philippines: Indigenous women farmers in the Cordillera who grow potatoes have faced the effects of the liberalization of the potato industry signaled by the lifting of the import ban on potato seeds in 1987 and the tariffication of potatoes as laid down in the AoA. Like their sisters in Thailand, women farmers in the Cordillera have to work longer hours in the farm (from 9 to 10 hours), face health threats due to the increasing use of pesticides to increase production, and lack of access to credit and production assistance.

Indonesia: Cheap imports of rice and depressed domestic prices threatened the food security and livelihood of a large number of rice-growing small farmers in Indonesia. The government's "safety net", providing farming credit to farmers has been ineffective in its implementation. Women have been excluded from access to the credit by the "village units" deciding on the loans, as women were not considered farmers because they are not involved in the plowing of the land.

India: In 10 villages in Tamil Nadu, the shift to flower production for exports has decreased the production of food crops and led to higher food prices, lower employment, lower income and lower food consumption among marginal farmers and landless women workers

Sri Lanka: Food imports increased since 1996, a year after the WTO was established. The increase in imports was followed by a decrease in food production resulting in the drop in rural employment. About 300,000 jobs were lost due to the drop in the production of onions and potatoes.

Although the AoA was supposed to enlarge the foreign market of local agricultural producers, it has actually opened the door to cheap imports of products from developed countries such as the United States into developing countries where millions of small-scale and family farmers could not compete with giant multi-national agribusiness.

The United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), after studying the effect of the liberalization of agriculture in 16 countries all over the world found that the AoA has brought about the influx of imported food into developing countries, but has not led into an increase of their exports.

Asian Development Bank

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is a financial institution set up in 1966 by governments in the Asia-Pacific to provide financial assistance to development projects. The ADB is currently made up of 64 member countries, among them Japan and the United States.

At first glance, the role of the ADB appears to be beneficial to its member-countries as the bank extends loans to and promotes investments in developing countries. However, many criticisms have been raised against the bank. For one, it favors large, costly and risky infrastructure projects such as mega dams, wastewater projects, super highways and intensive agriculture which in many instances have damaged the environment and undermine the communities' rights to determine their needs and participate in the decision making of their own development.

Indonesia

The economic situation of Indonesia has been worsened by privatisation, deregulation & liberalisation. Foreign debt of the country is 214 million USD, and 50% of country's annual income goes to pay for debt service. SAP and its policies are eroding health care and education services in which women and children primary rely on these services are. There are around **500 large TNCs** operate in Indonesia, eg. Newmont, Monsanto, Freeport. Megawati's administration signed mining contracts covering 11.5 million hectares, displacing 6 million people, mostly farmers & indigenous people.

Likewise in other countries, mining problems has been very detrimental for the people. Government is keen on opening up the country to MNCs including mining corporations, policies and laws are in place enabling the foreign companies to operate freely in the country. Large-scale mining companies in the country are Freeport & New Mont. Indonesians have seen the land confiscation done by mining companies and it is being supported by military for their own interest. Moreover, pollution and tilling from mining projects affect health of women. Malnourishment of villagers in areas surrounding mining areas is rampant because the villagers find that they have no access to land to grow food as the land and nutrition of it has been ruined by the pollution.

Since the country acceded to the WTO, a number of legislations adjustments have been made in Indonesia to accommodate WTO accession.

Following are existing **laws supporting the WTO** (entry into WTO in 1995)
Law 23 - privatisation of water
Law 22 (2001) - oil mining
Law 23 (2003) - patenting
Law No. 1/2002 -- anti terror law

(Excerpt from Indonesia country report: Task Force Meeting of Women and Environment Programme, July 2005)

The ADB, together with the World Bank, is in the forefront of the privatization of the energy and water sectors of many countries in Asia and the Pacific. The privatization of water is being done through outright sale of water utilities owned by the government to the private sector, usually a consortium of local big businesses and foreign partners. In the power sector, the ADB has, as of 2002, provided over \$1 billion worth of loans for "power sector reforms", meaning increasing private sector participation in the energy sector such as support for the build-operate-transfer projects and other ways to encourage private investment in the energy sector.

Aside from the IMF, the World Bank, the WTO and ADB, there are other organizations such as the regional trading blocks, North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA) which push for the adoption of globalisation policies.

The Role of National Governments and Elites in Supporting Globalisation

While the World Bank, the IMF, the WTO, the ADB, APEC, and transnational corporations have played crucial roles in the imposition of globalisation policies in our countries, our national governments and elites have in many cases embraced with open arms the conditionalities imposed by the lending agencies. Our countries have thus been opened up to foreign investments, foreign trade and unfair competition.

Since 1988, Pakistan has implemented a series of economic reforms "recommended" by the IMF and World Bank. This included three Structural Adjustment Facilities. Observers have noted that since these reforms were implemented, economic growth has dropped, and the cost in the prices of goods and products has risen. Even the government of Pakistan has acknowledged that there are at least 40 million people living below the poverty line. Moreover, Pakistan has accumulated a debt of around \$35 billion.

Source: S. Akbar Zaidi "Globalisation and the Creation of Poverty in Pakistan" n The Journal, March 2002

Over the past decade, ever since economic liberalization became the development mantra, India has been on the receiving end. With the Indian Government amending the Patent Act 1970 to comply with the requirements of the Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs) of the WTO and agreeing to phase out the controls on all imports from the month of April 2001 a new trade game has begun. Flooded with cheap and highly subsidised agricultural imports, its agrarian economy has been thrown out of gear. Whether it is the import of palm oil, rubber, sugar, coffee, paddy or wheat, almost every aspect of the nation's socio-economy has been negatively impacted. Seven years after the WTO came into existence, on January 1, 1995, the anticipated gains for India from the trade liberalisation process in agriculture are practically zero. The Ministry of Agriculture as well as the Ministry of Commerce has officially admitted that the hopes from an international regime that talked of establishing a fair and market oriented agricultural trading system have been belied.

India was forced to either phase out or eliminate the quantitative restrictions (QRs) on agricultural commodities and products latest by April 1, 2001. India has therefore, opened its market and in turn made the farming community vulnerable to the imports of highly subsidised products. Already cheaper imports of skimmed milk powder, edible oils, sugar, tea, arecanut, apples, coconut, among others have flooded the market.

In developed countries, clever manipulation of their subsidy reduction commitments has in reality increased the support to domestic farmers. In the United States, subsidy to mere 900,000 farmers has increased by 700 times since 1996. India, on the other hand, is committed to do away with agriculture subsidies under the Structural Adjustment Program of the World Bank and the IMF. In any case India provides only one billion dollar worth of indirect subsidies to 550 million farmers.

India has seen a massive increase in the imports of agricultural commodities and products from about Rs.50,000 million in 1995 to over Rs.1,50,000 million in 1999-2000 - a three-fold increase.

Unlike the European countries where the Public Distribution System (PDS) was discontinued after the Second World War, its importance has grown for an overpopulated and poverty-stricken country like India. The PDS was introduced more than fifty years ago with the basic objective of curbing the consumption and ensuring an equitable distribution of available food supplies, especially in the deficit areas and among poorer strata of society. The AoA allows developing countries to use public stockholding of food grains for food security purpose. After all if India were to acquire food grains for stockholding under PDS, at the international prices, the budget allocations would mount beyond manageable limits.

Internationally, powerful multinational companies are trading food. At the same time as these companies have been handed the reins to the nation's food security, the WTO's policing system has removed trading blocks. Thus, India is witnessing a gradual collapse of food self-sufficiency and the scrapping of the PDS, the very foundations of food security. It is very clear that the new trade regime in agriculture only aims at eliminating the hungry and not the hunger, the small and marginal farmers and not unsustainable agriculture.

Source: 'Trade Liberalisation in Agriculture and Food Security: Impact on Peasant Women' by Sheelu Francis (Tamilnadu Women's Collective) presented at the Asian Women Workshop on Globalization Manila 22-24th Nov, 2001

Thailand

The government of Thailand is also subscribed to the similar prescription - privatisation, deregulation & liberalisation - to achieve development. To implement this prescription, the government creates new national policies to facilitate the implementation process. In the context of globalisation, the centralised government has tendency to pursue privatisation of natural resources for economic growth. In the southern part of Thailand, there has been a national policy to promote the economic growth in the coastal areas. Introduction of the corporate fishing industry in the areas created the conflicts between the corporate fishing industry and small fisher folk. Previously, people could oppose to the national policies that are not pro-people by organising among themselves. But, the current political climate of Thailand has become anti-people's movement, and it made worse by the unrest in the South. Civil society cannot demonstrate their opposition views as they would be labelled as terrorists or sympathizers.

Presently, the government wants to privatise the sea so that whoever wants to use the sea they can lease a portion of sea. Under the poverty reduction policy, individual has the right to borrow money from the bank thus the consequence is that those who have capital are likely to claim the ownership upon the public resources. However this kind of policy would create more conflicts over resources between rich and poor as virtually the coastal resources will be owned by rich people.

The government is putting the natural gas pipeline across country. With the implementation of new law people cannot oppose this project although this has a potential of further displacement of people. Soon, there is a national plan to establish an industrial estate in the south. The expansion of tourism leads to competing use of natural resources and land between rich and poor. Gradually, the vital lands in the country are confiscated by the business companies.

As part of the economic reform process, "asset capitalisation" scheme is being promoted by the government, which is framed within the World Bank's development programme. There are many issues surrounding this policy which are detrimental for people. To name a few examples of "asset capitalisation" scheme, there is a recent development which is the issuance of "sea title" to seafood banks and aquaculture projects for tailing the waste water to the sea. Under the 'asset capitalisation' scheme back by the WB, sea or land titles are given as credit to people to operate aquaculture 'seafood bank projects'. If the title holder cannot maintain the project, the credit will have to be passed on to others with more buying power. The allowance of consolidation of sea and land titles by those who have purchasing power may result in concentration of wealth in a few handfuls of people.

Aside from the recent development of seafood banks in the South, ethnic groups in the north are also being displaced due to tourism development. In the forest areas where predominantly occupied the hill tribes are under threat of forestry zoning projects, which primarily serve as the gateway for commercial/industrial usage of high land. The government has been allowing tourist industry & foreign investors to have access to highland. Furthermore, zoning of protected areas (occupied by hill tribes) for commercial and industrial purposes is rampant.

(Excerpt from Thailand country report: Task Force Meeting of Women and Environment Programme - July 2005 and Task Force Meeting of Rural and Indigenous Women Programme - August 2005)

● The Impact of Globalisation: Winners and Losers in Globalisation

The advocates of globalisation have said that countries embracing the policies of liberalisation, privatisation and deregulation would develop and the standard of living of the people would rise. The World Bank wrote in 1995 that “governments must pursue market-based growth paths that generate rapid growth in demand for labor, expansion in the skills of the work force and rising productivity and take advantage of new opportunities at the international level by opening up trade and attracting capital — but manage dislocations that international changes sometimes brings.” (World Bank, 1995: 1-2)

What has the drive towards the full opening of countries to world trade resulted in?

- The possibility of farmers owning their own land has become slimmer as land planted to food crops are rapidly converted to export crops or to industrial estates and tourist areas.
- Even farmers who already own a small piece of land or have rights to it are in danger of losing the land because of bankruptcy or land use conversion.
- While farmers' products are sold at a low price, the cost of agricultural inputs continue to rise in spite of liberalization.
- Traditional water and fuel sources in the village are lost as environmental degradation due to commercial mining and logging.
- Education and health services become more expensive as government schools and hospitals are privatized.

- The free entry and exit of international investors means easy relocation of factories and firms from one country to another in pursuit of cheaper and docile labor force and better incentives. Infant domestic industries which cannot withstand competition from international giant corporations go bankrupt.
- Displaced farmers are not absorbed by new employment and join the already vast army of unemployed. Labor contractualisation, flexibilisation and migration remain the only options of the working classes.

Women

1. As mothers and home managers:
 - a. longer hours of work,
 - b. additional jobs to generate more income,
 - c. greater hunger and malnutrition,
 - d. worsening health conditions,
 - e. worsening physical, emotional and psychological stress,
 - f. increase in female-headed households.
2. As farmers and producers:
 - a. loss of land and loss of control in agricultural processes,
 - b. involvement in informal economy,
 - c. factory and subcontracting work at low wages and no job security,
 - d. sex workers,
 - e. trafficking.
3. As community works and organizers:
 - a. added work as such,
 - b. additional work as health workers,
 - c. repression.

The Nation, People and Peasantry

1. Decapitalization in terms of money, natural and human resources
2. Destruction of agriculture
3. Destruction of domestic industries
4. Destruction of environment and ecology
5. Destruction of communities
6. Repression and militarization
7. Loss of culture, tradition and identity

Source: Conference Proceedings, "Asian Peasant Women Dialogue on the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT) and Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs), November 9-18, 1992, Antipolo, Philippines.

Indigenous Women and Communities

Source: Baguio Declaration of the 2nd Asian Indigenous Women's Conference, March 8, 2004, Baguio City, Philippines.

Globalisation and the Exploitation and Theft of Indigenous Peoples' Lands, Waters, Forests and Resources

- Globalisation is accelerating the alienation, privatisation, commercialisation, and the theft of community forests, lands, waters and traditional medicinal plants, causing impoverishment and generating ill health for our peoples.
- The violation of indigenous peoples' prior rights to ancestral territories, lands, waters and resources, including the requirement to obtain our free, prior and informed consent to all programs and projects. This affects our lives and welfare, and causes community strife and conflicts. Free and prior informed consent should include the full and effective participation of indigenous women in the decision-making process. Violations of

customary use rights, particularly women's access to and control over natural resources, have been especially undermined.

- Indigenous peoples are gradually being estranged from our lands, mountains, waters and forests which are sources of wisdom and means of survival. Our knowledge of biodiversity and natural resource management is systematically exploited, appropriated or eroded. Piracy of indigenous arts, crafts and medicines is rampant and is facilitated by patents and other western intellectual property rights.
- The cash economy has eroded indigenous women's independence as self-reliant food producers, healers, artisans and spiritualists, transforming us into vulnerable lowly paid workers, urban poor and tourist attractions in the market economy.
- Indigenous peoples, particularly women, are not given our just share of the benefits arising from the sustainable use of surface and sub-surface resources, including waters and forests on indigenous territories.
- Corporate mining has resulted in the displacement of indigenous communities as well as in soil erosion and contamination, water and air pollution, serious health problems, impoverishment and social conflict.
- Illegal logging, private concessions, monoculture plantations and agribusiness ventures are depriving indigenous peoples of lands and livelihoods and seriously eroding our rights.

- National Parks and Protected Areas have displaced indigenous communities, expropriating our lands and denying access to the natural resources critical for our livelihoods and survival. Indigenous women have been disproportionately affected.
- Current forms of tourism make indigenous peoples and women objects of curiosity, display and commercialisation. Prostitution has increased, alongside the inducement to commercialise indigenous cultural heritages. Tourism is breeding cash dependence, especially on children.
- Large dams have serious impacts on the lives, livelihoods, cultures and spiritual existence of indigenous and tribal peoples, who have suffered disproportionately from their negative impacts, while often being excluded from sharing in any benefits. In the Philippines, almost all the larger dams built or proposed are on the lands of indigenous peoples. In India 40-50% of those displaced by development projects were tribal peoples, who account for just 8% of the nation's 1 billion people.
- Forced displacement of indigenous peoples from our ancestral lands is a major cause of impoverishment and threatens our very survival as indigenous peoples. Indigenous women and children are the most seriously harmed.

Militarization and Violence

- Indigenous women and children in Asia likewise suffer the brunt of militarization perpetrated by state forces, including vigilante groups and private armies of companies. Indigenous communities targeted for development aggression are also targets of militarization.

- Rape continues to be used as a weapon of war by the military to humiliate and attack indigenous communities. Girls and even older women and children are not spared. Courtship and marriage with indigenous women is used to gain acceptance in indigenous communities; however soldiers often abandon local women and children upon transfer to other destinations.
- Military rule and the establishment of military detachments in our communities have curtailed our movement and economic activities, the entry of food supplies and basic social services and even disrupted the education of our children.
- The military has facilitated the occupation of indigenous territories by non-indigenous settlers, a form of assimilation which breeds conflicts between indigenous and non-indigenous communities.
- Compounding militarization is the war on terror and the passage of national policies or laws restricting the exercise of democratic rights and freedoms of the indigenous women and communities. Our organizations are regarded by the state to be engaged in terrorist activities. Women leaders suffer persecution and our elders are criminalized for asserting customary practices in defense of our land and resources.
- The Burmese military regime has perpetrated extreme violence against ethnic communities including forced labour, forced relocations, torture and murder. Indigenous women suffer from rapes and sexual violence, including the trafficking of women and forced prostitution.

- The report on the Philippines by Prof. Rodolfo Stavenhagen, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of Indigenous Peoples, underlines the continuing militarization of indigenous territories in furtherance of development aggression, particularly the extractive industries. Intensified militarization has resulted in family and community disintegration, human rights violations and hardship.

Violation of the Right to Citizenship of the Tribal Peoples of Thailand

- The tribal peoples of Thailand have not been guaranteed citizenship by the government. Applicants face long delays in the processing of documents. Without citizenship, indigenous and tribal peoples are denied their most fundamental rights and entitlements, including access to education and other public services, land and property rights, and social mobility. Under these conditions, indigenous women are rendered extremely vulnerable and marginalised. Urgent government action is needed to redress this situation.

Political Misrepresentation

- Governments have engaged in political misrepresentation of indigenous peoples through the creation of government-controlled structures, the promotion of false and beholden indigenous leaders and deceitful manipulation. Indigenous Peoples' right to free, prior and informed consent has likewise been manipulated and abused.

Lack of access to Basic Social Services

- Indigenous women in many countries face many barriers to the access of education, healthcare and sanitation, and other basic services and are excluded from decision-making on programs to meet these needs and entitlements.
- Women are marginalised by cultures of patriarchy and violence, which confine women to the domestic sphere.

Outmigration and Loss of Traditional Livelihoods

- Recent extreme climate events and changes in Mongolia have devastated nomadic livestock herding, thus deepening rural poverty and lack of access to basic social services, and accelerating migration to urban centres. The continued survival of traditional livelihoods and cultures is under threat with the rapid transition to market and urban lifestyles.

Physical and Sexual Violence Against Women

- Poverty, which has been exacerbated by globalisation policies, is increasing the vulnerability of indigenous women to violence, both sexual and physical. In search of jobs, many indigenous women are trafficked to other parts of the country, or even across borders and are eventually pushed to prostitution.
- At the same time, indigenous women living in urban centres become victims of wife battering by their husbands, who finding themselves jobless are unable to support their families, become irritable or addicted to drugs and alcohol. Uprooted from the communities, indigenous women who migrate lose the protection afforded by customary laws.

Weakening of Women's Role

- The loss of lands, waters and forests is deepening the poverty of indigenous women while increasing their domestic loads and subsistence responsibilities. We now have to work harder and longer to feed and nurture our families. Many women have become increasingly dependent on their husbands as the primary wage earners as they have more employment opportunities and higher salaries in the market system. Thus indigenous women's status and power decline, weakening their influence and participation in decision-making.
- The incorporation of indigenous peoples in the cash economy has eroded self-reliant subsistence activities and women's role in production, economy and community life.
- Changes in the traditional social, cultural and political institutions and practices have led to a loss of practices, rules and codes of behavior, which have long been instruments in ensuring gender-sensitive structures. The introduction of western education and religion, and the imposition of alien leadership structures have undermined the role of our indigenous women spiritual leaders and healers, who have provided moral and spiritual guidance through generations, and who were often part of decision-making structures in our communities.
- The declaration of Nepal as a Hindu State has meant the promulgation of laws, rules and regulations (including the Constitution) based on Hindu values including cultural norms which consider women as inferior and impure. The government policy of Hinduisation undermines the egalitarianism of traditional indigenous societies of Nepal and downgrades the status of indigenous women.

THE CONTINUING PAST

Aim

To provide an overview of the historical development of globalisation from colonialism to the present.

Objectives

By the end of the session, participants would have:

- ♦ Traced how colonialism laid down the foundation for globalisation in the economic policies and programs implemented in the colonies,
- ♦ Traced how the local elites have supported the colonisers and benefited from their collaboration.

Colonialism and Globalisation: Indonesia

After explorers and traders from European countries, such as Spain, Portugal and Britain, had made trade contact with the Indonesian community, came the Dutch traders. The Dutch used its navy to conquer and colonise in an effort to monopolise trade. This monopoly was manifested in the Dutch Trading Company (VOC), not the equivalent of but in many respects similar to a multinational or transnational corporation. Trade monopoly through force not only marginalised the Indonesian community, but also destroyed the seeds of vital economic activity and the seeds of entrepreneurship (Furnival, 1944: 45). Masvelt (1979: 79) concludes that the monopoly of trade

sponsored by Dutch trading companies wiped out local industry. The free trade adopted by the Dutch led to a flood of European products into Indonesia. At that time Indonesia functioned merely as a producer of raw material and as a market to support industrial activity in Europe.

To support the interests of traders and to drive industry in Europe, the Dutch colonialists invited and allowed entrepreneurs, European in particular, to invest in Indonesia. This was facilitated by agrarian law that adopted a system of long-term leases and fairly undemanding authority rights that benefited entrepreneurs. Foreign investment flooded into Indonesia at the end of the 19th century, beginning with investment by English entrepreneurs in tea plantations (Hall, 1988: 733-735). Then European investors from Switzerland, Belgium and Germany came to Indonesia, investing in oil, mining, and plantations. Around 75% of this was Dutch investment, 13.5% English, and 2.5% American. At the same time, foreign workers also started arriving in Indonesia. It is estimated that around 16,476 foreign workers (not including Chinese, Indian and Dutch) were employed by foreign companies in several regions of Indonesia.

Lands were leased by foreign companies for, among others, sugar cane, oil palm, cocoa, rubber and indigo plantations. The crops they cultivated were those needed for raw material by industry in Europe. The Dutch colonialists even adopted a program of enforced cultivation. Local people were forced to plant crops that met the needs of the Dutch colonial administration, such as sugar cane. Their harvests had to be sold to sugar cane factories owned by Dutch colonial entrepreneurs at prices set by the Dutch colonialists. According to Hall (1988: 732), all economic activities at that time were controlled by the Dutch colonialists and by foreign companies, while the economic activities of

the local people were restricted and marginalised through various regulations that restricted their scope of trade. For instance, only European traders were permitted to conduct inter-island trade, and only businessmen of Chinese extraction were allowed to act as middlemen. Mining and oil companies were only allowed to employ workers from China. Local people were employed only as contract coolies or hard labourers and were only allowed to trade or establish small-scale industrial operations in rural areas. Dutch control of prices and restriction of trading areas, coupled with its monopoly of the market, left the local people no room to move and limited their involvement in economic activities that might improve their standard of living.

Thus, the process of economic liberalisation that began in 1870, not only marginalised and excluded local people from land and economic activities, but also restricted the market by flooding it with foreign products, in particular from Europe (Booth, 1998: 372). The inability to compete meant that local industry could not grow. Under these circumstances, the local people had no choice but to work as subsistence farmers or work on plantations as laborers or coolies for extremely low wages. Furnival (1944: 44) explains that the economic and social condition of the local people at that time was appalling, living as they were in abject poverty.

With economic liberalization in 1930, came economic crisis. Many European businesses suffered and went bankrupt. As a result, demand for raw materials from Indonesia decreased sharply. Plantation owners in Indonesia were hard hit. Some plantations folded, others managed to keep going, but laid off workers and labourers.

The economy, had been rising until that time but had relied on the strength of the European market, and thus went into stagnation. The local economy was not directly affected to any significant degree, but this stagnation did have an effect on the lives of people as thousands of people lost their jobs. This economic crisis brought chaos to the modern (capitalist) economic system, while the local economy, a large proportion of which was still subsistent, managed to keep going despite all its deficiencies. However, according to historical data several isolated regions suffered famine, because to help revive the economy, the Dutch government in Europe cut its budget for the purchase of food. The earlier profits of foreign entrepreneurs were not felt by the local people as they went directly towards building the economy of their home countries in Europe. Their economic crisis, on the other hand, struck hard upon Indonesian locals throughout the islands. This kind of unfairness has trapped and drowned local people in the depths of poverty.

*Source: 'Globalisation and Poverty in Indonesia, Helping or Hindering Poverty Alleviation?'.
Tadjuddin Noer Effendi*

WE WON'T TAKE IT LYING DOWN

Aim

To draw out responses to globalisation from the participants experience and to share the responses of other women

Objectives

By the end of the session, participants would have:

- Shared their experiences and knowledge on how they and their communities have responded to globalisation
- Learned about the experiences of resistance to globalisation from women in other villages and countries

Your Experiences

How have you, your organization and your community responded to the problems such as: lack of jobs, inability to own your land, high prices of farm inputs, land use conversion, high cost of hospitalization, high cost of utilities such as water and electricity etc?

Experiences of Resistance to Globalisation

- | | |
|--------------|----------------|
| - Organising | - Research |
| - Campaigns | - Mobilization |
| - Networking | |

Elam a woman of Sarawak

When an oil company started to open a huge plantation in Ulu Niah, Sarawak in 1996, two long-house communities faced constant threats by thugs employed by the company. For about three years, the Iban communities did everything to petition the government to intervene but to no avail. As the company started to bulldoze their customary land, anger and frustration led to a violent encounter between members of the community and the company thugs in 1999. Three people were killed, and 19 Iban men were arrested.

Elam, mother of three and daughter of one of those detained, worked tirelessly to seek redress for those who were arrested and to continue the campaign for the community's rights to land. Elam also performed ceremonies and rituals to keep up the morale and spiritual well-being of the community. Her efforts, together with many other women, finally paid off when all those accused were acquitted by the Sarawak court and upheld their rights over their customary lands. She gained the trust and respect of the community for the leadership she has shown in the struggle.

Source: Ideal, Sarawak - Malaysia (Cited in the APWLD RIWTF Proceedings of Workshop on Indigenous Women, Chiang Rai, Thailand, October 24-27, 2002)

Women vs. Mega-dams, Cordillera, Philippines

During the Marcos dictatorship in the Philippines (1972-1986), women of the Kalinga and Bontoc joined members of their tribes to oppose the World Bank-funded mega-dams in the late 70s to 80s. The women barricaded employees of the National Power Corporation who conducted surveys in their villages and the women confiscated the lumber which would have been used for the dam and dropped these to the Chico River. They tore down the tents of the corporation. They sent

several petition letters to government, thumb-marked with their blood, forged multilateral peace pacts against the project, and gained the support of various organizations at the urban centers and even at the international level. In the process of their opposition, many of them were arrested, dumped into trucks like pigs and jailed for as long as six months. Many were harassed and threatened with death. The assassination of one of the leaders of the resistance, Macliing Dulag, fueled a stronger movement against the dam project, pressuring the Marcos government to shelve the project. The success story against a World Bank-funded project became a landmark case for indigenous women and peoples of the Cordillera and all over the world.

Source: "Globalisation and Its Impact on Indigenous Women in the Cordillera, Philippines" in the APWLD RIWTF Proceedings of Workshop on Indigenous Women, Chiang Rai, Thailand, October 24-27, 2004

There is an Alternative to Globalisation

Aim

To provide participants with the knowledge of alternatives to globalisation

Objectives

By the end of the session, participants would have:

- Discussed the alternatives to globalisation
- Discussed what women's groups and other organizations are doing to oppose globalisation
- Come up with a listing of what they can do to oppose globalisation and contribute to global efforts to provide alternatives to globalisation.

Alternatives to Globalisation

- ⇒ Work for the dissolution of the US-led IMF-WB and the GATT-WTO
- ⇒ Work towards a society free from all forms of foreign domination, where the sovereignty of peoples is upheld, and which gives equal value to women's role in production.
- ⇒ Work towards a socio-cultural system devoid of patriarchal values and which uphold the rights of oppressed peoples especially women.

Source: Proceedings of the Workshop on Women and Globalisation, November 23, 1996, Quezon City, Philippines.

In the area of global trade, we must move from “free” to just, sustainable and caring global trade that:

- * recognizes the sovereign right of states to use a combination of trade policies, including protective measures, to ensure their people’s socio-economic welfare and mutual benefits gained from trade;
- * ensures that the formulation and implementation of global trade rules are democratic, transparent, participatory and made accountable to human and collective rights;
- * does not displace women from their sources of livelihood, nor destroy the capacity of both women and men to nurture and provide for their families and communities;
- * places agriculture, fisheries and livestock as key to food sovereignty; and protects their multi-functionality – thus, these should not be subsumed under the dictates of “free” trade;
- * ensures women’s access to, and control of, land and other resources;
- * protects land, natural resources, goods and services that sustain life (e.g. water, health and education services) from commodification and corporate control;
- * nurtures real producers through the expansion of dignified livelihood for women and men, improvement of their health, and raising of education levels, among others;
- * respects and protects biodiversity, local and collective wisdoms, and cultural identities, especially of indigenous peoples; and
- * honours universally applicable labor and environmental safety standards evolved by the International Labor Organization and the World Health Organization.

In the area of global finance, we believe that capital flows must be subordinated to the goals of justice, sustainability and care. This implies, among others:

- * the cancellation of illegitimate debts and halting of structural adjustment policies under the IMF and WB’s Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiatives, which have placed tremendous burdens on women’s time and energy;
- * the creation of transparent mechanisms that hold international financial institutions (IFIs) accountable for the failure of their debt policies;
- * the imposition of gender-sensitive financial transaction tax or similar mechanisms to curb volatile short-term capital flows causing financial crises;
- * the implementation of socially-responsible, progressive and gender-aware fiscal policies that do not tax the already impoverished, the majority of whom are women;
- * the functioning of responsible and transparent public finances utilized for social welfare and protection and the stimulation of internal markets through participatory and gender-responsive budgets; and
- * the moving away from over-reliance on foreign direct investment that only leads to wasteful public finance practices such as concessions and subsidies to multinational corporations, and the erosion of labour standards.

Just, sustainable and caring global trade and finance is required to ensure that the movement and utilization of goods, services and funds best serve the interests of all peoples. Therefore, decision-making structures and processes on trade and financial agreements and policies must be genuinely democratized to involve and represent women and the diversity of society.

Source: Women’s Voices on Alternative Globalisation Addressing People and Earth sponsored by the World Council of Churches, 27-29 August 2004, Antipolo City, Philippines

Amihan: Women Creating Alternatives

For this change to occur, rural women must build alternatives and initiate changes in the face of the havoc unleashed by the WTO and globalisation. The situation is far from hopeless for the rural women as long as we do not take these developments lying down.

In various chapters of Amihan in the three major islands of the country, various initiatives are being undertaken to counter the onslaught of the WTO trade regimen on our lives. In 32 provinces in the country, there exist organisations of peasant women, and other rural women under the Amihan, National Federation of Peasant Women. Through their organizations, these women are undertaking different programs and self help projects, all for the objective of working for the betterment of their lives, and their families.

In the chapters of Amihan in Bohol, peasant women have taken the lead in organising their communities, and in undertaking various economic activities to increase their incomes. They have initiated the production of vegetables, and the planting and processing/formulation of herbal medicines for the consumption of their communities. They have also taught nutrition education among the mothers, and held feeding programs in their communities in which malnutrition among children was a problem. Trainings on basic medical processes were also undertaken, giving the women skills on basic dental extraction, minor surgery, first aid, etc. Through a savings program, and with some help from outside sources, they were able to set up a training center and a library, which is also being used as venue for their nutrition education and feeding programs.

Laxamana estate, Pampanga, members of Amihan have been holding onto a 29-hectare piece of land despite harassment and numerous threats from the landlord. With their hold on the land, they have been able to turn the land into a productive and continuing source of food and livelihood for the peasant families.

In Naic, Cavite, south of Manila, five barangay chapters of Amihan (Malainen Bago, Labac, Munting Mapino, Bagong Kalsada, Palangui Central) are operating village drug stores, and selling medicines, mostly herbal, to the communities at affordable prices. The proceeds of these undertaking are used for the activities of their organizations, trainings, organizational meetings and medical missions.

In Montalban, Rizal east of Metro Manila, the peasant families of Sipac Maly, an area organised by Amihan, are battling a corporation because its quarrying operations around their community are causing pollution and affecting the health of families. Also with the quarrying operations, the sources of water and irrigation for the community have been contaminated, greatly reducing their production and harvest by 50%. The source of water for drinking and other household use is also contaminated, which had made life even more difficult for women, as they now have to walk long distances just to be able to get clean water.

Also in Lubog, still in another community in the same municipality, the peasant families, with support from Amihan, are resisting attempts of former generals and military personnel, and even government officials to grab their lands which they have cultivated and tilled for generations. And as they continue their resistance to these landgrabbers, they continue making the land a productive and continuing source of their food and other necessities.

At the national level, the effects of the WTO regimen on peasant women have long been advocacy issues of Amihan. In 1992, three years before the formation of the World Trade Organization, Amihan members already raised their voices against the GATT. Also in the same year, they convened an Asian Peasant Women Dialogue on the GATT and the Structural Adjustment Programs of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). In that conference it was declared that:

“ The GATT and the Structural adjustment programs (SAPs) imposed by the IMF are present day mechanisms of the rich countries, particularly the United States, to maintain, expand and intensify extraction of profits from our countries at the expense of our poor people, especially rural women.

As producers, home managers and community organizers, we Asian women are the frontline casualties of the SAPs and the GATT. GATT and SAPs are depleting our food sources, are making us slaves to MNCs for our seeds and other agricultural inputs, are eroding what meager income we have, and are forcing us to work longer and harder.

SAPs and GATT mean hunger and malnutrition, the deterioration of our health and that of our families. In many instances, SAPs and the GATT have forcibly created single-parent households because of the death of our spouses from illnesses or repression or because of their departure from our villages or countries in search of jobs overseas. SAPs and GATT mean additional physical, emotional and psychological stress for us as we balance our economic, mothering and household roles. SAPs and GATT have increased the violence we suffer: as battered wives within our households, as harassed community activists, as women who have to prostitute ourselves in our countries or overseas to eke out for our families.”

Amihan has been active since, locally, regionally in Asia and internationally in exposing the evils of the free trade espoused by the GATT, and now the WTO.

In June of this year, Amihan convened another Asian conference on peasant women's land rights and globalisation. In the conference statement it was declared that:

“We comprise the majority of the landless poor. 51% of the total female population in the region are employed in agriculture, and we produce 60% of the food for the Asian region, yet our right to land continues to be denied.

As our right to land is continuously denied, so is our right to decent lives. As our rights are denied, so is our children's right to a healthy lives and therefore of the lives of future generations.

We particularly condemn and fight the policies of liberalization, deregulation and privatization of the WTO, which worsened and intensified landlessness, poverty and hunger. These policies not only denied us of our right to land and jobs but also denied us equal access to resources, proper health care and education. Imperialist globalisation also continues to endanger and threaten our food security and sovereignty as a result of its continued plunder of our agriculture and economies.”

Amihan is currently in the process of formation of an alliance of women opposed to the WTO. Named “Kababaihan sa Kanayunan Kontra sa WTO at Globalisasyon”, it can roughly be translated to English as ‘Women Weaving a World free from WTO and Globalisation’ or ‘WWW@WTO and Globalisation’. Initially they will be focusing on the issue of the protection of rice, corn and other agricultural products of small farmers in the Philippines. Particularly for rice, they are preparing for strong protest and lobbying actions against the set date for the removal of quantitative restrictions on our rice in January 2005.

And while protesting and launching actions, Amihan is already building alternatives. At the national level, they are running a direct producer-to-consumer program for marketing organic products. The products traded range from grain products such as rice and corn, indigenous vegetables produced organically by women peasants, various root crops, beans, spices and herbal plants. In the Philippines, there are still hundreds of indigenous species of plants for food consumption, and which have not yet been subjected to genetic manipulation. For rice, the communities and the peasant families still have in their possession at least 50 different varieties of mountain rice, which they are trying very hard to keep and preserve.

These initiatives are still tiny drops in a bucket, but in time, and with the determination of the poor rural women to create a better society for our children, we will surely prevail.

Source: Zenaida Soriano and Teresita Vistro, AMIHAN, National Federation of Peasant Women - Philippines “More Than Fair Trade: Reflections on Just, Sustainable and Caring Global Trade” (Paper delivered at the International Consultation of the World Council of Churches- Women and Globalisation Program entitled: Women's Voices on Alternative Globalisation Addressing People and Earth (AGAPE), held in Antipolo City, Philippines, on August 27-29, 2004)