

From ...
How to “do” Development with women,
To ...
How women “do” Development

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I have been very uncertain on what would be of interest to this group... a detail from India? A reflection on the gender and development discourse and strategies? So I think I will do a presentation of a mix and let you take it where you want to through a discussion?

Basically I would argue that the various ways we, i.e. feminist researchers, governments international agencies donors have tried to address , what I would like to call women’s quest for equality and justice, in relation to macro economic initiatives or policies , and development cooperation are flawed and we need to rethink and find other tools and strategies

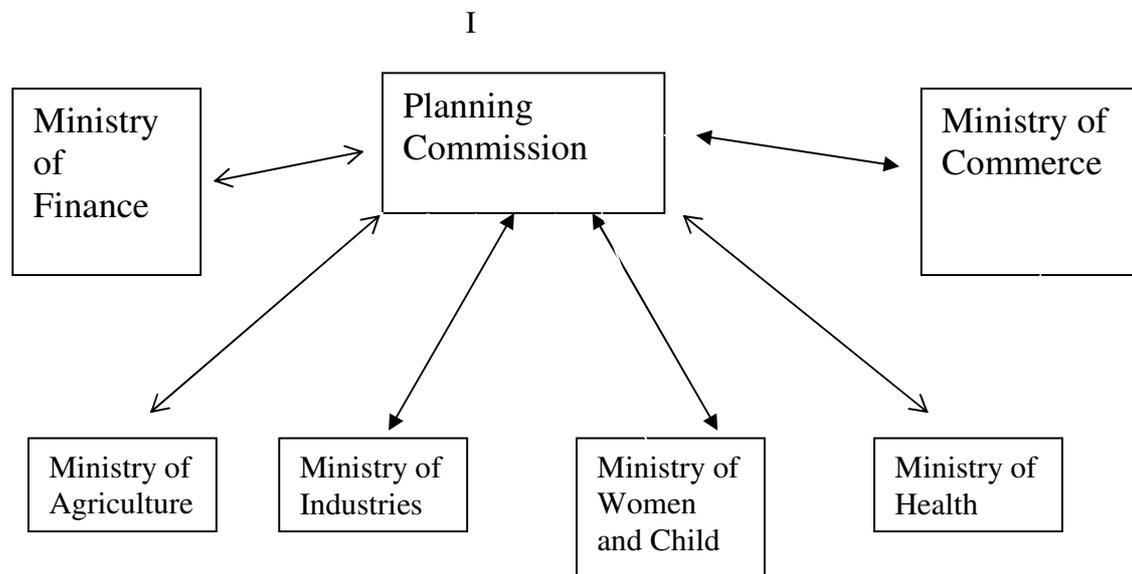
I would suggest that ideas like mainstreaming gender, or even the goal of gender equality are errors, not only because they have not been successful, but also because they deny the very basis of feminist reasoning and unfolding of knowledge.

I would suggest that what appears more appropriate is to look at the issue of gendering public policy with facts analysis and collective voice followed by a reconstruction of the theory of economic growth ...a treatise which can replace the two unbeatable or unbudgeable icons of economics, Adam Smith and Karl Marx...

That we shift our voice from what has been a special feature of the feminist movement , i.e. activism, grassroots experience , campaign to challenging ideas and replacing them perhaps it is crude to say, from what has emerged from our lived experience, often located in the domain of the biological to the intellectual ---but with the rider that for feminists dichotomies like body and mind do not exist

The recent Indian attempt made by a group of feminist economists, illustrates what I am trying to argue...move away from goals like gender equity and mainstreaming and MDG etc to locating women’s particular place in various sectors of the Indian political economy and arguing its meaning with the “other side” those who were drawing up India’s 11th plan.

The Planning Commission is central to designing and giving the overarching allocations across sectors



It was set up in 1950 – three years after India gained her Independence (circa 1947) by a Govt. resolution to promote a rapid rise in the standard of living of the people and increasing production and offering opportunities to all for employment. It was based on the old socialist idea of centralized planning where the state was to play an important role in ensuring that the citizens have the minimum basic needs satisfied ¹

Between 1950-2007 the Planning Commission has prepared Ten Five Year Plans. In the first seven plans the emphasis was on a growing public sector with massive investments in basic and heavy industries. The goal ‘self reliance economy’ a throw back or follow up on of one Gandhi’s political economy tenets of swadeshi –home made, and swalamb

¹ The composition of the Commission has undergone a lot of change since its inception. With the Prime Minister as the ex-officio Chairman, the committee has a nominated Deputy Chairman, who is given the rank of a full Cabinet Minister. Cabinet Ministers with certain important portfolios act as part-time members of the Commission, while the full-time members as experts of various fields like Economics, Industry, Science and General Administration. The Commission works through its various divisions, of which there are three kind: General Planning, Programme, and Administration Division

–self-reliant. The idea was that while the first freedom struggle was launched for political freedom, a second freedom struggle was imperative to ensure economic independence.

The Eighth Plan (1992-97) marked a break with the old approach, a departure. India moved into the reform mode basically linked to economic deregulation and liberalisation. The role of the Planning Commission was recast the economy on to new tracks.

Timeline of the Five Year Plans – Views on women

Plan	Activity	Approach
First Five-Year Plan 1951-1956	set up the Central Social Welfare Board	Welfare work through voluntary organisations, charitable trusts
Second Plan (1956-1961)	supported the development of mahila mandals to work at the grassroots	Rural Development
Third, fourth and interim plans (1961-74)	provisions for women's education, pre-natal and child health services, supplementary feeding for children, nursing and expectant mothers	Women as “targets” of family planning and social sector “beneficiaries”
Fifth Plan 1974-1978	Programmes and Schemes for women in development	Shift in the approach from welfare to development
Sixth Plan 1980-85).	Separate Chapter on Women in the Plan	Accepted women's development as a separate economic agenda. Took a multi-disciplinary approach with a three-pronged thrust on health, education and employment
Seventh Plan 1985-1990	Working Group on Employment of Women. Statistics on women Quota for women in development schemes	Objective bringing women into the mainstream of national development.
Eighth Plan (1992-1997)	the core sectors of education, health and employment. Outlay for women rose from Rs 4 crores in the first plan to Rs 2,000 crores in the eighth	paradigm shift from development to empowerment and benefits to women
Ninth Plan (1997-2002)..	Concept of a women's component plan to assure that at least 30% of funds/benefits from all development sectors flow to women	empowerment of women as its strategic objective
Tenth Five-Year Plan (2002-2007)	self help groups	suggests specific strategies, policies and programmes for the empowerment of women

The approach of the plan changed from welfare to empowerment. It could be argued that these changes came about as a result of pressure from the grassroots level movements as well as research from the women's studies movement² that challenged and informed the policy makers. The Planning activity as mentioned before is carried out mainly by groups of economists. But basically these attempts were basketed into a Chapter called Women and Child Development and funds were transferred through women's machineries. Funds

² Devaki Jain and Pam Rajput(ed) “Recreating Knowledge: Narrations from the Women Studies Family”, SAGE 2002

were dramatically increased and many new schemes were drawn up, but the core was the social programme

During the preparation of the the 11th Plan 2006-2011??? A propitious factor was the induction of a feminist scholar activist as a Member of the Planning Commission, in charge of many portfolios, but also what is traditionally called women and child development. The synergy of these two phenomena led to the engagement of a formal committee of feminist economists, to put their footprints on what was being drafted, which began with a political philosophy, political economy piece called the Approach to the 11th Plan.

A group of feminist economists with specialized knowledge on women in the economy and with strong connection with the women's movement in the country was set up as a Feminist Economists Committee, officially recognized by the Planning Commission first in many ways-using the word feminist, in an official bureaucracy and secondly to have such a committee to scrutinize ALL the chapters , 12 plus not only women and child development . .

The value of this initiative , what can be called strategy, was that it argued for the moving away from the basketing of women and child into a sector called women and child, to looking at women as growth agents in the political economy of India. Thus the major shift that this initiative made was to move the gendering of public policy away from, what in fact even the UN has burdened us with, namely women's machinery, the women and child ministry, the women's space into macro economic space.

Starting from addressing the very approach and first chapter which claimed to work for inclusive growth , moving to chapters like infrastructure and industry, the feminists provided facts, critique of the draft and ideas for change .

Reconceptualize inclusion

The feminists argued that there is need to reconceptualise **inclusion** as not only recognizing the usual marginalized communities or sections of society as beneficiaries but by including them as thinkers who think and “know” differently, and whose presence in designing, is the real inclusion. There is need to give the excluded agency, to use Prof Amartya Sen's language.³ Inclusion should be to include knowledge and analysis and experience in development design, of minority groups, dalits, women and other excluded groups. Nowhere is this proposition more clearly validated than in the “exclusion” -or desire to include - women.

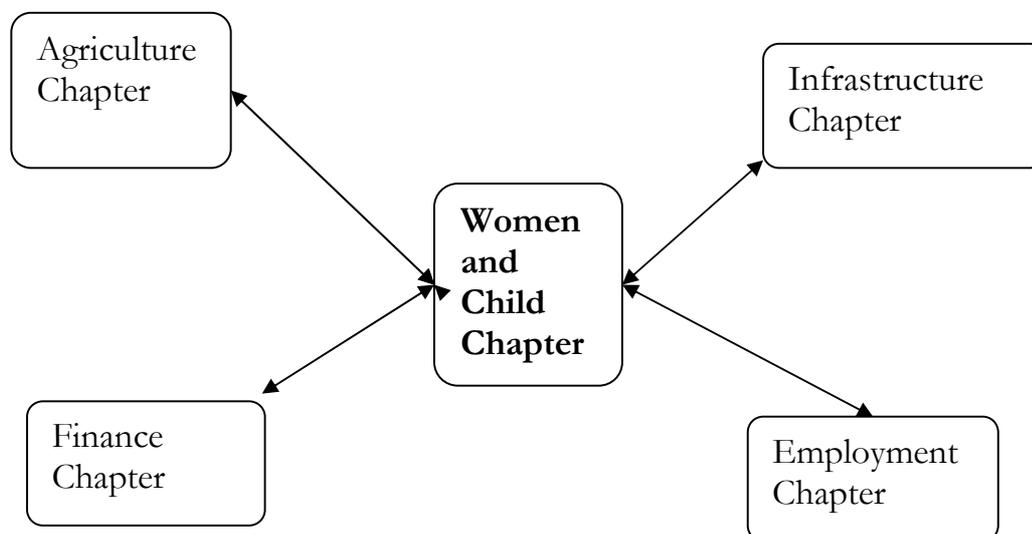
³ Amartya Sen, 'Transition to Sustainability in the 21st Century', Keynote Address, at the Inter- Academy Panel called Sustainability and Freedom on International Issues, 15th May, 2000

This example, of “inclusion”, or “agency” for one of the excluded groups, offers a radically different definition of the term “inclusion”, or “agency”. The argument is that excluding women is inefficient and the Plan cannot achieve the target it has set for itself. By ensuring that women have an important role in design of the entire plan not only in the womens’ component.

The Committee in its presentation went behind the statistics that the Planning Commission had put out in its document in its pursuit of inclusive growth. The data that the group had garnered spot-lighted women’s contribution and location in the political economy, thereby strengthening the argument that women deserved to receive what is rightfully theirs.

The group was able to argue that mere participation of women in terms of numbers was inadequate. The challenge is also conceptual - to move away from, “gender equity and mainstreaming” and even beyond current mantras like “inclusive growth” and the addition of “safety nets”. These more tradition approaches could inhibit initiatives such as these that go beyond the stereotypical approach. It is such advisories that can actually create the necessary conditions for poor women to move out of poverty.

This was a marked departure from the situation as it existed in relation to gendering; and **the group suggested** that in addition to inclusion of women in development planning, implementation and in allocation of funds by a special women’s component plan; **there was a need to ensure that equality is built into the envisioning process as a whole** And that along with ensuring that part of sectoral funding is available and used for women or Gender Responsive Budgeting; special attention has to be given to women and disadvantaged group to enable them to take a lead in planning. **The Plan chapters, the group argued needed to include analysis of women’s location in the various sectors of the economy and intersect with the women’s chapter**



An example of this is while the economy is directing itself to an export /trade mode, it needs to recognize the insecure conditions women workers. Macro economic policies and programmes and schemes need to accommodate regional differences in socio economic conditions. They also called for deeper integration of the PRI institutions with policy and program design. Currently governance is an add on to sectoral policy and programmes

Further focusing on poverty eradication and the noticeable increase in inequality during the last ten years known as the reform years (ref) They flagged as the key factor employment and found that this goal was absent in the planning for rapid growth. Moving them to follow this basic thrust for poverty eradication, they selected a few sectors and revealed “knowledge”. The theme however was work-livelihood employment as the core tool for poverty removal.

Sectors: *Revealing the Phenomena on the Ground*

I. Agriculture

The Plan aspires to increase agricultural growth which has declined drastically now (so want to move it from 2% to 4 %) but does not recognise who the cultivators and workers in agriculture

But researchers like Bina Agarwal and others have shown that women were now the majority of cultivators because men were going to non agriculture

Revealing the Phenomena on the Ground

- 75% of all women workers, 85% of rural women workers are in agriculture.
- More than 20% of rural households de facto female-headed. Many women manage farms without male support.
- Women are 40% of agricultural workforce & % rising. The face of agriculture is increasingly female

Recommendations for Action

- Achieving agricultural growth targets will depend on policies that increase efficiency of women farmers
- Women farmers need land titles, credit, infra structure support (technology, inputs, extension, marketing)

II Industry

Similarly while focusing on, India's industrial growth is over 8%. One would imagine that this came from the big huge industries that we have now, but a more careful examining of the figure showed that the products that were being created by the informal economy, and not by the big manufacturing companies, but the informal economy was a tiny enterprises and within the tiny enterprises, women were the major workers. The Chapter does not resonate what is said however inadequately, in the chapter one, that employment and poverty removal are items that have not gone well in the last five years but amends will be made in this plan

Revealing the Phenomena on the Ground

Within Small enterprises, it was shown that Own-account enterprises constitute 87% of informal enterprises and 73% of informal workers. Of these only 12% are women proprietary enterprises, even though there are a large proportion of women in all informal enterprises, who are engaged in trade and small manufacturing activities mainly on sub-contract basis.

Recommendations for Action

Certain measures were required to be put into place to strengthen women-operated enterprises. These included

- Access to credit and women friendly banking
- Technology and skill training to improve productivity
- Such inputs that are industry and region specific
- Development of clusters with concentration of women

III. Infrastructure

Similarly infrastructure development which was considered a gender-neutral terrain but a look behind the scenes revealed a different picture

Revealing the Phenomena on the Ground

The Plan emphasizes large infrastructure like highways, ports, airports; poor women definition of infrastructure would mean drinking water, toilets and houses

- 62% of slum dwellers do not have access to toilets, 25% of slum women and higher proportions of rural women to drinking water
- Tiny enterprises and slums are displaced to accommodate infrastructure projects--- increasing dispossession and destroying livelihoods

Recommendations for Action

It is important to design infrastructure for the poor. This implies that

- **Large infrastructure projects to be drawn up in consultation with people who may be displaced**
- **Land tenure rights have to be widely given with the land titles in name of women.**
- **Housing for poor has to be undertaken on large scale, including housing finance without collateral**
- **Drinking water should be prioritised and has to be made available for all urban and rural households**
- **Every urban-dweller, whether “authorized” or not should have access to toilets**

IV. Financial Inclusion

Women and the poor increasingly excluded from formal sources of finance. The group ably captured the fact that the savings basically come from something called the household sector. The household sector is a word that is being used in statistics to cover tiny enterprises. And savings, as a ratio of GDP, is one of the most critical economic factor for determining investment and growth. Almost all the economic models in the world are about savings, investment and consumption. So focusing on where this saving is actually being generated was important. The figures are revelatory

60 % of total savings comes from informal sector which has minimal access to financial savings. Overall credit to SBA has also declined over the last ten years.

Further Exclusion

In addition, women of disadvantaged sections that were supposed to be the main beneficiaries of the nationalised banks were totally neglected. For example in 2004 on average a Dalit woman received Rs 8 of bank credit as compared to Rs 100 received by a non-dalit, non Adivasi woman and she received only Re 1 for every Rs 100 received by a

non Dalit/ non Adivasi man

Suggestions

The proposals to increase financial inclusion included providing savings services near work & home sites, increasing all types of credit sources—commercial banks, RRBs, Co-operatives, SHGs, MFIs for women. Increase access to insurance services and to formulate pensions schemes aimed towards poor women (with co-contributions). They also clearly specified that financial services for women need to be linked with state initiated plans for reducing the burden of household tasks – e.g. energy policy, drinking water policies

	1997	2001	2004
Average credit to a Dalit female borrower per 100 Rs of credit to a non Dalit/Adivasi female borrower	23	12	8
Average credit to a Dalit female borrower per 100 Rs of credit to a non Dalit/Adivasi male borrower	5	1	1

Source: Pallavi Chavan (2007).

Has it had any impact?

According to its progenitor Dr Hameed , it offered an equal opposite challenge to the predominantly male economist commission and helped to dislodge entrenched patriarchal norms and customs that hinder the recognition of women’s work the multiple locations of work—home-based, in the unorganised sector and service sectors, and so on.

Further the research experience of the economists revealed that the major output from sectoral growth, accounting for India’s phenomenal recent growth rates, of 8 – 9.5 % was largely from women’s “hands” as SEWA describes it .. the value chain is such that women’s cheap labour is the first step to that product .-so we called women “growth agents of India”. I am presenting some slides which indicate the intervention.

Another gain was that the fem econ by sharing knowledge became a collective and a new actor in the public policy domain, a voice which could give informed challenge to policies like the SEZ, or FDI in retail trade etc ... more critical to protect and enhance the lives of the deprived sections of women, than all the notions of mainstreaming , gender responsive budgeting , and gender equality promotion.

II

The Problematique of the Indian Experience

Everyone has heard of the miraculous appearance of India , within the last five years as a leading economic power ...now racing next to China, something that was not so tangible

even about six years ago, though India set out on a road to liberalization, euphemistically called economic reform , with the budget of 1993.

The real GDP in 2004 was 10.3 times what it was in 1978 and in the post-liberalisation period the average annual growth rate of the GDP has been around 6.2 percent

Its *implications*, as in many other countries, has been

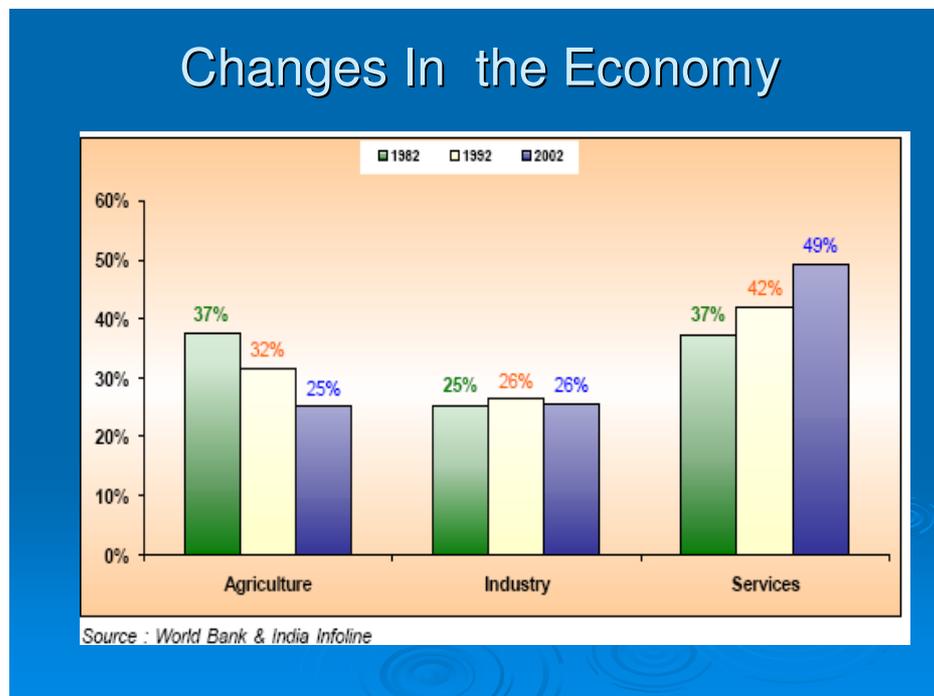
The shift in the share of GDP from Agriculture to Services .

A shift in labour absorption, increase in the rate of joblessness

A third impact has been on inequality

A fourth impact which is emerging, in frightening proportions, is violent conflicts ,

□ **One of its implications has been, as in many other countries, the shift in the share of GDP from Agriculture to Services.**



□ **Another aspect of this shift has been the rate of joblessness**

After ten years of these reforms (1991-2001) the Indian Planning Commission admits that

“The employment generating capacity of the economy and especially the organised sector vis-a-vis the GDP growth is ‘declining fast over time (1983 to 2000)’, in spite of the fact that during the same period GDP growth accelerated from 5.2 to 6.7 percent per annum

there has been an even more significant decline in the labour intensity - employment elasticity to value added has declined from 0.52 to 0.16.⁴

At the end of November 1999, there were more than 4.1 crore registered job-seekers compared to nearly 3.92 crore at the end of 1997-98

According to NSSO data during 1995-96, 1.8 per cent of rural men, 0.9 per cent rural women, 4 per cent urban men and 3.6 per cent urban women of the labour force returned their status as usually unemployed. With nearly 8 million new entrants in the labour force every year, the labour force presently may well be around 400 million. According to the latest NSSO data for 1998, the usual status unemployment rate has gone up to 2.49 percent of the labour force, which is the highest ever reported so far except for the year 1987

As for 'employment' in the unorganised sector, it is mainly own-account, decentralised, rural and small town based. The growth rate of enterprises (numbering 237.82 lakh) during 1990-98 declined from 2.264 to 2.23 per cent and growth rate of employment (at 650.45 lakh) in these enterprises during 1990-98 came down from the 1980s rate of 2.68 per cent to a mere 1.30 per cent.⁵ *The contagion of low employment growth in the organised sector has spread to the unorganised sector as well*

Compared to nearly 30 per cent share of wages in industrial value added in 1988-89 according to the Annual Survey of Industries data, in the year 1997-98 the share of wages came down to as low as 20.24 per cent.

In China and India, the two largest developing countries, the sharp fall in the employment intensity of growth has been the problem. This is due largely to a sharp sudden shift away from labour intensive economic activities towards capital intensive ones⁶

Most Asian countries experienced inadequate employment growth, and the problem has become worse in recent years. "This has been a major factor in weakening the impact of economic growth on the earnings of the poor and in *making growth less poverty alleviating* than it might have been".⁷

For women, agricultural work, informal work, landlessness and poverty mesh into a connected web, the sheer magnitude of which is apparent in the following statistical profile –

⁴ The Planning Commission Of India 'Package Of Ten Million Jobs A Year In The Tenth Plan 2002-2007' New Delhi 2002

⁵ Hindu Business Line, June 3 1999

⁶ "Jobless Growth" in Asia fails to tackle poverty - UN Report, February 2007
http://www.ilo.org/public/english/region/asro/bangkok/public/releases/yr2007/pr07_04.htm

⁷ *Asian Experience on Growth, Employment and Poverty United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the International Labour Organization (ILO)*
http://www.undprcc.lk/Publications/MDGI/Asian_Experience_on_Growth_Employment_and_Poverty.pdf.

- n There are 107.5 lakh agriculture workers in India (2001 Census)
- n Of all agriculture workers 99.4% work in the informal sector.
- n 64% of the total informal sector workforce depends on agriculture
- n 38% of all agriculture workers are women
- n More than 90% of the rural poor engage in agriculture
- n Although women constitute two-thirds of the agriculture work force, they own less than one-tenth of agriculture land

□ **The third impact is growing inequality .**

The globalisation process is premised on creating winners and losers, and thus leads to greater inequality. The recent study by World Institute for Development Economics Research of the United Nations University (UNU-WIDER) on the World Distribution of Household Wealth⁸ takes wealth (rather than mere income) as the parameter and finds resounding evidence that the distribution of wealth is highly concentrated — “in fact much more concentrated than the world distribution of income, or the distribution of wealth” It also states in unequivocal terms that “corporate globalisation has been marked by greatly increased disparities, both within countries and between countries.”

The gender dimension further complicates this – women most often do not share in the wealth of men, even within the same household or family.⁹ Therefore the gender distribution of wealth matters. The deep widespread asymmetrical gender relationships leads women to experience greater inequality than men, and similarly not only are more women poor, but their experience of poverty is also marked different.

Within India the sharp and appalling rise in inequality is evident in the fact that while until 1993-1994, the all-India Gini coefficient of per capita consumption expenditure was fairly stable but has shown a marked increase since then. The magnitude and rate of change of inequalities is quite substantial as very sharp contrasts are evident between the rural sectors of the slow growing states and the urban sectors of the fast growing states¹⁰

⁸James B. Davies, Susanna Sandstrom, Anthony Shorrocks, and Edward N. Wolff World Institute for Development Economics Research of the United Nations University (UNU-WIDER) on the World Distribution of Household Wealth 5 December 2006)

⁹ Carmen Diane Deere and Cheryl R Doss Gender and the Distribution of Wealth in Developing Countries, Research Paper No. 2006/115 2 October 2006

¹⁰ Aseema Sinha Globalization, Rising Inequality, and New Insecurities in India <http://209.235.207.197/imgtest/TaskForceDiffIneqDevSinha.pdf>.

Chart 6a: Rural Inequality (Gini)

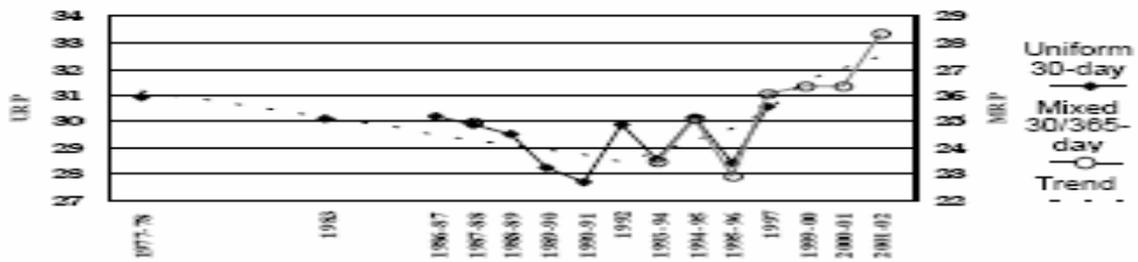
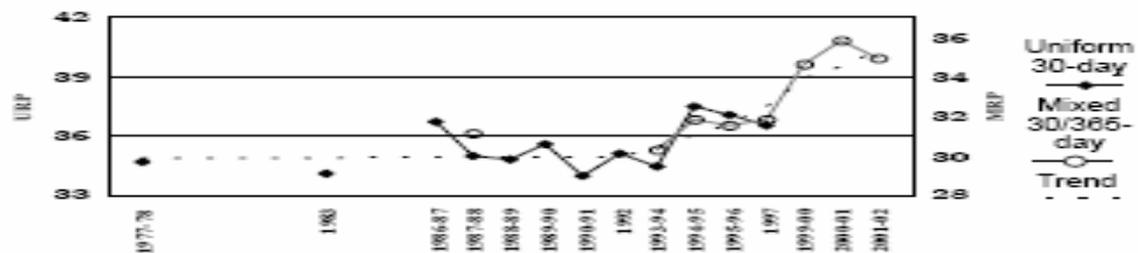


Chart 6b: Urban Inequality (Gini)



Notes: The trends plotted above are from the following fits obtained from the data in the charts:

For rural areas:
 $G = 394.7 + 5.05 \cdot D1 + 2.33 \cdot D2 - 0.19 \cdot T + 0.64 \cdot T1;$ $R^2 = 0.85$
 (7.14) (2.45) (3.02) (4.21)

For urban areas:
 $G = 29.26 + 4.67 \cdot D1 + 1.58 \cdot D2 + 0.00 \cdot T + 0.57 \cdot T1;$ $R^2 = 0.79$
 (6.50) (1.67) (0.01) (3.71)

where G is the Gini index, T is time, T1 is 0 till 1992 and thereafter the number of years elapsed since 1992, D1 is a dummy with value 1 if the estimate is by the uniform 30-day recall and 0 otherwise, and D2 is a dummy which is 1 only if the estimate is by the 30/365-day recall but the 30-day question for clothing, etc. is also present. Figures in parentheses are t-values. It may be noticed that both dummies are significant, implying that estimates by the 30-day recall return a higher Gini and that presence of the 30-day question also increases the Gini by the 30/365-day recall.

The trend lines are drawn with D1=1 and D2=0

In order to make them comparable with rounds 51 to 57, the plotted values of the MRP Ginis of rounds 43 and 50 (where D2 was equal to 1) have been reduced by the coefficients of D2 in the fits above. All the other Ginis plotted are unadjusted. For rounds 51 to 53, URP Ginis are from schedule 1 and MRP from schedule 2.

Multiple inequalities lock in income levels of the poor, disadvantaged and populations in backward area, and the trickle down effects of growth is limited to the margins of the high growing enclaves and urban conglomerations.¹¹

The rise in inequality appears to be the result of three factors: (i) a shift in earnings from labour to capital income, (ii) the rapid growth of the services sector – particularly the FIRE sector² – with a consequent explosion in demand for skilled workers and (iii) a drop in the rate of labour absorption during the reform period. There has also been an increase in regional inequality, especially in the incidence of rural poverty. This rise in inequality has implied that, despite better growth, poverty reduction has been sluggish.¹²

□ A fourth impact which is emerging in frightening proportions is violent conflict , and that attributed to growing , rapid, rise in inequality

A case study of Ahmedabad, once known as the ‘Manchester of India,’ illustrates how the rise in economic insecurities can create a fertile ground for social and political instability. 80 percent of workers in the city of Ahmedabad were employed by the textile industry in the 1960s and the 1970s.¹³ The closing down of the mills pushed the workers into partial employment, insecure employment and unemployment. These long years of loss of livelihood and a way of life created frustrations, tensions and anger that became one of main triggers for communal riots in the city in 1985 and later again in 2001.

Similarly, numerous cases of substantial disruption and rising vulnerabilities in people’s lives are evident:

- deep recession in the power loom sector in Tamil Nadu,
- crisis in the edible oil industry after the slashing of import tariffs,
- collapse in coffee prices and farmer suicides in Kerala,
- bankruptcy among the cotton farmers and farmers in Andhra Pradesh leading to an increase in farmers suicides.¹⁴
- the displacement of traditional fishing by commercial shrimp farmers in Kerala and Orissa.

“Some will agree to be herded around, humiliated, starved, kicked around. Some are going to stand up and fight. My prediction is that we are going to see a paroxysm of violence. Most of it will be committed by the state. Some of it will be just an outbreak of common criminalism fuelled by desperation. Some will be part of a political

¹¹ Aseema Sinha Globalization, Rising Inequality, and New Insecurities in India

<http://209.235.207.197/imgtest/TaskForceDiffIneqDevSinha.pdf>

¹² Reducing Poverty and Inequality in India: Has Liberalization Helped?

Raghendra Jha <http://rspas.anu.edu.au/economics/publish/papers/wp2002/wp-econ-2002-04.pdf>

¹³ Sujata Patel., 2002. “Urbanization, Development and Communalization of Society in Gujarat.” In *The Other Gujarat*, ed. Takashi Shinoda. Mumbai: Popular Prakashan.

¹⁴ For a series of articles by Sainath on the issue see

<http://www.indiatogether.org/opinions/psainath/suiseries.htm>

insurrection.” says Arundhati Roy commenting on the scattered all over India eruptions of violent resistance in the last 6 months.¹⁵

The 2005 Philippine Human Development Report, with the theme on *Peace, Human Security and Human Development in the Philippines* reveals that the bottom 10 provinces in almost every aspect of human development (including human survival, income, access to knowledge) are always the most conflict-ridden. “This Report is the first quantifiable documentation to show that cultural isolation, discrimination, and a lack of basic services, such as electricity, water, roads and education, can be *predictors* of armed encounters¹⁶

III

The Engines of Growth

There is now the argument, that the engines which generated India’s growth are not really the Foreign Direct Investment and business production but consumption driven..

“The rising share of economic surplus in output has been accompanied by greater consumption by the surplus earners themselves and also by greater investment that has been stimulated by such consumption. The ability to introduce technological-cum-structural change through imitation of what prevails in the metropolis is what has kept up the level of aggregate demand in the Indian economy leading to an increase in the rate of economic growth”¹⁷

This analyses points to several dangers to the Indian economy, reminding of the time in the 1960s and 70s when Brazil was described as TWO ECONOMIES , one a circular production –consumption cycle of the rich for the rich, and one down under leading later to explosive political situations .

STOP PRESS

Head lines in an Indian newspaper after the last G 8 summit,

The Davids took on the Goliaths¹⁸

Here the Davids are the G5 (China, India, Brazil, Mexico and South Africa) who were invited to Germany as "outreach" partners. There is a growing coming together of the G5 despite their strong differences This needs to be taken note of by UNDP and its gender work, as this is where macro policies will be decided collectively, not at the UN or at G 8

¹⁵ Arundhati Roy “Intellectual Terrorist” Deccan Herald Articulations
Sunday, June 3, 2007 <http://www.deccanherald.com/Content/Jun32007/artic200706025318.asp>

¹⁶ hdr.undp.org/docs/network/hdr_net/Philippines_Press_Release_1.doc

¹⁷ Prabhat Patnaik A Model of Growth of the Contemporary Indian Economy Economic and Political Weekly June 2, 2007 2077

¹⁸ D Ravi Kanth G-5: The Davids took on the Goliaths Deccan Herald, 14th June 2007 Bangalore.

Brazil's income inequality, along with South Africa's, is among the highest in the world, far greater than China's and India's. But the magnitude of poverty in the latter two is greater — with more people in “extreme poverty” in India than Brazil's population. Further, rising regional differences are a serious concern for China.

Leaders concern:

Lula da Silva said he would seek to reduce Brazil's huge gap between the rich and the poor and ensure economic growth in his second term following his landslide re-election. He said his second term will be marked “by economic development, better income distribution and quality education.”

“None of the great social problems we have to solve is capable of resolution outside the context of creation of jobs and the alleviation and eradication of poverty and therefore the struggle to eradicate poverty has been and will continue to be a central part of the national effort to build the new South Africa.” Thabo Mbeki¹⁹

“I clearly stated that the guiding principle of our Government has been to ensure that, while sustaining higher rates of economic growth, the improved performance of the economy must contribute to employment generation, poverty reduction and human development. The aim of each of our flagship programmes is to ensure that growth is more equitable and that it empowers the most deprived of our citizens... I do recognize that we have a long way to go in addressing the needs and concerns of all sections of our society, especially the poorest among us.” Manmohan Singh²⁰

IV

Hence I initiated a process of thinking through a new development theory, associated with a **Powerful Idea**, which could draw the feminist movement to work together, if possible overcome their extraordinary capacity to emphasise diversity and difference, which I call **Nethi nethi**. This initiative, process has been christened as the **Casablanca dream**, by my most brilliant feminist friend, Fatema Mernissi .of Morocco. She was with me; when 20 years ago, before the Nairobi Conference we worked together to challenge the existing development framework. and presented an alternative by DAWN, the third world network²¹ But what is needed now and it can be done if women put their minds together is for women's brilliant struggles, to be treated as a **BODY** of knowledge, chiseled into **theory**, into an intellectual challenge to what “is” i.e. the currently dominant social science theories / ideas

An **intellectual theoretical construct** out of the ground experience, which can claim **space** in the world of theoretical discourse.. A new Das Kapital or Wealth of Nations, as

¹⁹ Job Creation and poverty Alleviation Key to Building a New South Africa South Bulletin

²⁰ Speech to the Confederation of Indian Industry by the Indian Prime Minister
29 May 2007

²¹ The Bangalore Report – A Process for Nairobi at Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era,
Institute of Social Studies Trust, New Delhi, 1984

a bomb that can explode the patriarchal mind set and exclusion of the real agency of women in public policy.

Looking around in the world, there were other places from which a similar concern about a turbulent world, not necessarily responding to the feminist concerns, were being voiced. They ranged from what we call mainstream like Davos²², and the World Bank, to think tanks like the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation in Sweden (who are working on a project entitled “What next?”)²³ or The Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID)²⁴ Society for International Development or South Asian Networks like SANGAT²⁵ and of course at the ground level where resistance and death are saying the same thing, *on this phenomena, of economic boom coupled with increase in inequality and unrest*. In every case, interestingly, the term, *idea* has become the language. *The power of ideas.*²⁶

This is Work in progress.

The idea is to forge the **new** path with women's *gyana*- an Indian concept which roughly translates to knowing, meaning knowledge, which includes "experience". In my paper for the Casablanca meeting I argued that we (i.e. feminists) have not been using our most powerful tool for attracting “justice”. Namely our *gyana*, and that this would undermine the intellectual inheritance.

The introduction of a gendered reconstruction of the various components, or subjects, or themes of the broader subject of development, or transformation, not only drew attention to conceptions of “difference,” and the role of patriarchy and the implications of these for practice and policymaking in all the fields of inquiry, but the gendered analysis also challenged the very basis of knowledge construction. It transformed the facts, the vocabulary, the construction of development theories, and thereby the policies and practices that followed. The definition of categories, the tools of measurement and the interpretation and analysis of the data collected were all transformed: seemingly straight forward elements such as “work,” “the household,” and “the poor”; measuring tools such as money, the domestic product, and calorie requirements for types of work; the

²² Introducing the theme of the 37th Annual Meeting in Jan 2007, “The Shifting Power Equation”, Mr. Schwab urged participants to help shape a global agenda that addresses a world that is rapidly changing: “we are living in an increasingly schizophrenic world, where economies are booming and global signs are promising but underneath are economic, political and social risks, as well as imbalances and inconsistencies (as quoted by Vidya Subrahmaniam “Snow, Prosperity and Political Correctness” The Hindu 25/01/2007 Pg 13)

²³ <http://www.dhf.uu.se/whatnext/>

²⁴ [Gender and Development: Women Reinventing Globalisation](#) In search of an alternative development paradigm: Feminist proposals from Latin America Members of the Feminist Initiative of Cartagena

²⁵ Dina M Siddiqi and Malathi de Alwis Feminist Activism in the 21st century: Challenges and Prospects Report of the South Asian Feminist Meet July 25-29 2006 Sri Lanka

²⁶ Henry Hardy (ed) London: Pimlico 2001

hierarchies in valuation, from the contribution to the economic, social and political spaces to the intellectual spaces, were not only challenged but replaced by the uncovering of the difference revealed by gender

The group sought to respond to these phenomena by trying not only unfold women's location in the political economy of today, but also strengthening their capabilities in organising themselves to walk out of poverty and powerlessness. The focus therefore was on issues that would fall under the rubric of poverty and inequality.

In January 2007 a group of us, met in Casablanca , hosted by the Caravan Civique. A network of carpet weavers, artists, professionals, activists, academics, publishers and art gallery promoters.

The basic question that the Casablanca process seeks to answer...

How should a framework in development theory and practice respond to this new world with special reference to enabling women in poverty to walk out of it?

At the end of the brainstorming the group developed a new framework for understanding and transforming womens lives, which they summarized , as

Getting the Fundamentals Right,

i.e. a way of challenging the slogan of finance ministers of getting the fiscal balance right, and then went on to identify new parameters or indicators to assess the progress of women, and thereby societies,as

Women, Water and Wealth.

Which Transliterates as follows

- Women as idea creators, and the women's movement as the hope for organized creative rebellion.
- Water is symbolic of so many dimensions of our lives and aspirations - political, social, economic, environmental, health and cultural
- Wealth as a symbol of poverty and inequality, and the current driving force in the world, money and accumulation

The underlining argument was that there was a need to unpack the fundamentals – the constructs, the “knowing” as they exist and concepts that inform policies and actions – and from the basis of knowledge that women have provided, they would be “reconstituted”. Measures, the indicators of progress and of poverty they argued needed to be changed along with the terminologies such as progress , development .:

Following that meeting , the group is engaging itself in developing that new paradigm, building it from the various components of this new changed global economic order, and its symbols .

They have called their quest Interrogating and Rebuilding Progress: Through Feminist/Women' s Knowledge

The aim of this project is to bring together a group of feminist thinkers – primarily from the South with the diversity of intellectual backgrounds and experience – to reflect on forms of progress and the implications for women caught in deprivation , in the South. And hope to convene a workshop out of papers that individual scholars will write from different sources of knowledge, see slide and then a book after the workshop

The document would seek to explore the conceptual definitional and substantive ways of understanding or interpreting/measuring progress and their limitations; and to rebuild the concept and content of progress in terms of social justice.

V.

Economic policies to be just need institutional arrangements

A field experience

A micro illustration of how we can upturn the pyramid, create transformation from below

In this field experience the positioning, suggested by Gender Responsive Budgeting of subject and object is shifted, and it is called

- *Women design area development.*
- *Women advice on fiscal policy,*
- *Women participate in macro-economic decision making,*
- *Women reveal, put forth the knowledge* as derived not only from academic studies, where in any case feminist research is known for drawing its inspiration from ground level research but also from what is called the lived feminine experience.

Giving agency to women reveals *that institutional design , can perhaps be a useful tool for transformation* of macro economics by women

The review of the past seems to suggest some dramatic reversal of the current theories of where the engine of growth lies, if the interest is in poverty eradication.

Difficult to do, - to go against such powerful reasoning, but a start can be to **re write definitions, perceptions; develop new measures of poverty and new measures of progress**

Diane Elson, in dialoguing with the women who met in Casablanca said “Perhaps one of the things that women’s knowledge can do is contribute to an alternative vision of

modernity and progress to those which have dominated the last two hundred years. Those visions have always been made in man's image, leaving out the domestic, the non-market, the realm of unpaid care; prioritizing the large scale, the far-reaching, the expanding . But at the same time, they have contained elements of liberation, from, for instance, the drudgery of collecting fuel and water, by investment in infrastructure; from the petty-mindedness of localities cut-off from wider communication; from the subjugation of some groups of people (especially women) in the name of collective 'traditions' of all kinds. May be women can create an alternative vision of modernity which avoids false polarities between local and global, paid and unpaid, market and non-market, sustainability and growth; individual and collective; and between the moral and the economic; and instead rests on innovative syntheses.

Hope Chigudu in New York, wrote,

Is there a way of talking about transformation and how it happens? Is it possible to take the time to dream about new possibilities, to 'paint' a picture of what we want to see, to begin to build a movement of those who want another kind of leadership, one that breaks the limits and starts to bring people who want to see possibilities together? People who want to be more adventurous, audacious, etc. People who are not afraid to talk about *love, energy, connectedness... what are seen as soft issues?*

Others like Solita Collas Monsod emphasised the importance of *including women's unpaid work in the GNP* she was appalled that at Beijing we had agreed to satellite accounts; and not full interpretation. She has shared with us knowledge of an exercise done fore almost 5 years in the Philippines where "two GDP's were calculated".

Way Forward

- The collective voice of various women, their experiences, their insights have been translated by the agencies of the women's movement, and has become a body of knowledge, which has increased and improved "understanding". It is this knowledge that we have within us and amongst us, that has to find a place in the planning process in ways in which it can be adapted and made into a real mission to transform the stressful conditions in which these sections of society are facing today.
- Given the scenario from India both in terms of the macroeconomic dilemmas as well as cope for change from the local governments there are new architecture like the feminist economic group. AND initiate a "rethinking" process.

§ On Concepts and Definitions

§ On Measures

§ On "who" the movers and shakers of change are

§ On Challenging Inequality

§ On supporting South Formations like the NAM initiatives

§ Move away from Gender Bureaus to Advisories like the Feminist Economist Group.

