



# Asia-Pacific GEM

## Quarterly Newsletter on Gender and Macroeconomic Issues (GEM) in Asia and the Pacific



Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.

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### SEMINARS ON GENDER AND ECONOMIC POLICY MAKING IN CHINA

The Gender and Economic Policy Management Initiative has been introduced into China through a partnership between UNDP China and the Chengdu Municipal Government Foreign Affairs Office, Southwest Jiaotong University and the Nordic International Management Institute. The Initiative is a comprehensive capacity development and policy advisory services programme that aims to accelerate achievement of the Millennium Development Goals by making economic policies and poverty reduction strategies deliver results equitably to women and men, girls and boys. Through the partnership, a localized gender and economy policy making and management training course was incorporated into the local civil service training of Chengdu, Sichuan Province.



The launching ceremony of the Gender and Economic Policy Management Initiative in Chengdu, Sichuan, China, April 26, 2014.

Forty three senior policy makers from the Chengdu Municipal Government covering 21 districts in the region as well as the members of the women's federation and students of Southwest Jiaotong University attended the first sessions on April 26, 2014. Christina Hajdu, Programme Specialist from the UNDP Headquarters, spoke on gender mainstreaming in public administration, followed by the interactive seminar on gender-responsive policy analysis by Yumiko Yamamoto, Policy Specialist at the UNDP Asia-Pacific Regional Centre.

On the following day, Professor Jane Y. Zhang, Vice President of China Association for Employment Promotion in China *[continued on page 4]*

### INCREASING WOMEN'S LAND AND PROPERTY RIGHTS AND ACCESS

Fulfilment of women's land and property rights is critical for access to justice, as well as gender equality and empowerment. Many countries in the region ratified the international human rights treaties and the Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Yet, major gaps persist in legal and policy reform and implementation as well as knowledge and research in the areas of women's land and property rights. Similar gaps exist regarding comprehensive mapping of actors and ongoing and successful strategies for their possible replication across the Asia-Pacific.



Professor Bina Agarwal of Development Economics and Environment at the University of Manchester. Click [here](#) to watch exclusive interview with Professor Agarwal.

Against this backdrop, the UNDP Asia-Pacific Regional Centre brought together key actors and experts from across the region to discuss and validate key issues and entry points on women's access to land and property from an access to justice perspective, while engaging in a consultative process that aimed to include the voices of women concerned. About 50 participants with various backgrounds shared their struggles, experiences and recommendations for solutions and a common framework for programming and action to advance women's access to justice, and land and property rights in particular. Professor Bina Agarwal, whose work over the past two decades has largely focused on the issue of women and land rights, was a keynote speaker.

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## CALL FOR APPLICATIONS/ CALL FOR PAPERS

### *Assistant Professor, Gender and Development Studies, AIT, Thailand*

Gender and Development Studies in the School of Environment, Resources and Development (SERD) at the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) in Thailand is seeking for assistant professor for the terms of January 2015-December 2016 with possibility of renewal.

Duties and responsibilities include: teaching a minimum of three one-semester courses a year, one of which is a required course "Gender, Culture and Development"; advising master and PhD students in their coursework and research; conducting own research and publishing research results; participate in and create outreach programs that advance gender-responsiveness in development; raising research and outreach funds among others. Qualifications include:

- \* PhD with a specialization in Gender/ Women's Studies; Development Studies; Sociology; Environment and Society studies; Public Health; Anthropology
- \* Good publishing record
- \* Knowledge of Asia as an increasingly globalizing region (preferably South, Central and/or East Asia)
- \* Teaching, research and/or practical experience in gender and development studies, with specialization in one or several following areas: culture and religion, environment, public/reproductive health.
- \* Experience in teaching graduate level students in English.
- \* Experience in fund/research grant raising is an advantage.
- \* A team worker, who can also work with scholars from other disciplines.

Interested applicants should submit application letter and comprehensive resume with complete names, addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses of at least three referees, to: The Dean, SERD, AIT, P.O.Box 4, Klong Luang, Pathumthani 12120, Thailand; E-mail: [deanserd@ait.asia](mailto:deanserd@ait.asia) **Application deadline is August 1, 2014.** For more information, please visit <http://www.hro.ait.ac.th/job/show/131>

[Contributed, with thanks, by Dr. Kyoko Kusakabe of AIT, Thailand]

### *RSF: The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences*

The remarkable gains in educational achievement and advances in the economic and social standing of women have been distinguishing features of the 20th and early 21st centuries. *The RSF Journal of the Social Sciences* invites paper submissions for its upcoming **special issue on the changing roles and status of women and the effects on society and the economy.** The special issue will consider both the determinants of these important economic and social changes as well as their consequences. These papers will be organized into three sections; examining changes in women's labor market outcomes including education, experience, occupations, and pay; addressing family and intimate relationships; and addressing issues in politics, law, and culture.



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Prospective contributors should submit a CV and an abstract of their study along with up to two pages of supporting material **no later than 5 PM EST on August 7, 2014,** to: <https://rsfjournal.onlineapplicationportal.com>

All submissions must be original work that has not been previously published in part or in full. Only abstracts submitted online will be considered. Each paper will receive a \$1,000 honorarium when the issue is published.

A meeting of the authors of invited papers will be held on January 9, 2015 in New York City, and a draft of the full papers will be due in the late spring of 2015. For more detailed information about this issue, including examples of analyses would be of interest to the research and policy communities and submission guidelines, please [RSF website](#). For questions, please contact Director of Publications, at [journals@rsage.org](mailto:journals@rsage.org).

[Source: IAFPE listserve]

### *Annual Conference of the Indian Society of Labour Economics, Dec. 18-20, 2014*

The 56th Annual Conference of the Indian Society of Labour Economics (ISLE) will be held during December 18-20, 2014 at Birla Institute of Technology (BIT), Mesra, Ranchi, India. The theme for the Conference are: Inter-linkages between formal and informal labour processes; the demographic dividend—challenges of employment and employability; and industrial relations in India—sectoral and regional patterns.

Researchers and other professionals, including those from outside India, are invited to contribute papers on the Conference themes. Scholars from outside India may contribute either conceptual or empirical papers relating to their own regions/ countries.

The submitted paper should not exceed 8,000 words including tables and appendices and should adhere to the style of writing being followed in the current issues of the Indian Journal of Labour Economics. The papers with a summary of 1,000 words can be sent to [conference.isle@gmail.com](mailto:conference.isle@gmail.com), with a copy to [56isleconference.bit@gmail.com](mailto:56isleconference.bit@gmail.com) by **September 30, 2014.** Proposals for

panels are also invited. The best paper writers, who are below the age of 40 years, would be honoured with the Ruddar Datt Memorial Award and the Sanjay Thakur Young Labour Economist Award; each of which carries an award of Indian Rupees 10,000. Contributors who wish to be considered for the awards are requested to furnish their age proof along with their full papers.

Various registration fees for the conference apply based on the ISLE membership and nationality. Registration fees cover modest boarding and lodging as well as the conference package. For more information, please visit [ISLE website](#). The Conference is organized by the Department of Management BIT in collaboration with the Eastern Regional Centre of the Institute for Human Development.

[Contributed, with thanks, by Dr. Indira Hirway of the Centre for Development Alternatives, Ahmedabad, India]

## NEW RESOURCES

### ***Female Entrepreneurship and the Role of Business Development Services in Promoting Small and Medium Women Entrepreneurs in Sri Lanka***

This [study](#) aims to examine the socio-economic and cultural barriers which hinder women's progression to Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) sector. It also looked at the existing and future opportunities for women to enter and lead SMEs with a special focus on access and availability of women-friendly Business Development Services (BDS); e.g., development of business skills, technology transfer and access to financial services.

Based on key informant interviews, survey that was carried out in the five districts and the focus group discussions, the study found that female entrepreneurs receive family support for their businesses. Increasing social acceptance and recognition is a key element of improving female entrepreneurship.

The study also found that there were either very few or no private sector BDS providers working with women entrepreneurs. While the entrepreneurs value the services provided by the public institutions, these public institutions may find difficult to provide all the necessary services under their limited budget. The study suggests that it would be more sustainable in the long-term if both the private and public institutions form partnerships in which more BDS can be offered to SMEs at a subsidized fee.

There is an asymmetry of information that is affecting the performance of the women entrepreneurs. The study recommends the BDS providers visit villages and meet with entrepreneurs, inform them of the services available to women SMEs and identify women's needs in business. The study is a joint publication by the Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka (IPS) and Oxfam International, Sri Lanka dated May 2014.

Authors: Kaushalya Attygalle, Dilani Hirimuthgodage, Sunimalee Madurawala, Athula Senaratne, Anushka Wijesinha, and Chopadithya Aedirisinghe [51 pages]

[Contributed, with thanks, by Sunimalee Madurawala, Research Officer of the IPS and 2011 Asia-Pacific GEM fellow]

### ***A Gender-Responsive Budgeting Tool for Educational Expenditure in Timor-Leste***

The International Association for Feminist Economics (IAFFE) produces a one-page, nontechnical summary of an article from the journal *Feminist Economics*. The Notes for *Feminist Economics* Vol. 19 (2013) Issues 3 and 4 are now available at <http://www.feministeconomics.org/fern>, including "[Expenditure Incidence Analysis: A Gender-Responsive Budgeting Tool for Educational Expenditure in Timor-Leste?](#)" by Siobhan Austen, Monica Costa, Rhonda Sharp, and Diane Elson.

The authors first matched school attendance data of boys and girls in Timor-Leste with the educational spending in 2006/2007 and showed that expenditure shares favoured boys compared to girls (52.5 to 47.5 percent). This amounted to a total education expenditure on boys that was about US\$0.8 million higher than that on girls. The gendered Expenditure Incidence Analysis (EIA) also found a rural-urban gap; both boys and girls in rural areas receive a relatively small share of total expenditures on secondary schooling.

Based on the 2007 national survey data, a regression analysis showed that a girl's chance of attending schools in 2007 were linked to household characteristics, such as educational background, the use of the national language *Tetum*, urban location, and economic situation. These results suggested increasing the education levels of mothers and their access to and use of the national language as well as reducing household poverty, would help reduce the relative disadvantage of girls.

The authors argue that the potential of gender-disaggregated EIA can only be fulfilled when it is combined with additional gender analysis and a deep understanding of the budget decision-making processes and the actors involved. The access to information by policy makers, the timing of the budget decision-making processes, the gender politics within institutions, the strength of the political commitment to gender equality, and international influences can also constrain the use of gender-disaggregated EIA as a tool to influence policies and budgets in a gender-sensitive way. The debate on evidence-based external assistance and a

sustained interaction between academia and decision makers is critical to bring analysis and a strategy for change closer. [Source: IAFFE listserve]

### ***Policy Brief on Trade, Gender and the post-2015 Development Agenda***

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) released a policy brief "[Trade, Gender and the Post-2015 Development Agenda](#)" on the occasion of the second Geneva dialogue on post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda, April 4, 2014.

This 4-page brief aims to highlight some linkages between gender and economics, especially trade, and propose new targets and indicators for the gender equality goal (3) and partnerships for development goal (8) of the Millennium Development Goals. Only if women are economically empowered can they benefit from the opportunities arising from expanded trade. In turn, trade can play its role as an "enabler" of development if flanking economic and social policies are in place.

Targets suggested to ensure gender equality and complement the existing ones are: eliminate gender disparity in wages for similar work and gender segmentation in the labour market; reducing women's poverty and share of vulnerable employment; and ensuring that women entrepreneurs have equitable access to productive resources and ICT. A number of targets proposed for the partnership for development are: Ensuring that gender impact assessments are conducted for trade and investment agreements and provide support to developing countries for it, industrial upgrading linked to export expansion does not exclude women, and women and men adversely affected by trade are adequately compensated and/or reintegrated into the labour market; providing gender-sensitive social safety nets to address economic insecurity and volatility to trade; and assessing the openness, predictability, and non-discriminatory nature of the international trading system and evaluating and monitoring how trade contributes to inclusive development and to reducing inequalities.

[Contributed, with thanks, by Simonetta Zarrilli, Chief of Trade, Gender and Development Section, UNCTAD]



## SEMINARS IN CHINA

Continued from page 1

provided her lecture on gender mainstreaming strategy in the world and China. On May 10, 2014, UNDP consultant Dr. Anit Mukherjee offered his seminar entitled "Gender and Macroeconomic Strategies in Asia and the Pacific."

The course sessions were offered on weekends between April and June. Professors affiliated with Southwest Jiaotong University and the Nordic International Management Institute also provided seminars based on the UNDP training modules as well as a localized subject such as gender in urbanization and infrastructure construction.

Upon request made by the Chinese Academy of Governance (CAG), a Ministerial-level institution that provides training for high- and mid-level civil servants, high-level administrators and policy researchers, Dr. Mukherjee also delivered a lecture entitled "Gender Mainstreaming in Asia and the Pacific" at the CAG in Beijing on May 12, 2014. UNDP China facilitated his lecture as part of its ongoing partnership activity with the CAG. UNDP's partnership with Chengdu Municipal Government and the CAG marks an important milestone as China is taking up of the gender and economic policy making and management trainings.

[Contributed, with thanks, Wing-shan Stella Lo, Programme Coordinator, Poverty, Equity and Governance, UNDP China]

## WOMEN'S LAND AND PROPERTY RIGHTS

Continued from page 1

Dr. Agarwal called for more of field-based research studies to understand women's issues in land rights, ownership, access, and control as well as socio-economic impacts of having land and property; e.g., being less vulnerable to gender-based violence. She also urged researchers to co-design the study and survey questionnaires with those who are affected by climate change and changes in political and economic decisions that influence the multiple use of the land.



Participants of the Regional Consultation "Increasing Women's Access to Justice in the Asia-Pacific: Programming on Women's Access to Land and Property," Bangkok, Thailand, June 9-10, 2014

Throughout the meeting, a number of speakers addressed the issues surrounding formal and informal justice systems, and how various systems may discriminate against or favour women's human rights. In Cambodia, land titling for both men and women progressed on paper due to new land law, housing law and directive 01. In practice however, women don't have much control over the land and they have been affected by forced eviction and relocation. In many parts of the region, the customary law and practices determine the women's land rights and access. In Afghanistan when women

seek to obtain land rights, they do not seek the support from formal system due to strong patriarchal cultural norms.

There were also discussions over women's human rights issues related to access and use of the customary forest and within the indigenous communities. When the common lands or customary lands were recognized, the state law is not applicable. As a result, the private sectors may directly negotiate with the indigenous groups over the commercialization of the territory for mining, plantation or development projects. Women's participation in consultation is limited although women have different concerns from men. They do not receive the outcomes they want; yet, negative impacts fall on women's shoulders as they are situated in subsistence economy.

The consultation shed lights on women's struggles and issues that are common in many countries. Exchanging information on how one becomes successful to claim or protect their rights through formal and informal justice systems, legal implementation, provision of justice and land services and advocacy of civil society networks is key. Through the consultation UNDP established new and built on existing partnerships on women's land and property, and based on the evidence and knowledge generated will orient its future women's access to justice programming on it.

## About Us:

UNDP is the UN's global development network, an organization advocating for change and sharing knowledge, experience and resources worldwide to help people build a better life.

UNDP Regional Centre serves 36 countries in 24 country offices of Asia and the Pacific. A main priority of the Regional Centre is to provide [UNDP Country Offices](#) in the region with easy access to knowledge through high quality advisory services based on global applied research and UNDP lessons learnt. The second priority is to build partnerships and promote regional capacity building initiatives, which allow UNDP, governments and other development partners to identify, create and share knowledge relevant to solving urgent development challenges.

**Asia-Pacific GEM**, a quarterly newsletter, aims to bring news related to gender and macroeconomic issues in the region to government officials, development agencies, civil society, and academia. **The next newsletter will be released in September 2014.** Please send any relevant news items you would like to share (e.g., announcements about upcoming events, calls for papers, conferences, workshops, training programmes, new publications and research papers on gender and macroeconomics, and association news) to the [editor](#) by **15 August 2014**. The newsletter will be distributed electronically and posted on the UNDP Asia-Pacific Regional Centre website.

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