

How can a Feminist Agenda be Integrated into the World Trade Organization?

By

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Table of Contents

Abstract	V
Chapter 1: Theoretical Analysis	1
Feminist Critique of Neoclassical Economics and the Neo-liberal Agenda	6
Feminist Analysis of Unpaid and Paid Labour	8
Feminist Critiques of Macroeconomic Theory and Policy	13
Chapter 2: Critical Analysis of the World Trade Organization (WTO)	27
History, Structure and Function of the WTO	30
Proponents and Detractors	36
Whose Agenda? Good Governance	41
Chapter 3: Critical Analysis of the Three Feminist Agendas	51
Feminist Organizations	53
United Nations Development Fund for Women	53
Developing Alternatives With Women For A New Era	57
Feminist Alliance for International Action	62
Differences and Commonalities	65
Grassroots Approach vs. Mainstreaming Approach	67
Chapter 4: Learning From The Past: Evaluating the Feminist Agendas	74
Challenging the WTO: Evaluation of Three Strategies	75
Learning From The Past	80
Mainstreaming the WTO	86
Conclusion	90
Bibliography	92

Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is two-fold. First, it provides a feminist critique of neoclassical economics and the neo-liberal agenda with regard to trade liberalization policies and questions why a feminist agenda needs to be integrated into the World Trade Organization. Second, it evaluates the initiatives of three feminist organizations and past experiences of women's opposition groups to outline how a feminist agenda can be integrated into the WTO by means of a multi-faceted good governance approach.

CHAPTER ONE:

THEORETICAL ANALYSIS

Introduction

Economic globalization is not a new process, for in the past five centuries firms in the economically advanced countries have increasingly extended their outreach through trade and production activities (intensified in the colonial period) to territories all over the world...[However,] economic globalization has accelerated as a result of various factors, such as technology developments but especially the policies of liberalization that have swept across the world (Khor 2001a: 3).

Current international trade policies do not have a gender analysis. This thesis will explore both why and how the World Trade Organization (WTO), the umbrella organization for international trade, must implement a feminist agenda to address the issues of gender inequalities perpetuated by economic globalization. Trade policies do not only affect economic markets; these policies directly influence government agendas and expand into political, social and cultural spheres (Grinspun and Kreklewich 1994: 38). The WTO policy-makers ought to take into consideration the direct and the indirect repercussions of trade liberalization on citizens in general and women in particular. Political and economic feminist agendas seek to eradicate disparities between the north and the south, as well as between men and women.

Given the persuasiveness of economic globalization, in this thesis I will argue that inclusive, alternative feminist frameworks are necessary to temper the effects of economic globalization and improve the lives of both women and men around the globe. More specifically, I suggest the integration of a feminist agenda within the WTO to ensure that women are adequately represented in policy-making decisions so that they are not continuously burdened by the uneven process of economic globalization.

A feminist agenda will be defined as the goals of feminist organizations that strategically outline methods or frameworks for change vis-à-vis women. *Globalization* “refers to the widening and deepening of international flows of trade, capital, technology and information within a single integrated global market” (Petras and Veltmeyer 2000: 11). *Trade liberalization* is one of the driving forces behind globalization. It promotes the removal of trade barriers, the opening of free markets and an increased role for international institutions such as the WTO. *Neo-liberalism* is a theory “that makes the market central in governing economic, social and political life” (Wilson and Whitmore 1999: 14).

The goal of this thesis is two-fold: first, to explore the reasons why a feminist agenda is necessary within the WTO’s policies on trade liberalization; and second, to determine: *how can a feminist agenda be integrated into the WTO’s policies on trade liberalization?* To do so, I will critically examine the WTO’s agenda, structure and function, and how its policies on trade impact women. Then, I will study the strategies of three women’s groups concerned with the impacts of economic globalization on women. I have selected the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), Feminist Alliance for International Action (FAFIA) and Developing Alternatives With Women for a New Era (DAWN). I specifically chose these three feminist organizations to provide different socio-economic views from: (i) an international perspective, (ii) a northern perspective; and (iii) a southern perspective. They provide an inclusive representation of the challenges and the barriers facing different women from different geographical regions. I will comparatively link and contrast these feminist organizations with regard to their agendas on economic globalization. I will analyze their different methods of

addressing the impacts of trade liberalization, their objectives, and finally, how they propose to influence the current trend of trade liberalization by a mainstream approach or a grassroots approach. Finally, based on a critical analysis of these feminist agendas and the WTO's agenda, I will illustrate the conceptual reasons *why* a feminist agenda is necessary and then detail the strategies that best illustrate *how* a feminist agenda can be integrated into the WTO. To do this, I will critically examine the grassroots approach and the mainstream approach to decipher the best method to implement change. There are various types of mainstreaming such as the liberal feminist approach which advocates for systems of power such as the government to equally incorporate women and men. Mainstreaming also takes the form of women's movements engaging in male constructed and dominated institution. For the purpose of this paper, however, I use the term mainstreaming as integrating gender and policies into services for both men and women (UNIFEM 2000: 135), but do not preclude the resources of coalitions.

This study is important because the current course of economic globalization is widening the gap between the rich and the poor countries (Riley 2001: 7). A small fraction of the population is benefiting from this process at the expense of the majority of the world's population (Oxfam 2002; UNRISD 1995). Moreover, basic human rights are being neglected and women are predominantly suffering. More specifically, economic globalization is being legitimized by neo-liberal theories and practices. Neo-liberalism, in practice, calls for reducing "state spending and regulation, maximize[ing] exports, and enable[ing] market forces to restructure national economies as part of transnational or regional trading blocs" (Bakker 1996: 4). As we shall see, these tendencies serve to exacerbate economic, political and social inequalities between men and women. For

example, because neo-liberalism favours an unfettered, unregulated market, freer trade serves as the centerpiece for most neo-liberal projects (Williams 1999; Folbre 1994). However, most trade liberalization processes, as currently constituted, also disproportionately and negatively affect women, especially women of the economic south (Sen and Grown 1988). And yet, neo-liberal theories and practices fail to factor in gender whatsoever. As a result they in turn, perpetuate the systemic oppression and subordination of women (Sparr 2002a; Elson 1991). Feminist organizations highlight such concerns and propose alternative frameworks, but their agendas are not being implemented by governing bodies. Therefore, I argue that a good governance approach becomes a key methodological strategy for effective change.

This thesis begins with a theoretical analysis of why a feminist agenda is needed in the WTO. This analysis draws on several feminist theorists who examine the neo-liberal agenda and the neoclassical economic framework. Building on their work, I argue that neoclassical economics, which is used to justify the neo-liberal agenda, does not take into consideration unpaid labour, which is mostly performed by women. The neo-liberal agenda is premised on an individualistic framework which assumes that unpaid labour is an infinite and replenishing activity without collective labour from the formal and informal sector. The neo-liberal ideology and the neoclassical economic framework are imperative to analyze for three specific reasons. First, the neo-liberal agenda is not sustainable because of the individualistic assumptions that work against women. These assumptions are portrayed as being gender-neutral, but they are not. Second, the neo-liberal agenda is premised on a rational actor model, which tends to correspond to calculations done by men rather than women. Third, the neo-liberal agenda and trade

liberalization may increase employment, but the individual's or the state's well being or competitive advantage does not automatically, or necessarily increase as a result of further trade liberalization.

In this chapter I briefly review the overall feminist critique of neoclassical economics and the neo-liberal agenda. I then focus on three issues which are central to a gender analysis of globalization and trade policy. First, I examine the exclusion of unpaid labour in the neoclassical economic framework. Second, I analyze the significance of the gender division of labour. Finally, I analyze how macroeconomic policies including structural adjustment policies and trade policies are not gender neutral.

Feminist Critique of Neoclassical Economics and the Neo-liberal Agenda

The neo-liberal agenda predicated on the neoclassical economic framework is contested because it is embedded with assumptions based on male biases (Beneria 1999; Bergeron 1996; Folbre 1994; Sparr 1994; Elson 1991). The current neo-liberal agenda is premised on an individualistic approach to economics with universal assumptions.

Political leaders such as Margaret Thatcher, Ronald Reagan, Brian Mulroney and Kim Campbell set this neo-liberal agenda in motion, which in turn created major political and policy setbacks for women and the women's movement (Bashevkin 1998: 237). This approach generalizes that all individuals are positioned equally on the economic playing field and fails to take into consideration gender, class, race, nation, creed, sexual orientation or disability (O'Hara 1999: 796). Men and women do different work. Thus they are affected differently by the neo-liberal agenda given their distinctive roles in both the paid and unpaid, formal and informal sectors.

The neo-liberal approach to the economy is premised on the assumptions: "that institutions such as the state and the market should reflect the motivation of individual self-interest; the state provides a minimum of public goods; and that the most efficient allocation of resources and maximization of utility occurs through markets" (Bakker 1996: 4). Neo-liberalism is often legitimized by neoclassical economic models.

Neoclassical economics "is characterized by its use of a behavioural model of constrained choice, where individual units (be they persons or firms) maximize their self-interest and these choices generate the supply and demand of commodities and resources in markets, where prices are determined" (MacDonald 2001: 2). This model is beneficial to a specific and selective minority of the population (Oxfam 2002: 9). Feminist political

economy analyses provide thorough critiques of such tendencies (MacDonald 2001; Cagatay 2001; Folbre 1994; Sparr 1994; Elson 1991). These feminist analysts incorporate gender into the economic framework. Their key methods include making household labour and unpaid labour visible, recognizing the contribution to the economy of all labour, regardless of monetary worth. Moreover, they see gender as a category of social and economic differentiation that influences the distribution of work within the economy, thus raising the awareness of the biases of micro and meso institutions, which directly influence the macroeconomy (Cagatay, Elson and Grown 1995: 1829).

Feminist critiques of the neoclassical economic model emphasize the following principles. Sparr states:

1. Neoclassical economics is not a value-neutral science.
2. The theory is ahistorical.
3. One consequence of this ahistorical approach is that the theory assumes a full monetized, market-oriented society.
4. Social mores and male-female power dynamics have a profound influence on the economy. They need to be part of an economic analysis.
5. Men and women are not politically or economically equal. What goes on inside the household has a profound bearing on the macroeconomy and cannot be taken for granted.
6. Labour is not freely available or flexible as neoclassical theory assumes (Sparr 1994: 15-18).

Feminists criticize both the narrow scope and the masculine bias of such economic frameworks. MacDonald states:

...it is not that economics has simply not yet turned its attention to feminist concerns; rather the whole construction of the theory and methodology of the discipline reflects the social devaluation of "femininity" and has erased from view feminine reality and non-masculine world-views, values and ways of knowing. Choice, independence of action, competition, individualism- all core aspects of economic models- are identified in our culture with masculinity. A related aspect is the defining of male behavior as the norm, implicitly leaving female as the "other". Feminist theory argues that disciplines like economics have an implicitly male standpoint, and that this must be balanced by analysis

based on a female standpoint. This will require different theoretical and methodological tools than those which have been honed to the male standpoint (MacDonald 2001: 5).

Neoclassical economics lacks a critical analysis of the contribution of unpaid labour to the economy and thus provides an inaccurate representation of the economic process. The neoclassical economic framework is important to analyze to reveal gender biases in what labour is considered valuable in the economy. Neoclassical economics does not account for unpaid labour, thus much of what women contribute to the economy is excluded from traditional parameters of economics (MacDonald 2001: 6). This is evident by the fact that “the annual value of unpaid and underpaid women’s work is roughly \$11 trillion dollars...” (Sparr 2002a: 2).

Men’s fallback position is stronger than women’s due to social and economic conditions, i.e., pay inequality and job insecurity. As a result, women have less bargaining power within the household (Elson 1991: 182; Agarwal 1997:4). The household is treated as a stable unit of cohesive interests. This model neutralizes the role of women in the household, thereby, reinforcing the sexual division of labour by neglecting to account for the differences in the household.

Feminist Analysis of Unpaid and Paid Labour

In the neo-liberal approach gender differences are not assumed to influence the economy. Feminist analysis, on the other hand, demonstrates the critical role of gender in the economy. This section explores the analytic importance of the gender division of labour in paid and unpaid work, and the undervaluing of women’s work.

Unpaid Labour

There is a correlation in Western society between what is valued and what is paid. Unpaid labour within the household crystallizes this correlation (Waring 1999: 19). Feminists argue that unpaid labour needs to be incorporated into the gross national product, national statistics and valued as much as paid labour (Sparr 2002a; Beneria 2001; Waring 1999). The lack of value attributed to unpaid reproductive labour is at the root of statistical biases leading to the underestimation of women's work in the labour force and national accounting statistics (Beneria 2001: 85). Women are disproportionately concentrated in unpaid activities in four sectors: social reproduction, domestic work, subsistence production or volunteer work (Beneria 2001: 87). Therefore, the problem lies in the way that theory and statistics define the term work such that it is necessarily linked with paid economic activity in the market (Beneria 2001: 86; Waring 1999: 21).

The neoclassical economic framework does not measure the cost of social reproduction. Therefore, labour such as child rearing, caring for the elderly and sick, or volunteer work is considered valueless to the economy. Nancy Folbre's analysis illustrates the implicit contradictions within the neoclassical economic framework. Economic frameworks are structured in such a way that economic growth and welfare is measured by the goods and services exchanged for money. This type of measurement excludes the time required for unpaid labour and therefore, devalues the process of social reproduction and the importance of this process for economic sustainability (Folbre 1994: 3). This contradiction is also illustrated by stay at home mothers. These women are

perceived as being dependent on their husbands within the neoclassical economic framework, and yet their husbands are not perceived as dependents on their wives for social reproduction to maintain their male spouses' active participation in the formal labour market (Folbre 1994: 3). Folbre and others call for unpaid labour to be made visible, as social reproduction is a fundamental contributor to the economic sphere.

The contribution of unpaid labour needs to be adequately assessed by raising questions that make evident its importance to the economy. As noted earlier, women's unpaid and underpaid work is approximately \$11 trillion dollars (Sparr 2002a: 2). Questions such as: What would happen if unpaid labour ceased to exist for free? Who would benefit and who would be affected by these changes? What aspects of unpaid labour are fundamental for continued economic growth? These questions start to highlight how important unpaid labour is to the economy. The neo-liberal agenda takes for granted the contribution of unpaid labour such as social reproduction and volunteerism. Moreover, they are assumed to be the constant social safety nets (UNIFEM 2000: 8; Beneria 1999:71).

Paid Labour

Feminist concerns about paid work, including occupational job segregation, the undervaluing of women's work and the persistent gender wage gap (Code 2000: 158) are also crucial in evaluating the impact of neo-liberal economic policies. Feminists critique the analysis of paid work in the neoclassical framework because of its lack of analysis of these gender issues.

The sexual division of labour accentuates how the labour market is gendered. This is manifested by at least two factors: first, by the distribution of earnings within the paid labour force which reflects what is valued, e.g., doctors as opposed to care providers; and second, by how women's jobs are generally characterized by lower wages, part-time, non-union representation and job insecurity (Armstrong 1996: 53; Jenson 1996: 92; Standing 1989). The increase in women's participation in the paid labour force does not necessarily result in improved living standards for women (Armstrong 1996: 53). The neo-liberal strategy to reduce and cut costs increases privatization and increases part-time employment. Part-time work is more beneficial for employers because they are not obligated to pay for benefits to their part-time employees. Large corporations prefer to hire women because they are more often prepared to work part-time and for lower wages than men to support their families (UNRISD 1995: 28). Women perform approximately seventy-one per cent of part-time work [in Canada] (Armstrong 1996: 32). Moreover, women constitute approximately seventy per cent of workers in service producing industries such as health, social science and education (Armstrong 1996: 39) where part-time work is prevalent. Women's pay in non-agricultural employment is seventy to eighty percent that of men's in Europe and fifty percent of men's in Japan (UNRISD 1995: 28). The increase of women in the formal sector does not mean that equality is being achieved; in fact, gender inequalities might be exacerbated with globalization (Carr 2000: 1). Thus, under current conditions of trade liberalization, the feminization of the paid labour force does not necessarily equate to the empowerment of women (Cagatay 2001: 7).

The liberalization of international markets allows for the freer flow of goods and services. The opening of markets presents new and challenging labour conditions because economic globalization is decreasing labour standards, while increasing flexible labour with the deepening of trade liberalization. Therefore, there is a correlation between the increased demand for particular goods and services at competitive prices and the feminization of the labour force, which promotes part-time work.

Pat Armstrong deconstructs the neo-liberal assumptions that presume employment growth is always beneficial. These benefits cannot be accurately assessed without taking into consideration the impact of this employment on the social sphere. The analysis of employment restructuring is important for two reasons. Armstrong states:

First, most of the jobs in the goods-producing industries are male jobs and most of those in the service-producing industry are female jobs. Second, many of the new jobs in the service sector are what the Economic Council of Canada (1990) terms 'bad jobs', jobs that offer little security, little opportunity and that require few recognized skills (Armstrong 1996: 35).

From a neo-liberal economic analysis, women's increase in employment is considered a positive economic advancement, but this progression is ultimately measured yet again by a male standard or referent (Armstrong 1996: 52). Women's participation in the paid labour market does not automatically indicate the improvement or transformation of women's lives economically, socially or politically. With further liberalizing of markets, goods and service industries will be challenged by constant competition for cheaper labour and more efficient methods of production.

Thus, feminist critiques shed light on the limitations of traditional economic approaches when it comes to understanding the specific experiences of women in both

unpaid and paid work. This in turn, has implications for macroeconomic theory and policy.

Feminist Critiques of Macroeconomic Theory and Policy

The microeconomic analysis of the household decision-making process and gendered labour markets has led to feminist reevaluation of macroeconomic theory and policy. Neoclassical economics neglects to calculate significant factors that influence the economy such as gender segregation in the labour market and the wage gap between men and women.

Feminist analysts provide three specific reasons why gender is significant to macroeconomics. Cagatay, Elson and Grown state:

First, by making unpaid household labour visible and treating labour as a produced input, feminists analysis reshapes our understanding of the conditions necessary for the functioning of the paid productive economy that is the traditional domain of macroeconomic analysis. Second, feminist analysis brings in gender as a category of social and economic differentiation (like class and race) that influences the distribution of work, income, and wealth, the productivity of work, and the behavior of agents in the economy. Third, feminist economic analysis points to the gender biases of micro and meso-level institutions, such as households, government agencies, firms and even markets, from which macroeconomic outcomes emerge (Cagatay, Elson and Grown 1995: 1829).

These points illustrate why gender is an important factor to analyze within economic models so that there is a greater understanding of economic problems, especially at the macroeconomic level.

Cagatay, Elson and Grown identify four ways to understand and incorporate gender into macroeconomic models. They state:

The first approach, "the gender disaggregating method," involves disaggregating existing macroeconomic variables by gender... The second approach, "the gender macroeconomic variable method," introduces economic variables which capture the structure of gender relations, such as the degree of gender inequality in labor and credit markets, or decision making in households and in the public and private sectors... The third approach, "the two sector/system method," conceptualizes the world in terms of two sectors or systems, one of which comprises the traditional macroeconomic variables. The other can be unpaid reproductive economy or a nonmacroeconomic system that comprises the domain of gender variables... The fourth approach corresponds to combining two or more of the previous methods (Cagatay, Elson and Grown 1995: 1830).

These models take account of the different ways that gender influences the economy and help to clarify the need for gender aware policies. Gender neutral policies that neglect to take into consideration gender issues are particularly detrimental at the macroeconomic level because of the breadth of these sweeping policies. The links between gender as an irrelevant neutral factor and gender inequalities are exacerbated by macroeconomic policies such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). NAFTA spurred feminist mobilization that showed that macroeconomics is indeed gendered (MacDonald 1995; Bakker 1996; Gabriel and Macdonald 1996; Cameron and Gonas 1999). The NAFTA case will be elaborated upon in chapter four.

The new order of restructuring is market-oriented based on competition and self-reliance (Bakker 1996: 4; Grinspun and Kreklewich 1994: 38). This involves the reprivatization of the state's social responsibilities, which represents a shift from the Keynesian notion where limits were placed upon the market to ensure some form of welfare state (Bakker 1996: 4). The neo-liberal state moves away from state intervention towards an individual market orientation (Bakker 1996: 4). The shift towards a market

driven economy is evident in the current trends of the three leading international economic bodies: the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the WTO (Barlow and Clarke 2001; Griffin Cohen 1999). The shift away from state intervention is evident by the WTO's policies on trade liberalization and the structural adjustment policies of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. The rise and growth of the WTO, which fosters trade liberalization will be the focus of the next chapter. However, first I will examine the impacts of structural adjustment policies and trade liberalization in general. Structural adjustment policies encourage trade liberalization and illustrate some of the concerns which feminists have with the neo-liberal agenda.

Structural Adjustment Policies

From a capitalist perspective, structural adjustment policies are pro-active interventions that help to build less developed nations into thriving, competitive nations with stable economies (Wilson and Whitmore 1999: 14). Neo-liberalism assumes that structural adjustment programs will liberalize the market and increase exports, employment and competitive advantage. Structural adjustment programs are meant to stabilize the economy so it will be able to compete in the international market. Gita Sen, Martin Khor, Michel Chossudovsky, Pamela Sparr and Diane Elson's critical analyses of structural adjustment programs provide thorough examinations of the hidden biases found within these restructuring policies (Sen 2000; Khor 2001a; Chossudovsky 1998; Sparr 1994; Elson 1991).

These structural adjustment programs are received at a high cost to developing nations, while the developed nations tend to benefit (Oxfam 2002). Many developing

countries are in economic disarray due to multiple circumstances such as a long history of internal war, political unrest or repercussions from colonization (Durano 2002: 1). These countries, in particular African nations, require international financial assistance before they can even consider competing in international markets. Developing nations receive monetary assistance only if they agree to structural adjustment policies prescribed by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. The goals of structural adjustment policies are: to reduce inflation, to increase the rate of growth of output and exports; and to increase productivity and efficiency (Khor 2001a; UNRISD 1995; Elson 1991: 64). Therefore, the governments of developing states usually have no other alternative than to agree to the economic stabilization and structural adjustment policies, even at the risk of their own citizens' subsistence (Grinspun and Kreklewich 1994: 38). Structural adjustment policies are contentious because the real wages in the third world are "as much as seventy times lower than in the US, Western Europe or Japan" (Chossudovsky 1998: 4). These contested policies are not necessarily stabilizing developing nations' economies in the international markets. Structural adjustment policies are not confined to the economic sphere; adjustments are prescribed to the nation's policy-making process, thus there is the potential for deterioration of the state's power (Khor 2001a).

The deterioration of the state's power, evident within structural adjustment policies, directly impacts women because the state will rely more on the unpaid labour performed by women to compensate for the impacts of these restrictions. The devastating social costs explain the unpopularity of these programs within developing nations (Beneria 1999: 67). For example, the conditions of these adjustments allow for the liberalizing of the financial sector and increase the economic freedom of corporations,

while decreasing government intervention in the economy (Barlow and Clarke 2002; Griffin Cohen 1999; Beneria 1999). What has followed in many instances is that the restructuring mandate has eliminated minimum wage legislation and repealed social programs, further decreasing the state's role (Chossudovsky 1998: 7). The elimination of minimum wage legislation primarily affects women at the micro-level because they disproportionately work for lower wages in free trade zones. Therefore, the drive for cheaper labour will be placed on women. Furthermore, repealing social programs and decreasing the state's role in the market is also detrimental to women because women have to absorb the work. The decline of social programs, such as health care places added pressure on women to be care providers in addition to their formal work duties (Kerr 1996: 256).

Women's participation in the paid labour force cannot be adequately assessed without taking into consideration women's contribution and prescribed social reproductive role to generate and fuel the labour force. These competing sectors cannot be sustained without some form of decline or breaking point (Evers and Walters 2000: 1). Paid and unpaid work consistently compete for women's time. Elson states:

Ignoring the implications of macro-economics changes for unpaid domestic labour inputs is tantamount to assuming that women's capacity to undertake extra work is infinitely elastic- able to stretch so as to make up for any shortfalls in incomes and resources required for the production and maintenance of human resources. However, women's capacity for work is not infinitely elastic and a breaking point may be reached (Elson 1991: 179).

Policies that do not accurately assess the impacts of women's labour, both paid and unpaid, actually hinder the comparative advantage and the advancement of the nation state (Cagatay 2001).

Structural adjustment policies encourage trade liberalization. Trade policies, like structural adjustment programs, fail to accurately account for the sexual division of labour and unpaid labour, i.e., the social reproductive role. Neo-liberal policy structures expect the latter to be contributed, but neglect to factor in the time and energy required to perform this type of labour. In other words, they exaggerate the benefits of these policies by omitting labour that is not monetarily valued, but is essential for economic prosperity. This makes evident the male bias within the macroeconomic analysis. Elson states:

Stabilization and structural adjustment programmes are formulated on the basis of macro-economic concepts; that is concepts that look at the economy as a whole rather than individual firms or households. Such concepts appear to be gender neutral. But a closer examination reveals them to be imbued with male bias (Elson 1991: 165).

Miscalculated macroeconomic policies are not only hazardous for women, but also preclude sustainable development for all (Elson 1991: 165). Successful macroeconomic policies cannot be properly constructed or sustained if they exclude or underestimate women, who represent half of the population these restructuring policies are aimed to assist.

Trade Liberalization

The neo-liberal agenda uses the neoclassical economic model to provide the logic for the liberalizing of markets. The neoclassical economic model is structured upon:

the individual, who is seen as a rational utility maximizer, making choices at the margin, usually in competitive markets; which are characterized by market clearing and equilibrium outcomes. Firms too are seen as maximizers, subject to constraints imposed

by production functions, which are characterized by diminishing marginal products. Substitution at the margin is the driving principle behind all economic decisions. Thus the optimal allocation of resources is of central concern and is achieved when all markets clear. When this occurs, general equilibrium prevails and issues of unemployment are irrelevant (O'Hara 1999: 788).

This framework, in conjunction with the neo-liberal ideology, proposes that economic growth will be most rapid with unimpeded movement of goods, services and capital (MacEwan 1999: 31). Therefore, trade liberalization is most effective and efficient with open competitive markets and less government restrictions.

Feminist political economists disagree with this logic because it “renders invisible a wide variety of economically significant relationships that do not fit into the rubric of rational maximization” (O'Hara 1999: 796). The relationship between gender inequalities, economic growth and trade liberalization raises serious concerns for feminists, particularly at the macroeconomic level. Grown, Elson and Cagatay identified four scenarios that illustrate how this relationship can play out in macroeconomic policies. They state:

A win-win (high growth- low inequality) scenario; a lose-lose (low growth- high inequality) scenario; a win-lose (high growth- high inequality) scenario; and a lose- win (low growth and low inequality) scenario (Grown, Elson and Cagatay 2000: 1149).

These scenarios illustrate that the relationship between gender inequalities and growth is dependent on other variables such as the structure of the economy and the extent of the gender assessment (Grown, Elson and Cagatay 2000: 1149).

Macroeconomic frameworks consider employment growth to be positive, regardless of the repercussions (Elson 1991: 171). Nilufer Cagatay analyzes the

distortions of neo-liberal assessment by critically examining gender inequalities, gender biases and the concept of competitive advantage. Cagatay argues:

Besides looking at the social impact of trade based on growth and market access, to look at social content, that is, the social relations across and within nations (class, gender, race, etc) that form the context in which trade policies are enacted (Cagatay 2001: 5).

This is an important analytic concept for a more holistic, inclusive socio-political economic framework, particularly with further trade liberalization, to ensure proper assessment of trade policy implementation.

Trade liberalization perpetuates gender inequalities in two specific ways. First, trade liberalization may increase women's paid employment, but the sectoral reallocation of work creates winners and losers, and thus one sector will be disproportionately impacted. Second, women's paid employment reallocated to export processing zones may not be sustained over time (Cagatay 2001: 7). Cagatay states:

It is significant that the increase in women's share of paid employment has taken place at a time when the power of workers generally has eroded, owing to increased capital mobility, greater flexibility due to technology innovation as well as labour market deregulation caused by the need to stay competitive in an intensified globalization and market liberalization. Thus, although trade liberalization may advantage women in terms of employment, their 'competitive advantage' as workers lies in their lower wages and inferior working conditions (Cagatay 2001: 7).

This argument addresses the misconception that women's increase in paid employment necessarily indicates an increase in well-being. This argument makes evident why a feminist agenda is necessary within the trade agreement processes to eliminate biases and to implement gender aware policies.

The sexual division of labour is highly visible in free trade zones, or export manufacturing zones. These areas are dominated by transnational corporations that capitalize on cheap labour predominantly performed by women (Durano 2002; Beneria, Floro, Grown and MacDonald 2000; Corpwatch 1999). The increase of employment for women within export manufacturing zones is not premised primarily on choice, but is based on having no other alternatives. Conventional macroeconomic policy analyses ignores the actual conditions and constraints from which this employment growth occurs. Furthermore, by examining all factors that contribute to employment growth such as social reproduction, the economic analysis of what factors contribute to economic growth at a macroeconomic level will be much more accurate.

Participation of women in the current paid labour market does not necessarily lead to higher incomes or empowerment (Cagatay 2001: 7). Cagatay states:

Women are more vulnerable to chronic poverty because of gender inequalities in distribution of income, access to production inputs such as credit, command over property or control of earned income, as well as gender biases in labour markets. Resource allocation is often gender-biased within the household as well as in state and market institutions. It is often stated that labour is poor people's most abundant asset (Cagatay 2001: 6).

Political and economic power dynamics play a significant part in the economic globalization process. Large multinational corporations have the economic power to reallocate a specific industry to another location for cheaper labour, such as to export trading zones, which are dominated by female workers. These power imbalances affect men and women differently because of the sexual division of labour that is predicated on pre-existing biases that are institutionalized. Institutional biases are assumptions made about a particular gender, sex, race or class and these biases are carried over into the

structural framework and policies within the organization, corporation or government. For example, “in China, [and, of course, not only in China] women are discouraged from entering management positions because of their assumed inherent preoccupation with family responsibility which is believed to adversely affect their ability to take on managerial roles” (Kerr 1996:247). Gender biases in the state, the market and the unequal control of resources within the household are systemic issues that need to be rectified. Thus, there is a need to reconceptualize the biases found within the household, the market and the state, which perpetuate inequalities by means of power imbalances between men and women.

Gender needs to play a significant part in trade policy analysis and formation because it does influence the final outcome of the policies (Williams 2001; 2002b, Sparr 2002b; L. Macdonald 1999). The parallels between the impacts of structural adjustment programs and the impacts of trade policies are evident in four ways. First, these trade policies adhere to the neo-liberal agenda, which excludes variables such as social reproduction that contribute to the economy. Second, trade policies reveal the contradictions of the neo-liberal agenda at the macroeconomic level because the liberalizing of markets actually increases poverty and decreases competitive advantage, the capability to compete internationally, for a large part of the world’s population. Third, the scope of these trade policies is not confined to economics, but affect the political, cultural and social spheres. Fourth, the neo-liberal agenda neglects to properly assess gender and the different impacts these trade policies have on men and women. A gender agenda within trade policy negotiations is necessary because the current method of analysis primarily focuses on productive and formal markets within the economy,

which inaccurately assesses the impacts of trade liberalization on women (Williams 2001: 3). The systemic subordination of women and women's work are the root causes of gender discrimination, which are perpetuated in trade policies. Sparr states:

Gender matters because the structure of the global economy is built upon the super-exploitation of women's time, labour, sexuality, and health. The United Nations Development Programme has documented that the majority of the world's poor are women; that 'women work longer hours than men in nearly every country'; and that the annual value of unpaid and underpaid women's work is roughly \$11 trillion dollars- slightly less than half of the official estimated \$23 trillion of global output (Sparr 2002a: 2).

Feminist critiques of trade liberalization are generally derived from two sets of experiences. First, the case is made by academics and activists researching the impacts of structural adjustment policies. Second, concerns arise out of non-government organizations and feminist research on the WTO's trade liberalizing impacts on the south (Williams 2002a: 3). From these research areas, two strong conclusions are drawn. First, existing gender inequalities may be exacerbated by trade liberalization policies, thus worsening the economic and social status of women. Second, trade policies may be adversely affected by existing gender inequalities, thereby feedback effects will alter the overall outcomes of the policies. Furthermore, macroeconomic policies do not accurately assess the feedback effects i.e., the impact on the household when a spouse loses his/her job, or the distribution of these effects, which are primarily placed on women. For example, "if wives are earning less, husbands may have to earn more- by working overtime, and so on- thereby leaving childcare and domestic labour to the partner who is bringing in less income" (Jenson 1996: 101). Feedback effects have short-term gains, but long-term problems and need to be factored into analysis.

Feminists critique international trade policies because they are limited to economic rationales, although the effects of these policies impact more than just the economic sphere. These policies impact national sovereignty, social policy and cultural policy. As we shall see, this is precisely why good governance in concert with democratic rule is imperative.

For example, the WTO's policies raise serious concerns for the nation state, citizens and women in particular. The deregulation of the market decreases national sovereignty by preventing independent domestic policies (Griffin Cohen 1999: 3). This is evident by the WTO's policies on Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights and Trade Related Investment Measures, which is discussed in the next chapter. This type of restriction makes the nation state susceptible to demands of transnational corporations and financial institutions (Grinspun and Krekelwich 1994: 36). This jeopardizes the state's control over labour standards such as minimum wage, regulated working hours and working conditions and women who are typically low wage earners and are required to do "flexible" labour are disproportionately affected.

The WTO's universal policies limit the control of the nation state on the imports of goods and services and how they are produced (Barlow and Clarke 2001). While the WTO's effort to increase trade liberalization by the freer flow of goods and services globally impacts every man, woman and child, these impacts are different for men and women politically, socially and culturally. Laura Macdonald critically analyzes the exclusion of women within the international trading system. Macdonald argues that trade agreements are not gender neutral, but are premised on pre-existing sexual division of labour within each country and play out in the international circuit (L. Macdonald 1999:

54). Trade affects women differently, which is evident by the feminization of the workforce, changes in agriculture, the informal sector, migration and consumption patterns (L. Macdonald 1999: 54). Recognition of this is fundamental for achieving equality within the economic globalization process.

Conclusion

This analysis reveals how men and women contribute to the economy differently and these differences must be accurately assessed within trade analysis. A gender and trade analysis will provide a more accurate account and analysis of the world's economic problems. This analysis will not assume that trade will always negatively impact women because not all women are negatively impacted by trade, but this analysis will provide different insights into the way trade policies play out.

Therefore, a feminist agenda is necessary within the WTO so that this organization does not perpetuate trade liberalization that adversely affects women. The foregoing analyses reveals the biases evident in the neoclassical framework and the neo-liberal agenda. The goal of my thesis is to establish the reasons why there needs to be a gender analysis implemented more specifically into the WTO. Without a gender analysis and with further liberalizing of markets more entrenched the devaluation of unpaid labour will become. This analysis, in conjunction with an assessment of the opportunities and successes of three feminist groups, discussed in chapter three, will assist in formulating how to implement a feminist agenda into the WTO, the topic of chapter four which expands on the good governance approach.

My contention is that good governance is the most effective method to implement a feminist agenda into the WTO. While this will be discussed further in chapter three, for the moment, let me indicate that good governance involves not only the participation of governments and business, but also civil society including women's organizations. Good governance promotes deeper and wider democracy, transparency and accountability. In my view, and that of Cameron and Gonas, women's organizations are particularly well suited to promoting and implementing these ideals (Cameron and Gonas 1999).

Although neo-liberal ideologies are presently influencing the globalization process these ideologies are not inevitable nor impermeable. These ideologies can be changed, altered and democratized by incorporating good governance. Therefore, a good governance approach which emphasizes the contribution of civil society and the contributions of women's organization, both grassroots and mainstream, in particular, can transform the current course of economic globalization. In turn, this approach will require trade policies to be more transparent and accountable, which will directly effect the way the WTO currently functions (Goetz 1998).

CHAPTER TWO:

THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

While there are, no doubt, harmful consequences of globalization and trade liberalization, the goal of this thesis is not to reiterate all of the negative implications of such trends as this has been thoroughly recounted elsewhere (Khor 2000a; Petras and Veltmeyer 2000; Afshar and Berrientos 1999). Instead, I intend to contribute to the literature that proposes alternative measures to help reduce the disparities caused by globalization and trade liberalization. In so doing, I mediate between the two dominant and opposing views: those that favour trade and those that are against the current practices and policies of trade. While these two diametrically opposed arguments are prevalent, especially within the media, there is a third for which I argue: good governance resulting in fair democratic trade. This will be developed further in this chapter along with a close and careful analysis of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

The WTO is a large international organization that is becoming the central focus for global trade agreements and negotiations. The democratic processes of these agreements and negotiations are questioned (Clarke and Barlow 2001) because of the social and economic disparities between the north and the south and in particular the impacts of trade liberalization on women of the economic south (DAWN 2001a).

The WTO is composed of different governments from around the world. The members of the WTO ratify agreements that permit trade liberalization, which fosters the neo-liberal agenda. It is argued that this agenda furthers the widening gap between the

north and the south due to the disparities in labour, resources and capital. The unequal distribution of wealth and power between the north and south, supported by national governments creates a breeding ground for new imperialism (Petras and Veltmeyer: 2000). Corporate demands for profits take precedence over human rights, labour rights and environmental rights.

The WTO is undoubtedly a powerful institution that affects the lives of people around the globe. This organization currently lacks a gender analysis, which adversely affects women (Sparr 2002a). As noted in chapter one, a feminist agenda integrated into the WTO has the potential to provide greater insight to the impacts of this agenda and its freer trade focus.

Because the WTO is not likely to be dismantled, I want to take a more pragmatic approach to reform and restructure the WTO and modify some of the detrimental practices of this organization (Williams 2001b). A key problem is the lack of civil society input, transparency and democracy, and in short the lack of good governance in the WTO. In my view, good governance is the mechanism to change the current course of globalization. Once more, good governance requires democratic procedures, transparency and accountability. Democratic procedures are necessary to guarantee legitimate decision making-processes. Transparency requires the representation and involvement of civil society in general and women's organizations in particular so that authentic negotiations and inclusive trade agreements can transpire. Finally, accountability is required so that there is a balance between the competing interests of all citizens, including women's organizations, corporations, states and all must be held to account. Ultimately, it is my hope that good governance will promote a multi-faceted

and multilateral trading system that contributes to not only economic, but social prosperity.

This chapter starts with an examination of how the WTO emerged and its functions and structure. The aim is to provide insight into how this organization operates in order to understand how it can be changed. Furthermore, I will problematize trade, trade liberalization and trade agreements and how they play out. The WTO's trade agreements are set in place as universal regulations. However, these universal agreements are producing distributional disparities between the north and the south, while reinforcing the sexual division of labour between men and women. The next section analyzes the proponents and detractors of the WTO and the good governance approach. These debates examine the contentious issues surrounding the WTO. A critical analysis of the WTO's policies is important to illustrate how transnational corporations set the WTO agenda and why a gender and trade analysis is important for a more comprehensive understanding of trade liberalization. Finally, I specifically examine how women fit into the WTO in terms of their exclusion and the need for their integration.

Overall, this analysis is aimed at illustrating that trade is not an inherently destructive process; on the contrary, trade has the potential and capability to assist in the prosperity and sustainability of developing nations (Oxfam 2002: 6). Yet, women must be factored into the equation. By implementing a feminist agenda into the WTO, this organization's policies will be informed by an awareness of the implications of their policies, especially for women.

History, Structure and Function of the World Trade Organization

After the Second World War there was a shift towards cooperation in international trade. The creation of the Bretton Woods institutions in 1944 and the United Nations in 1945 illustrates the trends towards unification and integration (Ransom 2001: 15). In 1948, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, GATT, was created to regulate international trade and deflect trade related disputes. Trade disputes would be resolved through a series of eight rounds (Ransom 2001: 15). GATT consisted of 23 countries, which is minimal compared to the current WTO's membership of approximately 144 (Sampson 2001: 3). The last GATT round was the Uruguay Round 1986-1994, which resulted in the creation of the WTO. This organization is an umbrella organization for international trade that aims at liberalizing the market (Sampson 2001: 3).

The WTO claims to provide: "the institution and legal framework for the new multilateral trading system" (WTO 1999a: 5).¹ This organization's structure and principles complement the neo-liberal agenda, which continues to foster trade liberalization. As noted in chapter one, the neo-liberal ideology justified by the neoclassical economic framework is to maximize exports, reduce social spending and restrict state regulations on trade blocks (Brodie 1996: 4). The link between neo-liberalism, economic globalization and trade liberalization is that they are all fuelled by capitalist structures of power that make the market central for monetary gain. Trade

¹ The Director General of the World Trade Organization is Supachai Panitchpakdi (MacMillian 2000:14).

liberalization, primarily controlled by the WTO, guarantees continued momentum of the spread of this economic globalization process.

The WTO's structure, principles and functions reveal an organization that is built upon rules, negotiations and "democratic" processes (WTO 1999a) narrowly conceived. This organization is the only international organization that deals with global rules between nations, one vote per country for each agreement, and this organization provides a common ground for trade negotiations and trade disputes (WTO 2002). The implementation of these processes, however, may result in different outcomes, and even undemocratic processes. The next sections briefly discuss the structural setup of the WTO. Examining the structural setup of the WTO is important to illustrate how this organization is democratic in theory, but is not in practice as a result of the exclusion of non-government representation and a gender and trade analysis.

The WTO's three primary functions are to first, facilitate and implement multilateral trade agreements; second, provide a forum for negotiation and third to administer the dispute settlement board and the review of trade policies (WTO 1999a: 7). Ministerial meetings, the forum for which trade negotiations and agreements transpire, occur every two years (WTO 1999a: 9). These meetings have been held in the following countries to date: Singapore 1996; Geneva 1998; Seattle 1999 and Doha 2001. The General Council, the support body to the Ministerial meetings, maintains and manages all aspects of the organization between the Ministerial meetings (WTO 1999a: 9). This General Council also represents the Dispute Settlement Body and the Trade Policy Review Body. These bodies deal with disputes between member countries with regard to trade agreements. These different levels reveal the WTO's hierarchy of power and that

illustrates the challenges that face women's organizations in their attempt to influence the WTO decision-makers.

There are two ways a country can become a member of this organization. First, by original membership under GATT; and second, by accession, which involves negotiating a membership with current members (WTO 1999a: 15). The rules and regulations for members are not clearly outlined or defined by the WTO because membership is specified on "terms to be agreed"(WTO 1999a: 16). The key principle of the WTO is consensus of the majority (WTO 2002d). The issue of consensus raises many questions such as: what agenda is put forward? What agenda is silenced? What issues are sidelined? What alliances are made prior to voting? What strategies are used to ensure consensus? All these questions raise further concerns in relation to democracy, transparency and accountability.

In the last round, held in Doha (November 2001), including developing nations was a pivotal agenda item (WTO 2002). This development only came about as a result of the intense public criticism and pressure from the failed 1999 Seattle Ministerial meeting which sparked the largest anti-globalization protest to date. This protest included the collective voices of women's organizations, students, Indigenous people, and environmentalists. Therefore, the Doha round was an important stepping stone from which a feminist agenda can be integrated into the WTO because it demonstrated that with enough public pressure and international visibility of the impacts of trade policies, accountability and transparency can become obligatory.

Trade, Trade Liberalization and the WTO

Economic power imbalances create disparities between the north and the south and breeds exploitation. This exploitation is visible in the treatment of developing countries and the people within these countries by transnational corporations. Transnational corporations maximize their profit by exploiting their workers in the south through lower wages and lenient labour rights (Chossudovsky 1998: 4).

Therefore, there is a need for solidarity in the construction of international institutions. However, how to achieve solidarity and shape these institutions is the question at hand (Griffin Cohen 1999: 1). Marjorie Griffin Cohen critically examines this complex issue of constructing democratic international institutions and argues that many developing countries are hesitant to formulate collective public policy because they cannot maintain or abide by the same standards as developed countries (Griffin Cohen 1999: 9). Developing nations are wary of universal trade policies that neglect to accurately account for the different treatment between the north and the south (Griffin Cohen 1999). The implementation of these policies could be devastating for the developing country, women in particular. However, continued devastation and exploitation could be maintained without such universal policies, i.e., the Human Rights Declaration (Griffin Cohen 1999: 9).

Amartya Sen's work also problematizes the issues of universals. Sen argues that universal policies are not necessarily the answer to economic development problems because they impede equal economic development process. Universal policies have utilitarian foundations that focus on only the sum total and not necessarily the equality of distribution or the economy of an independent state (Sen 2000: 62). Trade processes that

yield the highest economic growth are used as the referent for analysis for other trade policies regardless of the social repercussions. This is problematic within the current economic globalization process because the neo-liberal approach prioritizes the market.

Homogenous trade policies are usually contested by feminists because they often explicitly exclude gender, race or class consciousness. These policies tend to reflect a distinct elite business sector of society, which benefits from these policy outcomes. Universal policies are dangerous because of their utilitarian undertone, i.e., they are geared towards the greater good, but the greater good can be exclusive, especially when the economically powerful elite devise these policies.

Despite the WTO's democratic discourses, the WTO's universal trade agreements often infringe on personal freedoms. For example, rural women farmers or subsistence farmers cannot sustain their livelihoods because of the competition with large multinational agriculture corporations. These farmers are not benefiting from the WTO's universal trade agreements. In fact these farmers are disadvantaged by the sweeping trade agreements that primarily benefit transnational corporations. There is a correlation between universal trade agreements and Beneria and Waring's arguments that value is only placed on monetary gain (Beneria 1999; Waring 1999). If farmers cannot sell their goods, they will have no other choice but to participate in the formal sector. Therefore, people are forced to participate in activities in the social, political or economic sphere with so-called personal freedom already chosen (Sen 2000: 32).

Universal trade agreements may be democratic because they apply to all, but they are not democratic in practice because they are not devised on equal grounds. The WTO's trade policies are applicable to all member countries; in fact, on paper, favoritism

or “the Most Favoured Nation” clause is frowned upon within trade negotiations. The National Treatment article and the Most Favoured Nation article are important to understanding the breadth of these policies. The National Treatment article requires that local and imported goods be treated equally, and the Most Favoured Nations article requires that each country treat imports equally from all member countries (WTO 1999a; Barlow and Clarke 2001: 69). These articles threaten domestic policies and national sovereignty because sovereign states do not have the control to ban goods that have been produced in defiance of international treaties such as the human rights declaration.

A good example of concern for how Multilateral Trade Agreements threaten national sovereignty is given by *Trade Related Intellectual Property Measures, TRIPS*, which enforce global patents, copyrights and trademarks. TRIPS are a highly contentious area at the present moment. For example, under this agreement generic drugs, generic AIDS drugs in particular, are not allowed into many developing nations. This is particularly relevant to women who now constitute 58% of people with AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa (UNAIDS 2001: 1). Another example is the *Agreement on Agriculture, AOA*, which restricts governments’ control of domestic agriculture policy by adhering to international food trade rules. This agreement restricts the rights of governments to support local farmers and environmental laws (Barlow and Clarke 2001: 69). Another policy, *Trade Related Investment Measures, TRIMS*, decreases the rights of governments to regulate foreign investment and the governing laws from which they comply (Barlow and Clarke 2001: 69).

These types of agreements are contentious because in one sense universals can ensure democratic rights i.e., all members within the WTO are treated the same; however,

the fact that these universals are usually constructed by those in power to maintain power is a serious area of concern. These universal trade policies within and between countries are applicable to all, but neglect to take into consideration differences such as class, gender and race. These differences shape how these policies work. The WTO's agreements neglect to adequately account for these differences, which directly hinders equality. These arguments illustrate why feminist critiques of universals are particularly relevant to trade liberalization policies of the WTO.

The following section examines the debates surrounding the WTO. The positions can be categorized into three areas: those in favour of the WTO, those opposed to this organization, and finally, the approach for which I argue, those in quest of good governance. These different positions help to decipher how a feminist agenda can be implemented into the WTO and what strategies appear to be the most effective.

Proponents and Detractors

Proponents of the WTO

"...The principle objectives of the WTO, as of GATT, are raising standards of living, ensuring full employment, expanding production and trade, and allowing optimal use of the world's resources"(WTO 1999a: 6). The methods for which these objectives are achieved are highly contested between the advocates and the opponents of this organization. Proponents conceive of this organization as advantageous because of the WTO's pursuit of the freer flow of goods and services negotiated by elected officials and fostered by global consensual multilateral agreements. The construction of the WTO and

the global trading system is so sophisticated that it permits trade to be conducted at a rate of approximately US \$1 billion per hour, every hour of every day. Therefore, the powerful benefactors of this process will not easily give up this system (Sampson 2001: 5). Trade liberalization is expanding into every corner of the globe. Supporters of this global organization claim that trade liberalization is the driving force behind the formation of a global community with regard to the sharing of technology, resources, ideas and knowledge (WTO 1999a). This expansion raises the question of how plausible it is to impede or dismantle such a mechanism. This type of argument is held by Renato Ruggier, Former Director General of the WTO, who stated: "Anyone who believes that globalization can be stopped has to tell us how he would envision stopping economic and technological progress; this is tantamount to trying to stop the rotation of the earth" (Schrire 1999: 50). This argument asserts that the process is going to occur whether there is resistance or not.

Another argument advanced by supporters of the WTO is that trade is better than aid; therefore, developing nations directly benefit from trade liberalization via the increase of employment. Trade is important. Trade can assist with a successful development of a country. This is evident by the recent report Make Trade Fair, released by Oxfam. Oxfam states:

If developing countries increased their share of world export by just 5 percent, this would generate \$350bn- seven times as much as they receive in aid. The \$70bn that Africa would generate through a one percent increase in its share of world export is approximately five times the amount provided to the region through aid and debt relief (Oxfam 2002: 6).

Strong supporters of the WTO argue that trade is essential for the continued prosperity of the global economy. From this perspective: “public interest groups don’t acknowledge the increased output and improvement in living standards produced by freer international trade. They ignore the opportunities to better protect the environment and support society’s most vulnerable members that are possible by the increased income generated through trade”(Grady 1999: xvi). In short, supporters of the WTO claim that trade expansion is essential for global prosperity and deflect anti-trade, anti-globalization groups by arguing that these “interest groups” do not understand the complex issues and benefits of the international trading system (Grady 1999: 5).

Detractors of the WTO

Proponents of the WTO have well grounded arguments. Trade liberalization does indeed create new employment opportunities especially in developing nations. However, as feminist theorists (Sparr 2002a; Cagatay 2001; Beneria 1999; and Elson 1991) point out, the opening of markets does not necessarily mean an increase in living standards. The liberalizing of a particular market is not done on a whim. Particular markets are tapped into because of the potential for profit; thereby, capitalizing on the resources found within this market. Thus, there are numerous debates surrounding the multilateral trading system of the WTO. The arguments in favour of multilateral trade come from those who are successfully benefiting from this process. The arguments opposing the multilateral trading system are usually from the people who are negatively affected by this process, usually people of the developing south, women in particular. The current

process of trade liberalization is not detrimental because of the break down of trade barriers, it is corrupt because of the implicit hierarchical structures from which economic trade liberalizing is dictated (Barlow and Clarke 2001: 70).

The anti-globalization movement vehemently contests trade liberalization promoted by the neo-liberal agenda that does not necessarily take sustainability or fair trade into account, but rather promotes profit and efficiency. The main argument against economic globalization, and in particular the WTO, is the unequal distribution of wealth and the impacts of trade liberalization (Oxfam 2002; UNRISD 1995). At the recent international conference on Finance for Development, Fidel Castro Ruz, delivered a speech about the current economic globalization crisis. He stated:

As a result of this economic order, over 75 percent of the world population lives in underdevelopment, and extreme poverty has already reached 1.2 billion people in the Third World. So, far from narrowing, the gap is widening. The revenue of the richest nations that in 1960 was 37 times larger than that of the poorest is now 74 times larger. This situation has reached such extremes that the assets of the three wealthiest persons in the world amount to the GDP of the 48 poorest countries combined. The number of people actually starving was 826 million in the year of 2001. There are at the moment 854 million illiterate adults while 325 million children do not attend school. There are 2 billion people who have no access to lower medications and 2.4 billion lack the basic sanitation conditions. No less that 11 million children under the age of 5 perish every year from preventable causes while half a million go blind for lack of vitamin A. The life span of the population in the developed world is 30 years higher than that of people living in Sub-Saharan Africa. A true genocide! (Fidel Castro 2002)

The WTO is composed of international bodies, which dictate the rules, regulations, negotiation and agenda of this institution. The only area in which the WTO claims to have the potential to alter government policies is with regard to dispute settlements (WTO 2002: 2). However, the WTO is the governing body of trade liberalization so this organization impacts much more than just trade disputes. International trade is almost an exclusive process within the WTO, which raises serious

concerns because of the uneven ground of members. Opponents of the WTO argue that the powerful members of this organization, the Quad, are gaining global governance by completely dictating the WTO agenda. Tony Clarke and Maude Barlow state:

The Quad- United States, the European Union, Japan and Canada...convenes separately several times a year between General Council meetings, repeatedly making key decisions on what the WTO will do on major agenda priorities... meetings take place behind closed doors without the participation of other member-countries, and although the Quad is not formally recognized as WTO executives, it is by its composition able to informally exercise executive powers (Barlow and Clarke 2001: 72).

The WTO's democratic processes are controversial because the member-driven claim to democracy is questionable because of the fact that members are not situated on the same negotiating level. It is in the best interest of countries to join this organization to remain within the world trading circuit. If a country joins this organization there is potential for financial gain from trade liberalization; however, this membership could be at the potential cost of many citizens. The other option for a country is to reject membership and be excluded from the international trade circuit. The choice to refuse WTO membership is not a free decision either because members have more interest in trading with other members, than to have multiple bi-lateral agreements with individual countries. Therefore, the rejection of the WTO is the potential rejection of international trade, which illustrates Sen's argument of the lack of freedom of choice (Sen 2000).

Furthermore, the lack of transparency is a major area of contestation (Barlow and Clarke 2001; Edwards 2001; Hassanali 2000). The lack of transparency provides the forum to question the legitimacy and democratic procedure of this organization with regard to the limited access to meetings and the overlapping of meetings during missions. The lack of transparency is particularly contested by developing nations because their

missions' size is on average about 3.51 people compared to 7.38 people for developed nations (Shelfail 2001:1). Therefore, the concerns remain about the strategic structure of the meetings, especially when developing countries cannot participate in voicing their consensus or objections due to financial constraints. The lack of transparency in trade agreements also raise issues of elitism: "access to the WTO is dependent on possession of specialized knowledge available only to a small section of the world's elite"(Marc Williams 1999: 167).

Opponents of the WTO claim that it is democratic in theory, but not in practice (Green 2001; Shelfail 2001). This argument is reinforced by the fact that the WTO is controlled by a small handful of powerful nations dictating the course of globalization to achieve global governance (Barlow and Clarke 2001: 70). For example, "New World Order is comprised of a host of global strategic planning and policy forums. These institutions form an integral part of the new imperialism- the new systems of 'global governance'"(Petras and Veltmeyer 2000: 14). This is why it is important a good governance approach include governments, civil society and women's organizations so that truly democratic and accountable processes are in place.

Whose Agenda? Good Governance

Continued liberalizing of markets is enabling and facilitating the growth and expansion of transnational corporations globally. Corpwatch states:

There are now some 40,000 transnational corporation (TNCs) (parent firms) with around 250,000 affiliates in foreign countries... Two-thirds of the world trade in goods and services is controlled by transnational corporations... Only one-third of international

trade is not directly controlled by TNCs and not subjected to their monopoly pricing or other monopoly practices (Corpwatch 2001: 1-2).

The WTO does not have direct engagement with transnational corporations just nation state representatives; however, the corporate agenda does influence the WTO's policies because they influence nation states with regard to financial security. This is evident by the power transnational corporations have within the nation state, which flows into multilateral agreements. As a result, the WTO or individual member countries have little authority or power over large multinational corporations to penalize them for violations or infringements on human rights, labour rights or environmental rights because of the nation state's dependence on financial security.

The increase and expansion of transnational corporations may appear to be positively impacting women because of the increase of employment opportunities, but these jobs are generally characterized by low pay, part-time and insecurity (Donath 2000: 115; Cameron and Gonas 1999: 65; Armstrong 1996: 53; Gabriel and Macdonald 1996: 171; UNRISD: 1995: 25). Free trade zones or maquiladoras typify these characteristics. Employment within maquiladoras does not necessarily increase women's competitive advantage because of the long working hours and cheap labour. In fact, "low female wages have spurred investment and export by lowering unit labor cost, providing the foreign exchange to purchase capital and intermediate goods which in turn raise productivity and growth rates" (Beneria, Floro, Grown and MacDonald 2000: xi). This decrease in workers' rights is evident by the fact that "impoverished families are forced to work at below subsistence, minimum-wage jobs or go hungry. More workers work longer hours today than they did in the 1970s" (Petras and Veltmeyer 2000: 45).

Corporate interests come before workers' interests. For example, "The U.S. has the lowest corporate tax rate of any industrialized country. Corporate tax accounts for 10 percent of federal revenues, but income taxes on wages account for 47 percent" (Petras and Veltmeyer 2000: 64). The United States has one of the highest number of transnational corporations globally (Corpwatch 2001:1). The primary objective of transnational corporations is to make money. Therefore, transnational corporations expand into developing nations to capitalize on the cheap labour, resources and lenient environmental regulations because they are able to most effectively and efficiently make a profit. This agenda is evident by the concentration of wealth within transnational corporations. UNRISD states:

The top 200 global corporations account from \$3,046 billion of sales in 1982, equivalent to 24 per cent of world GDP (\$12,600 billion) that year. By 1992, their sales had reached \$5,862 billion, and their equivalent value to world GDP (\$21,900 billion) has risen to 26.8 per cent (UNIRISD 1995: 4).

Although there is unequal distribution of wealth, transnational corporations, supported by the WTO's trade policies, do provide foreign investment, employment and wages to developing nations. Yet, in their drive for monetary gain, transnational corporations usually eliminate the competition within the area, thus countries become dependent on the transnational corporation for a large share of employment. Developing states are particularly affected by these mergers and acquisitions because the profits from these corporations are usually sent back to the parent company, which tends to reside in the north (Corpwatch 2001: 2). Petras and Veltmeyer's analysis crystallizes the unequal distribution of wealth and the concentration of wealth within a smaller number of transnational corporations. They state:

By 1980 the world's top five hundred TNCs had an annual turnover exceeding \$3 trillion (U.S. dollar), equivalent to almost 30 percent of gross world production and an estimated 70 percent of international trade... According to UNCTAD, 50 percent of these operations, in terms of their market value, did not involve the world market but consisted of intra-firm transfers (Petras and Veltmeyer 2000: 15).

Transnational corporations' retreat from nation states, particularly developing states, would be economically devastating. These corporations are conscious of this power and use it as a means to place demands upon developing nations' governments. Therefore, governments within developing countries in particular abide by the corporations' demands to ensure that the corporation will not leave the state. As a result, transnational corporations are becoming major actors within the international political scene (Durano 2002; Corpwatch 2001; Barlow and Clarke 2001). The more transnational corporations invest in foreign markets, the more clout they have in global governance. Similar links can be drawn between corporate dominance today and the imperial reign of the past.

Petras and Veltmeyer illustrate these parallels:

Today the pattern of asset ownership in the advanced imperial centres resembles pattern of land ownership in what used to be pejoratively called the "banana republic": less than 5 percent of the population owns close to 90 percent of privately held assets (Petras and Veltmeyer 2000: 15).

The rise of transnational corporations accelerates free trade policies, hence, the connection with the WTO.

These debates surrounding the WTO illustrate that there are pros and cons to multilateral trade. However, since the WTO is too large to dismantle and the anti-globalization's movement's allegations are too serious to ignore, there must be a common ground for which both positions can have some consensus. The WTO needs to make

itself more transparent and failure to do so will contribute to the suspicion, and hostility that the organization has engendered (Loy 2001:115). By having non-government organizations observe the WTO procedures, the issues and debates surrounding the WTO such as the lack of transparency and democratic procedures will be minimized. Good governance as opposed to global governance is one approach that provides a bridge for these different perspectives. The forgoing analysis of transnational corporations emphasizes how the WTO's agenda is controlled and why a good governance approach is important to ensure democracy. A good governance approach will move the WTO's corporate controlled agenda to a truly democratic agenda responsive to businesses, governments and civil society organizations. The next section elaborates upon the good governance approach.

Good Governance

Kofi Annan, the General Secretary of the United Nations, illustrates the intersection of perspectives. He states: "humankind has arrived at such a historical junction... we cannot take the onward march of free trade and the rule of the law for granted. Instead, we must resolve to underpin the free global market with genuinely global value and secure it with effective institutions" (Annan 2001: 27). Truly effective institutions can only come about through good governance. Good governance is a contested issue with regard to the WTO. My understanding of good governance is based upon Gary Sampson's definition, which is: "the sum of the many ways that individuals and institutions- public and private-manage their common affairs"(Sampson 2001: 17).

This includes the active participation of women's organization and civil society representation, thus, "governance seeks to capture both the blurred boundary between state and civil society..." (Rhodes 2002: 107). Thus with good governance, the state, the market and civil society work in concert to create more democratic, transparent and accountable processes.

Governments play a significant role in the practices and policies of trade liberalization. Most aspects of our lives are shaped by governments including their international trade policies. Government involvement in large international institutions, like the WTO, shape how our everyday lives function, ranging from the imported coffee we drink to the jeans we wear. The way the government functions and deliberates is therefore a central feminist concern (Brodie 1996: 11). There are varying feminist approaches to the state and strategies such as the liberal mainstream approach or radical alternative approach. The liberal mainstream approach works within the state and the disengaged approach works separate and outside of the state (Brodie 1996: 9). The disengaged approach is important so that independent feminist analyses continued outside of state structures is produced. The liberal mainstream approach works within the system. This approach advocates for alternative feminist methods, strategies and initiatives that are not influenced by or confined to, the state's policy-making processes analyzed in the next chapter. The mainstream approach to good governance works within the system to achieve better standing, but even though differences may be acknowledged this approach may assist in legitimizing structures of power that reinforce inequalities (Enloe 2000: 198). While I agree that pressure placed on governments will assist in achieving a good governance approach, nonetheless, mainstreaming a feminist agenda

into the WTO will be far more complex than that of a narrowly defined mainstream approach such as the liberal feminist approach. Rather, I argue for a multi-faceted approach that will require the active inclusion of women in policy-making decisions, as well as the role and participation of alternative grassroots feminist organizations. In my view, through coalition building this multi-faceted mainstream strategy will be an essential component for critical change to the WTO. In short, there needs to be a synthesis of the various types of feminist organizing to produce successful change which will alter the current trends of the WTO's policies and practices. These different feminist approaches illustrate the complex layers of good governance and will be further analyzed in the following chapter.

The good governance approach factors in the state, the market and civil society. This balancing is important to ensure that corporate interests do not exceed the public's interest. This multi-faceted approach is particularly important with further trade liberalization because trade, as discussed earlier, does not only impact the economic sphere. Rhodes states:

Globalization raises important questions about the impacts of the international system on the administrative structuring and restructuring of the nation state; the relationship between the nation-state, the rule of law and the international system; and the effects of the internationalization of policy-making in domestic steering capacities. But equally, national governmental traditions and state structures mediate the effects of globalization (Rhodes 2002: 110).

Therefore, the WTO's trade policies are testing the power and responsibility of governments. Governments need to ensure that the WTO is a state-centered institution that abides by the democratized processes and not only corporate agendas. Good governance also involves providing the United Nations systems with more power to

ensure that international institutions, like the WTO, adhere to international treaties, i.e., Human Rights Declaration, to ensure that corporations abide by these rules regardless of a particular states' enforcement of these rules. Furthermore, corporations must be held responsible and liable for violations of international treaties, as independent actors within the globalization processes. Therefore, good governance involves ensuring democratic rights and procedures within the multilateral trading system. Good governance will provide the opportunity for governments to be more responsible and accountable to civil society and peoples' interests in "globalization-from below" (Falk 2000: 381). These arguments illustrate that there is not a clearly defined path or strategy to rectify the problems presented with multilateral agreements. However, transparency and a greater status for civil society will help legitimize the WTO in the international spectrum and the participation by women's organizations is critical.

As previously discussed, gender blindness and gender neutrality have led to trade without a female face (L. Macdonald 1999: 54). Gender differences are not addressed within the WTO's policies. The current globalization process claims to be gender neutral; however, the impacts of trade liberalization are not gender neutral (Sparr 2002b; MacDonlad 2001; L. Macdonald 1999; Williams 2001a). Feminist organizations have to place pressure on individual member countries of the WTO to demand good governance. This good governance strategy will require constant pressure on member countries to answer questions and concerns about democratic procedures, negotiations and trade agreements of the WTO. In turn, this places pressure on the WTO to make processes and policies more inclusive and transparent. Women's organizations and civil society have to collaborate to place pressure on governments and demand good governance.

Currently, feminist organizations are not permitted to participate within the WTO's policy-making processes. Large multinational corporations are not permitted either, but there is overwhelming evidence that their agendas are represented in General Council meetings and even within Ministerial Meetings (Green 2001: 2). For a feminist organization to be effective, it must have access to influence the WTO policy-makers. However, the setup of the WTO excludes any attempts for non-government organizations to have access to policy-makers (Marc Williams 1999: 156). Nevertheless, there are two areas in which women's organizations, NGO's and other civil society organizations have the potential to influence and impact the WTO's policies (Marc Williams 1999: 166). In the agreements establishing the WTO, Article V.: Relations with Other Organizations, has the potential for NGO participation. Article V. states:

1. The General Council shall make appropriate arrangements for effective cooperation with other intergovernmental organizations that have responsibilities related to those of the WTO.
2. The General Council may make appropriate arrangements for consultations and cooperation with non-governmental organizations concerned with matters related to those of the WTO (WTO 1999a: 27).

This article provides potential avenues for participation in policy-making. However, the WTO structure challenges feminists on a number of levels, specifically with regard to the hierarchical exclusive setup. Negotiations within the WTO are high-level and technical, which are not accessible to most social advocacy organizations; therefore, the WTO excludes most of the opposition just by the mere fact that the language used is terribly complex and intimidating (Marc Williams 1999: 166). However, consistent advocacy is required to ensure social organizations concerns are voiced. Therefore, feminist

organizations have to push forward with multi-layered good governance initiatives that demand transparency, accountability and responsibility within the WTO's trade policies.

The next chapter will critically examine three feminist organizations and their attempts to rectify trade liberalization policies and practices. This analysis includes the examination of previous women's social advocacy movements, which is important to determine what are the best methods to integrate a feminist agenda into the WTO.

CHAPTER THREE:

CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE THREE FEMINIST AGENDAS

The integration of a feminist agenda into the World Trade Organization (WTO) is necessary because the different impacts of trade need to be acknowledged so that gender-blind policies are not perpetuated. In my view, a feminist agenda with a gender and trade analysis will better articulate how gender differences and differences in class and race, among other inequalities, can be rectified. A feminist agenda proposes to change the current systems of power, which continue to obscure women's issues by producing gender-blind policies. A feminist agenda attempts to empower women by recognizing the systemic oppression of women, and envisions a better world, which can be achieved through feminist praxis resulting in transformation. My understanding of *feminism* is based upon Susan D. Phillips's definition: "a rich and diverse analytic perspective that at its core involves a transformative politics committed to removing gender based injustices and empowering women in their communities, workplaces, and families, as well as through public policies"(Phillips 1999: 242). The term *feminist praxis* will be premised on Jo-anne Lee's definition: "the simultaneous linking of research, as a form of knowledge production, with activism for positive change"(Lee 1996: 142). The term *feminist organization* is based on Myra Marx Ferree and Patricia Yancey Martin's definition: "...as the places in which and the means through which the work of the women's movement is done" (Marx Ferree and Yancey Martin 1995:13). *Mainstreaming gender* "requires a review of norms and regulations from a gender perspective, integrating gender and policies into services for both women and men..." (UNIFEM 2000: 135).

This chapter examines the priorities of three feminist organizations. This analysis examines the strengths and weaknesses of the three feminist organizations and their strategies towards economic globalization. This analysis will then be used to evaluate the best means to integrate a feminist agenda into the WTO. I have selected these particular feminist organizations to analyze because they provide different perspectives on the globalization process. United Nations Development Fund for Women, UNIFEM, provides an international feminist perspective. Developing Alternatives With Women For a New Era, DAWN, provides a southern feminist perspective and Feminist Alliance for International Action, FAFIA, provides a northern feminist perspective.

These three feminist groups adhere to principles which I believe are foundational for a successful agenda that can be adopted or integrated into mainstream institutions. The key elements are:

1. Must recognize the systemic subordination of women, but envision a better world for women.
2. Must focus on empowering women, but not excluding men. The goal is for a more humane sustainable world.
3. Inclusion of class, race, nation, creed, ethnicity, sexual orientation and disability must be an integral part of the analysis.
4. Must have a clear direct focus and maintain this focus.
5. Must be vocal and promote the issue with literature, seminars, media outreach and public awareness. This will raise consciousness of the agenda.
6. Must be active and participatory at the grassroots level.
7. Must distinguish between the economic-political agenda at the macro-level and the micro-level.
8. Must be fluid to embrace changes, differences and welcome diverse perspectives.
9. Must network with feminist and non- feminist organizations to further advance the agenda.
10. Must provide alternative options to existing frameworks.²

These elements synthesize the central concerns of the women's movement and are derived from previous women's movements strategies developed in reaction to economic

² I have composed this list based upon what I believe are important aspects for an inclusive feminist agenda. This list is derived from various feminist courses, theories, texts, articles and the Beijing Platform for Action.

developments such as NAFTA and APEC, which will be further analyzed in the next chapter.

Feminist Organizations

United Nations Development Fund for Women, UNIFEM

The United Nations Development Fund for Women is a feminist organization that promotes women's empowerment and gender equality. This organization is aimed at ensuring the participation of women at all levels of development planning, practice and policy-making. This feminist organization works primarily in: Africa, Asia, the Pacific, Latin America, the Caribbean, Central Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth Independent States (UNIFEM 2000: 4). I chose UNIFEM as a representative group for the international feminist perspective, because this organization works on a regional, national and international level. UNIFEM provides a multi-leveled feminist perspective on the issues pertinent to economic globalization. UNIFEM works from within the system of the United Nations (UN). The UN is a large, international institution with access to extensive resources and capital. The UN system is hierarchically structured and is heavily influenced by traditional economic and political power (UNIFEM 2002a: 1).

Although UNIFEM acts as a catalyst within the UN, the former also works towards for grounding and empowering women at the grassroots level (UNIFEM 2002a: 1). Indeed, UNIFEM states that it aims to ensure that women will be empowered at all levels of the development process. UNIFEM states:

UNIFEM is the women's fund at the United Nations. It provides financial and technical assistance to innovative programmes and strategies that promote women's human rights, political participation and economic security. Within the UN system, UNIFEM promotes gender equality and links women's issues and concerns to national, regional and global agendas by fostering collaboration and providing technical expertise on gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment strategies (UNIFEM 2000: 1).

For example, this organization encourages and assists other women's organizations to build strategic alliances for successful advocacy. UNIFEM also encourages the development of management and business tools to advance non-governmental organizations (UNIFEM 2000: 8). UNIFEM's agenda is primarily focused on strategic programs and methods that empower women. It outlines five core strategies to accomplish this empowerment framework:

- Strengthening the capacity and leadership of women's organizations and networks.
- Leveraging political and financial support for women from a wide range of stakeholders.
- Forging new partnerships among women's organizations, governments, the UN system and the private sector.
- Undertaking pilot projects to test innovative approaches to women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming.
- Building a knowledge base on effective strategies for engendering mainstream development (UNIFEM 2000: 4).

These ambitious strategies suggest that UNIFEM has extensive resources and institutional access as compared to other women's organizations. In fact, as one illustration of the resources from which it can draw, UNIFEM received \$17 million in trust fund support of their current projects to eliminate violence against women (UNIFEM's Annual Report 2001d: 2).

UNIFEM's Biennial Report, Progress of the World Women 2000, focuses on globalization with regard to the achievements and progress of women's economic empowerment and gender equality from the 1980s to the 1990s (UNIFEM 2000: 5). This

progress report illustrates the impacts and challenges of the globalization process for women. However, UNIFEM takes a pro-active approach to the issues of gender neutrality and exclusion by empowering women to gain economic independence and compete within financial markets. A typical UNIFEM project was the development of Women's Edge in 1993 to ensure that women's voices were brought to the WTO trade negotiating table (Blacklock 2000: 8). Women's Edge is a coalition of organizations that critically analyze the impacts and effects of US trade policies and how women can organize for economic, social and political change (Blacklock 2000: 8). Another UNIFEM initiative, the Gender Responsive Project, responded to energy policies in Ghana and Nigeria, which reduced harvest losses and improves agricultural processing (UNIFEM 2000: 30). These types of projects are important because they provide critical insight into the impacts of trade that are not necessarily analyzed within the WTO.

UNIFEM has the capability and the resources to make fundamental changes, by providing women the opportunity for independent stable economic conditions and the tools to work within the market. The following section discusses the strengths and weaknesses of UNIFEM's agenda for economic empowerment. This analysis is important to decipher what is the best approach to change the WTO's policies on trade liberalization.

UNIFEM's Strengths

UNIFEM has the advantage of being a highly visible and prominent player because of its affiliation with the United Nations. In addition, unlike grassroots organizations, UNIFEM has access to larger sources of funding and direct access to a

larger international audience with this UN affiliation (UNIFEM 2000: 30). It can use these resources to strengthen women's economic conditions. UNIFEM states:

UNIFEM's support provides women with opportunities to hone technical and marketing skills, negotiate and bargaining tactics, foster women's access to and influence over new technologies, build women's networks and business association, and identify new market options (UNIFEM 2000: 7).

It cannot be stressed enough that secure funding is a key advantage for this organization. It provides UNIFEM with the mechanisms to undertake numerous projects and operate satellite offices around the globe (Judd 1999: 224). In addition, it allows UNIFEM to hire expert researchers to write reports and proposals.

UNIFEM also has the personnel and resources to be able to do fundraising for new projects and to sustain existing projects (UNIFEM 2000: 30). Moreover, it has the wherewithal to publicize its research and analyses, and to reach influential policy-makers. Thus, UNIFEM's stable resource base is not just about having access to funding, but also facilitates getting access to policy makers. And of course, it also may provide opportunities to reach a greater number of people, in general (Briskin 1999; Goetz 1998; Brodie 1996).

Beyond its funding advantages, UN affiliation comes with an underlying seal of legitimacy as well as the opportunity to make key contacts for potential policy-making opportunities. UNIFEM's ability to work within the UN system illustrates a mainstream agenda working within a hierarchical structure. UNIFEM's focus on women's economic empowerment is a clearly defined strategy that allows for a greater understanding of economic challenges that women face because of their focused research at the local level. Some of UNIFEM's strategic solutions have included: encouraging credit and land

reallocation and micro-financing that provides women with loans for starting their own business, as well as education and training to encourage economic independence for women. These projects provide grounded illustrations of how gender influences the economy and trade.

UNIFEM's Weaknesses

While UNIFEM's connections with the UN brings about many benefits, there are also negative connotations associated with this affiliation, such as a perceived Western bias. Chandra Mohanty's argument about the misperception of "Third World Woman" by Western feminists is particularly relevant. Mohanty clearly illustrates the necessity to acknowledge differences among women. She argues that Western feminism further oppresses "Third World Women" by continuously depicting them as: "poor, uneducated, traditional-bound, domestic, family-oriented, victimized...sexually constrained"(Mohanty 1991: 56). She argues that this type of approach can be a slippery slope because it can be perceived as reinforcing neo-colonialism or hierarchical power dynamics that work against women. Thus UNIFEM's UN and "northern" connections may circumscribe its effectiveness in advocating for women of the south.

UNIFEM is also constrained by its dependence on the UN systems and must be conscious not to condemn or contradict the primary goals of the United Nations systems. The United Nations system as a whole can be criticized as embracing neo-liberal ideologies that perceive development as primarily an economic task.

UNIFEM's approach, although hands on, can be perceived as modernization or a top-down/ trickle- down approach. This means that policies, methods and solutions originate from higher structures of power and are imposed upon lower structures of power. The type of approach has been heavily critiqued for its narrow scope and confined economic approach (Wilson and Whitemore 1999: 17). This approach is visible within patriarchal hierarchies, which have previously neglected to accurately assess or include gender differences. The downside of mainstreaming may include replicating or endorsing the structures of power that obscure differences within large systems of power like the WTO (Enloe 2000: 198).

Developing Alternatives With Women For a New Era, DAWN

Developing Alternatives With Women For a New Era, DAWN, is a southern feminist network of scholars, activists and researchers committed to developing alternative frameworks and methods to improve women's lives (DAWN 2002a: 1). This network engages in critical analytic research on globalization and the impacts of trade on women of the economic south. This feminist organization is committed to working for economic gender justice (Kerr 1996: 246). DAWN was founded in 1984, by a group of southern feminists while preparing for an international Conference in Nairobi marking the end of the UN decade for women (DAWN 2002a: 1). DAWN critically analyzes the developing process with regard to the repercussions of: famine, debt, militarism and fundamentalism and their impacts on women, while articulating alternative frameworks to these processes (DAWN 2002a: 1). These alternative frameworks aim: "for economic and social justice, peace and development, which is free from all forms of oppression by

gender, class, race and nation”(Sen and Grown 1987: 9). DAWN challenges the macroeconomic framework which development policy-making strategies continue to be based upon. This organization proposes and calls for new alternative development models that place peoples’ needs first (Cagatay, Elson and Grown 1995: 1833). DAWN’s feminist praxis is performed at both the macro-level and the micro-level (DAWN 2002b: 1). This feminist network engages the regions of Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean and the Pacific (DAWN 2002a: 1). Its current research concentrates on three themes: Political Economy of Globalization; Sexual and Reproduction Health and Rights and finally, Reproduction and Social Transformation (DAWN 2002b: 1). DAWN has been involved with projects such as participation in Structural Adjustment Participatory Review Initiative and the External Gender Consultative Group at the World Bank (DAWN 2002b: 1). DAWN is funded by the Ford Foundation, the Humanist Institute for Cooperation and Developing Countries, John D. and Christine T. MacArthur Foundation and the United Nations Development Programme (DAWN 2002b). DAWN’s research on trade is particularly focused on the impacts of the WTO’s trade liberalizing policies on women of the economic south.

DAWN’s Strengths

DAWN is specifically focused on issues of concern to women of the economic south. Economic issues are a key concern, but are not the primary focus of this group. Unlike UNIFEM, this organization may have more opportunities for successful advocacy because its research and experiences are based within several southern nations. The

strength of DAWN is its network of interdisciplinary southern feminist scholars and activists, working at the grassroots level and the international level. Another strength is that it is a leading source of readily available information and analyses on current topics, meetings and conferences, such as the WTO and other international organizations. This research includes a critical analysis of the implications of the WTO's trade policies on women. This material is disseminated through books, newsletters and presentations. This material is also accessible to the public via the DAWN website. DAWN's opportunity to be active at the UN level and network with other non-government social advocacy organizations is a key component to this organization's success. For example, the opportunity to liaise within the UN via preparatory meetings has allowed DAWN to engage with the WTO and its members. While, DAWN's economic analysis of the impacts on women of the south is sophisticated, its research and writing are still accessible to the general public. For example DAWN's discussion papers on the WTO are clear and concise (Williams 2001; 2002c), grounding and making intelligible difficult economic concepts and processes. This type of engagement with the public is particularly successful because the WTO's policies, such as Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights, lack transparency and DAWN's accessible analyses speak to a broader audience with potentially wider support for DAWN's efforts. In short, DAWN clearly articulates how the WTO's trade policies transpire and the repercussion of these policies on women, which makes these analyses widely accessible.

DAWN's Weaknesses

Although DAWN as an organization has tremendous potential for continued success, there are several areas in which improvements can be made. First, this organization needs a higher profile. DAWN's research is not publicized in mainstream literature on trade issues. DAWN needs the resources to be able to realize its potential of reaching out to a larger audience to increase awareness of the issues which effect women of the economic south.

Second, DAWN's agenda and structure of representation requires more articulation in terms of practical implementation for the larger population so that change can occur.

Third, although DAWN is more grounded in the south than UNIFEM, the former still makes generalizations about "poor women's experiences" in the south. This is problematic because not all poor women of the south share the same experiences. For example, DAWN's analytic framework is to understand oppression from the vantage point and "perspective of poor women" (Sen and Grown 1987: 23). This type of analysis becomes: "vulnerable to charges of essentialism, foundationalism and ethnocentrism" (Hirshman 1995: 45). This analysis projects a standard experience for poor women of the south, thereby marginalizing the 'other' experiences that are not within this standard model (Hirshman 1995: 45). Hirshman advances this essentialist critique of DAWN's analysis. Hirshman states:

In this way Sen and Grown tend to reduce both the complexity of the development process and women's existence by reducing it to the universal category of either *labor*, such as in the procurement of food-fuel-water, or *gender oppression*, symbolized by exclusion, clitoridectomy, restricted mobility, sexual violence and so forth.

Consequently, Sen and Grown's "alternative visions" remain mired in androcentric Western thinking and fail to provide a genuine alternative to mainstream development theory and practice" (Hirshman 1995: 53).

This analysis reveals the downside of overly generalizing a localized analysis and the dangers of speaking for or about a particular group of people. This analysis needs nuance, i.e., DAWN must couch local views for wider, practical implication.

Feminist Alliance for International Action, FAFIA

Feminist Alliance for International Action, FAFIA, is a Canadian feminist organization. It is an alliance of forty Canadian women's organizations committed to challenging the current trends of globalization, in particular the economic inequalities of trade policies. FAFIA's goal "is to assist Canadian women's organizations, to intervene strategically in international fora in order to improve the economic conditions of Canadian women"(FAFIA 2002a: 1). FAFIA encompasses a northern feminist perspective on globalization and its effects on women locally, nationally, and internationally. I specifically chose FAFIA for three reasons: first, it focuses on both Canadian and international content. Second, FAFIA is inclusive to both the local and the national feminist organizations and finally, it is narrowly focused on gender and trade issues. Therefore, FAFIA's work with regard to trade liberalization will be insightful for an illustration of a northern feminist perspective with a diverse representation of Canadian feminist organizations. FAFIA is an important organization because it challenges and articulates women's systemic economic inequality.

FAFIA's research focuses on: "developing a greater understanding of the relationship between international agreements and policies as they shape domestic policies and affect the economic status of women in Canada"(FAFIA 2002b: 1). This organization outlines four main objectives to improve the lives of women:

- Develop the capacity of Canadian equality seeking women and women's groups to participate in current and future domestic policy debates as those debates are informed and affected by globalization trends and the liberalization of trade.
- Facilitate the ability of Canadian women's NGO's to intervene effectively at the United Nations and other international fora.
- Increase the capacity of women in Canada to make links between international instruments and agreements and domestic policy-making.
- Hold our governments (federal, provincial and territorial) accountable to the international commitments and obligations signed by Canada (FAFIA 2002b: 1).

These aims illustrate FAFIA's call for a gender and trade analysis in public policy. It has clearly problematized the issue of trade liberalization and responded by challenging the Canadian government, and holding it accountable for national and international failures. These objectives also illustrate the fundamental need for practical and participatory action.

FAFIA's agenda challenges the Canadian government to help bring about international change via its commitment to gender equality. This agenda consists of six strategies and practical steps for action. These steps are:

- Use the review of the Canadian social union framework agreement (SUFA) to initiate and evaluate social policies in light of commitments to women's equality
- Establish a permanent parliamentary committee on the status of women with NGO representation
- Call for justice and human rights committee with NGO representation to hold hearings on issues covered by the hearings concluding observations.
- Establish a cabinet-mandated plan of action on complying with Canada's international covenants with reporting mechanisms and time lines across all departments
- Call for a feminist task force to examine the impact of macro-economic issues on women

- Ask a federal/provincial/territorial committee of ministers to examine Canada's international obligations (Addario 2001: 1).

FAFIA's approach is to use multi-level strategies to challenge the course of economic globalization.

FAFIA's Strengths

FAFIA collaborates with other women's organizations to work together as an alliance. By working as an alliance this organization can use greater resources to challenge policy issues at the national and international level. A typical FAFIA project is its sponsorship of a think-tank in 1999 to analyze trade and its social and economic effects on women in Canada (Blacklock 2000: 8). FAFIA also participated in Canada's Alternative Report to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, CEDAW, Committee (FAFIA 2002b: 1). By working as an umbrella organization, FAFIA's research, analysis and strategies can incorporate a greater number of women's issues. This type of cooperative action with other women's organizations provides well-researched and informed advocacy initiatives that draw on various feminist methodologies and theoretical approaches. FAFIA engages with different levels of government and is one representative of Canadian women's organizations at the United Nations level. Its representation at the UN provides the potential to bring about changes not only domestically, but also internationally, in the quest for good governance by having women's voices be a mandatory part of governments deliberations.

FAFIA's Weaknesses

First, this organization lacks a public profile and the participation of the general public. FAFIA does not list on the website its member organizations or ways that the public can participate. The website is a tremendous tool for public information; however, this group rarely updates their site. Perhaps this is a result of the lack of funding. This is an important point because their website is a medium for interaction with the general public. The participation of the public is of key importance for advocacy movements, which was evident by women's organized opposition to NAFTA.

Second, because this organization competes for government research grants, its research might become channeled and funneled into a particular area of government interest. Government sponsored research is beneficial; however, the scope of this research may be more defined and the conclusions and recommendations may be more circumscribed than would be the case with independent feminist research. Furthermore, reliance on government funding means that FAFIA is in direct competition with other women's groups. This type of competition between organizations has the capability to divide, instead of unite such organizations (Bashevkin 1998: 242).

Differences and Commonalities

Although, these three feminist organizations target similar areas of feminist political and economic concern, these groups are distinct in their forms of advocacy. UNIFEM's approach to gender inequalities, especially in the economic realm, is to mainstream gender or engender the economy so that women have more equitable

standing in economic activities that affects their lives. Therefore, UNIFEM's primary goal is to engender the economic system. In its view, economic freedom for women will allow for personal choice and advancement.

DAWN's approach is not congruent with UNIFEM's mainstream or engendering approach because this organization prefers to work outside of mainstream institutions and the state. However, fundamental change cannot occur without some interaction and cooperation with mainstream institutions (Miller and Razavi 1998: 6). DAWN acknowledges this requirement for change, and its interaction with mainstream institutions is evident by its work at the UN; nonetheless, DAWN is more committed to a bottom-up approach for transformation.

FAFIA's agenda is focused primarily on changes to public policy, in particular domestic policy that it then uses as a base to affect change at the international level. This approach differs from UNIFEM and DAWN because it works as a national umbrella organization and chooses to specifically challenge the nation state. Thereby, its influence lies in offering methods of change to the government who participates in the WTO decision-making process.

UNIFEM, DAWN and FAFIA share a common theme. They all call for gender aware trade policies and analyses. They all offer alternative frameworks to the current macroeconomic structures that obscure gender issues. These three different agendas recognize that the current globalization process is proceeding with gender-blind policies, thus the necessity to produce change in international institutions, like the WTO. These feminist organizations all recognize the necessity of women's grassroots involvement and the importance of women in policy-making and decision-making roles, but each

emphases one more than the other. However, their strategic emphasize differ. All three recognize the necessity of both mainstreaming and grassroots mobilization, but each organization shows a preference for one more than the other, e.g., UNIFEM being more mainstream, and DAWN being more disengaged. These three groups' strategies and methodological approaches play a key role in the advocacy for change to trade liberalization. Although, these groups all provide significant literature on the impacts of trade liberalization, the strategies of mainstreaming gender issues is in my opinion the best approach for change. However, this is not just the liberal variety of mainstreaming. In my view, the most significant changes can result if the systems of power in the WTO are reconstructed which will alter the outcomes of its policies.

Grassroots Approach vs. Mainstreaming Approach

To elaborate, it is my contention that feminists cannot afford to ignore the WTO. This organization possesses too much power and control to be dismissed. Therefore, engagement within this organization is essential to incite critical policy transformations that will lessen gender inequalities and the distributional disparities produced by free trade. Mainstreaming gender issues is a mechanism to advance a more socially responsible agenda (Miller 1998: 171; Mayoux 1998: 186). Concerns still remain about how women's organizations are to properly implement this mainstream approach, while remaining true to feminist method and theory. Thus, mainstreaming is problematized by several feminist theorists (Goetz 2000; Porter 1999; Goetz 1998; Miller and Razavi 1998). Women's interests and concerns are not unified (Francisco 2001: 2), which is

illustrated by the agendas of UNIFEM, DAWN and FAFIA. Some of the feminist debates are about whether the current systems of power can be changed and how to change them, i.e., liberal feminist analysis vs. radical feminist analysis. The grassroots approach and the mainstream approach reveal the different feminist perspectives and methodology for transformations. The grassroots approach is to empower women and challenge the systems of power, whereas the mainstreaming approach places pressure on the systems of power to incorporate feminist concerns. Both of these approaches significantly contribute to strategies in the opposition to the WTO. However, because of the structural setup of the WTO, consisting of multiple nations, the WTO requires more than just vocal opposition. The structure and policies of this institution need to be reconstructed.

Grassroots feminist organizations are often perceived as the most important type of feminist praxis. Grassroots feminist organizations are important in advocacy, in particular against WTO, because the women most adversely affected by free trade are empowered by providing insight and voice for change. These organizations articulate the benefits and disadvantages of various policies at the micro, meso and macro levels by critically examining how these policies function at the local level. However, a closer examination of this type of organizing reveals the constraints of localized advocacy in decision-making processes (Goetz 2000: 33). First, the lack of direct access or engagement with policy-makers limits the changes this type of organization can produce, especially within international institutions like the WTO. Second, grassroots organizing tends to focus on a specific issues of concern impacting their community, i.e., water access and not gender issues, thus the issues become a local issue or a cultural issue and

not a gender and trade issue per se (Mayoux 1998: 186). Finally, the most significant constraint of grassroots organizations is the lack of sufficient funding. This is a major area of concern for women's groups, especially grassroots organizations, because the lack of funding can fragment or even destroy an organization (Judd 1999: 224).

Feminist organizations that choose to mainstream run the risk of co-opting and conforming (Miller 1998: 170; Briskin 1999). Although, these are serious feminist concerns, especially with regard to universal policies or agreements, the mainstreaming process is too significant to dismiss. Mainstreaming is particularly important for three specific reasons. First, it targets change directly within the systems that maintain power. This is specifically relevant to the WTO which is the umbrella organization for international trade. Second, mainstreaming provides a platform to present alternative knowledge and research to decision-makers (Miller 1998: 171). Policy changes and reforms are more likely to be incorporated if they are routinized within the policy-making processes (Goetz 1998). Finally, mainstreaming groups tend to have more access to funding (Judd 1999: 224), and this funding provides the opportunity for more research, analysis and project initiatives. The following sections will illustrate that a good governance approach can mediate between these two extremes by building on the work of coalitions.

In my view, a multi-faceted good governance approach to economic globalization requires the participation of various strategies and methods for effective change. The key elements of a feminist agenda, discussed at the beginning of the chapter, reveal that women's organizations have to unite as a coalition force to ensure that the multiple issues facing the women's movement are voiced. Women's issues are vast and diverse; thus a

multi-faceted approach is a practical method to ensure that all voices are represented. Coalition building is one method for this multi-faceted approach. The advantages of uniting are demonstrated by the three feminist organizations. All three of these groups work as networks and alliances, which involve the active participation and co-operation of other women's organizations. In other words, a feminist coalition is required within the WTO that incorporates both a grassroots approach and a mainstream approach, but with the latter taking the lead.

The goal of mainstreaming gender into organizations like the WTO is to ensure that gender becomes routinized so that women's issues are not considered to be just special interests (Bashevkin 1998: 242; Goetz 1998: 45). More specifically a feminist coalition to mainstream women's issues presents opportunities not only within the state but also between different feminist organizations to advance feminist agendas into institutions that lack a gender analysis. Anne Marie Goetz's work advances this line of argument. Goetz states:

Effective strategies for institutionalizing women's interest in the state must therefore be attuned to political opportunities and backed up by mobilized political energies of advocates of gender justice in civil society and state (Goetz 1998: 86).

This argument suggests that significant change can occur with active advocacy within the state together with effective feminist strategies. Thus, feminist strategies for implementing change must be transforming in the sense that the agenda achieves policy reform. For example, the issues of separate trade policies for women within the WTO is problematic because separate agreement make women vulnerable to the "interest group" category. By implying that women are outside the "normal" structure reinforces the

‘other’ argument. This type of separate analysis was taken up by the World Bank’s External Gender Consultative Group (Goetz 2000: 43). This group and other organizations like Women’s Eyes on the World Bank, have been very successful at analyzing the gender implications of the Bank’s reform programmes, which has put pressure on the Bank to: “re-evaluate its position on gender and economic reform” (UNIFEM 2000: 144). However, this type of separate analysis consultative work has been problematic for two reasons. First, it required women’s issues and concerns to be presented as a business case for investment and secondly, gender differences were perceived to be a cultural matter (Goetz 2000: 50). Women’s issues should not have to be presented as a profitable business investment nor should women’s issues be automatically associated with cultural issues. However, by mainstreaming women’s issues, women’s input and concerns will already be an incorporated component of the decision-making process, which dismisses any special interest categorization. This type of separate analysis furthers stereotypes and isolates women’s issues in trade policies as special interest.

These complications with mainstreaming gender are problematized by Linda Briskin. She argues that a disengaged feminist approach can lead to marginalization and invisibility, while a mainstreaming feminist approach can lead to co-opting; however, “the task for feminists is to maintain a complex strategic interplay between disengagement and mainstreaming” (Briskin 1999: 16). The conflicts and challenges within and between different feminisms are important to understand so that mainstreaming within the WTO is effective. Briskin states:

Mainstreaming operates from a desire to reach out to the majority of the population with popular and practical feminist solutions to particular issues, and therefore relates directly and interacts with major social institutions, such as the family, the work place, the educational system and the state (Briskin 1999: 16).

Mainstreaming raises concerns not only at the intersection between feminists and the state, but also between different feminist organizations (Briskin 1999: 1). Joan Scott further problematizes this “insider” and “outsider” debate. Scott states:

Here a binary opposite has been created to offer a choice to feminists, of either endorsing “equality” or its presumed antithesis “difference.” In fact, the antithesis itself hides the interdependence of the two terms, for equality is not the elimination of difference, and difference does not preclude equality (Cited in Briskin 1999: 17).

The WTO possesses a different type of challenge for women’s organizations because the decision-making process requires the participation of multiple nations. Therefore, a grassroots approach is crucial for critical analysis of this organization and the production of alternative methods to the current processes of trade liberalization. A mainstream approach is necessary to effectively implement and monitor the WTO structure and trade liberalizing policies. These three feminist organizations have illustrated that fundamental changes cannot occur by changing or altering only one aspect of economic globalization. Economic globalization requires a multi-level change by multi-faceted approach that involves changes not only to the structural setup and institutional processes of the WTO, but also to the corporations, governments and advocacy approaches of civil society. A coalition force will utilize the critical analysis of grassroots organizations like FAFIA, but then have a mainstream group like UNIFEM to disseminate this analysis and work to integrate it into the WTO.

These arguments indicate that mainstreaming gender and integrating a feminist agenda into the WTO will not lose sight of women's issues. It will be another method of feminist organizing for effective change, by making women's issues a mandatory aspect of policy making and decision-making processes. All forms of feminist organizations are important to the larger scope of gender inequalities to advance feminist analysis and strategize effective change. Although there are positive and negative aspects of the grassroots approach and the mainstreaming approach. I argue that a feminist agenda needs to be mainstreamed into the WTO by a good governance approach. This approach will not only provide the opportunity to change policies and policy-making processes, it also provides the platform for diverse perspectives of various women's advocacy groups. It will be more holistic and ensure that different types of feminist organizations are actively participating.

Therefore, a mainstream approach will be most effective when it is combined with a multi-leveled coalition initiative that includes good governance and the participation of civil society and feminist organizations. This type of initiative will be further analyzed in the next chapter, which discusses the issues and concerns of the mainstreaming approach by examining the past successes and failures of women's advocacy experiences. This analysis provides a better understanding of how to integrate a feminist agenda into the WTO.

CHAPTER FOUR:

LEARNING FROM THE PAST: EVALUATING THE FEMINIST AGENDAS

I have argued for the necessity of a gender aware analysis within the WTO. Now, the question that remains is how to implement this agenda. The previous analysis of the three feminist organizations reveals that they develop different strategies for engendering change. As a young feminist, I use the terms integrate, incorporate and implement because I currently do not foresee a paradigm shift happening in my lifetime where organizations like the WTO will no longer be relevant. Therefore, I have argued, and will further elaborate upon, how a good governance approach incorporating the participation of civil society and women's organizations is the best means by which I am confident change can occur. This chapter builds upon the three feminist agendas and the opportunities and experiences of past women's movements to suggest the best criteria to implement a feminist agenda into the WTO. DAWN's strategic approach has tremendous potential as a result of its grassroots orientation as well as its link with mainstream organizations. FAFIA's agenda, as previously discussed, is most effectively incorporated into a large international organization like UNIFEM to continue mainstreaming a feminist agenda into the WTO. A coalition force with the active collaboration of both grassroots organizations and mainstream organizations is a strategic method for implementing a feminist agenda into the WTO. The following discusses how these three feminist organizations try or could try to alter the current course of economic globalization, in particular the trade liberalization process of the WTO.

Challenging the WTO: Evaluation of Three Strategies

United Nations Development Fund for Women

UNIFEM is more likely to have a direct impact on the WTO because it is an established feminist organization that works with women's organizations from the grassroots level to the international level. It is the catalyst for various women's organizations as well as established feminist alliances and networks (UNIFEM 2002a: 1). UNIFEM proposes different methods of economic analysis that influence the way trade policies play out. It aims to transform economic policies by changing the understanding of financial markets and the goods and services markets. UNIFEM demonstrates that economic empowerment is possible by successfully implementing women's projects and programs that change economic processes (UNIFEM 2002a: 1). UNIFEM not only provides different methods for women to be included in the market, but empirically proves by their successful projects that these alternative methods are capable of implementation.³

³ An example of this is the shea butter project. UNIFEM with other non-government organizations provided technical training on how to preserve the shea nuts so that women can postpone the processing work until after the agriculture season. Technical training is important for market growth in two ways. First, by preserving shea nuts the amount of nuts collected increased and so did the women's income. Second, this training ensures that international standards are met so that the nuts remained marketable, thereby making this business more sustainable. Furthermore, UNIFEM sponsored a shea nut trade fair, which promoted shea butter that in turn strengthened the bargaining power of the women producers (UNIFEM 2000: 136). The shea nut project was highly successful in empowering women economically because their small businesses increased both in price and product efficiency which improved the product on the international market.

Developing Alternatives With Women For A New Era

DAWN tries to influence the WTO in three different ways: first, by actively participating in its preparatory meetings and policy initiatives. Second, by strategically engaging with individual member countries of the WTO. Finally, DAWN networks with other social advocacy groups to strategize new development alternatives.

First, DAWN actively participates in the WTO preparatory meetings and follow-up sessions. DAWN's paper, Free Trade or Fair Trade DAWN Discussion Paper on WTO, is a critical analysis of the current free trade system (Williams 2001). This paper deconstructs the current trading system by illustrating the negative impacts this process has on women and sustainability. DAWN provides an analytic fair trade framework as an alternative to the current trading system. First, trade must be anchored in a sustainable development framework that is gender aware and gender sensitive, and addresses poverty as a serious issue and not just as a token concern. Second, the fair trade system must be grounded in a comprehensive approach to human rights. Third, this new system must provide adequate resources with the ultimate goal to expand women and men's capability (Williams 2001: 1). In my view, this type of participation is a tremendous success because DAWN critically engages with the WTO's policies and articulates the policy repercussions on women. DAWN attempts to alter the WTO's policies by providing empirical research and data on the impacts of trade liberalization on women of the economic south (Williams 2001, 2002c).

Second, DAWN strategically appeals to individual member countries of the WTO. This is evident by the recent presentation to the German Parliament, Globalisation

of the World Economy: Challenges and Responses (Williams 2002b). This strategy is effective in two ways. First, it engages with the citizens and the parliaments of the member states within the WTO. Second, it also speaks to the state's representative by means of a public forum which clearly and concisely articulates the issues and concerns with the WTO's trade policies. This strategy tries to make transparent the effects of the WTO's processes to the nation's citizens who will voice their concerns to the state representative. This advocacy is important because domestic governments have the potential to directly influence the WTO's policies through their vote. On a large scale this type of advocacy can be very influential and effective. It also reflects good governance practices such as increasing transparency and accountability.

Third, DAWN networks with other social advocacy groups to build larger alliances to formulate alternative frameworks to the current globalization process. DAWN participated in the advisory committee at the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre from January 31 to February 5, 2002. In collaboration with other southern feminist organizations, they ensured that feminist speakers participated in the main forum (DAWN 2002c: 1). The World Social Forum was an important conference because it attracted the leading social advocates from around the world to engage in discussions about economic alternatives and to strengthen north and south networks. This conference provides a platform to discuss international civil organizations and collective mobility (Williams 2001c: 4). DAWN's members are usually active participants within other social advocacy groups, thus allowing for greater awareness when formulating the best possible alternative frameworks.

DAWN's strategic approach, to engage with established mainstream organizations, is important for two reasons: first, this organization raises public awareness about their agenda. Second, this advocacy raises awareness of the socio-political issues at the macro-level and micro-level. This organization has been able to balance a grassroots perspective with a mainstream approach. In my view, these are successful steps for agenda integration into the WTO to change the current course of trade liberalization. Moreover, DAWN's strategies act upon multi-faceted good governance principles to change the current trends of trade liberalization.

Feminist Alliance for International Action

FAFIA attempts to influence the WTO in an indirect way. This organization's mandate is to hold the federal government accountable for gender inequalities, especially those perpetuated by free trade. By holding the Canadian government accountable for gender equality, FAFIA has the potential to indirectly influence the WTO. FAFIA critically analyzes and articulates the implications of trade liberalization on Canadian women. FAFIA focuses on the changes within Canada that will have an impact on the international spectrum. If the Canadian government is accountable to Canadian women, as an influential member of the WTO this accountability will be reflected in international trade agreements. This influence over other WTO member countries to follow Canadian policies will ensure more equity for women within the economic globalization process.

Synopsis of Three Feminist Agendas

Clearly, there is not a single method to integrate a feminist agenda into WTO. However, these three agendas illustrate the different calls for transparency, democratic procedures and the participation of civil society and women's organizations within the WTO processes to ensure democracy. These common aspects reinforce how a more nuanced approach incorporating both a mainstreaming approach and a grassroots analysis is required for a good governance approach towards the WTO.

UNIFEM's approach has provided the opportunity for extensive research and funding of various women's projects around the globe. However, UNIFEM has the potential to replicate hierarchies and power struggles by having the authority to choose what programs or organizations get funding. DAWN's approach to provide a grassroots critique of the WTO's trade processes is crucial for policy restructuring. However, this approach lacks practical strategic methods for implementing these alternative visions into the WTO. FAFIA's approach provides a platform to implement change by holding the government accountable. However, this platform is only a conceptual analysis that needs to be practically implemented. These feminist approaches illustrate how feminist opposition to the WTO is fragmented because there is no direct institutional approach to work with the WTO. This lessens the influence these organizations have on the WTO, because of their competing demands. As a result, I propose more collaborative and coalition work to respond to this dilemma. The power of collaborating as a coalition against structures of powers is illustrated by the NAFTA and APEC experiences.

Learning From the Past

The WTO presents challenges that are multi-layered and tremendously complex for feminist organizations. However, women's resistance to oppressive and exclusive economic processes and systems of power is not a new phenomenon; therefore, a key element for the WTO is to build upon the efforts of previous women's movements to challenge economic development. Successful advocacy approaches advance women's issues into mainstream institutions' processes, but also work to change broader discourse and consciousness. A feminist agenda can indeed work within the WTO and the challenge is how to implement this agenda for long-term effective change. This section analyzes women's mobilization around the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the Asian- Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), which can be built upon to conceptualize and decipher the best criteria currently needed to challenge the WTO.

North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)

Canada and the United States Free Trade Agreement, FTA, marked the beginning of the bi-lateral Canada and US economic integration and restructuring. Women's groups, like the National Action Committee (NAC), actively opposed the FTA (Cameron and Gonas 1999). NAC networked with organizations such as the coalition group

“Action Canada Network,” which consisted of labor groups, women’s organizations, farmers and students. The FTA was implemented in January 1989, and further trade liberalization followed with the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The move towards NAFTA produced a diverse social movement with coalitions building within Canada, the United States and Mexico (Gabriel and Macdonald 1996; Bakker 1996; Griffin Cohen 1996). Women in these countries worked as a coalition and united to lobby and raise public awareness about the economic restructuring impacts of NAFTA. In Canada, NAC was the key player in the movement against NAFTA (Cameron and Gonas 1999: 61).

NAFTA heightened concerns about the effects of macroeconomic restructuring on women. Martha MacDonald outlines NAC’s concerns with free trade:

First, that the cost of free trade would be disproportionately borne by the most disadvantaged in the labor force, namely women; second, in the manufacturing sector women were most likely to lose their jobs due to their concentration in vulnerable industries; third, women’s prospects for reemployment are fewer than men’s, given their more restricted access to training and other programs; and fourth, free trade in services would displace Canadian labor and threaten public service jobs (MacDonald 1995: 2009).

Women rallied around this cause. For example, during the campaign against NAFTA, the NAC’s membership grew to over five hundred women’s organizations (Cameron and Gonas 1999: 61). The following strategies were used by NAC to mobilize and contest this trade agreement:

1. Released newspaper publications.
2. Held press conferences.
3. Reported to the Royal Commission on the Economic Union and Development Prospects for Canada.
4. Campaigned to educate women about the potential effects of continental Free Trade on women’s equality and found ways to intervene in broader public debates.
5. Used the Annual General Meeting as a platform to provide knowledge and skills to

- participate in public debates.
6. Established a policy on free trade.
 7. Called for an election.
 8. Lobbied and grilled members of government on the effects of Free Trade on women.
 9. Repeated calls for election.
 10. Educated women, gained media attention and demystified the public on free trade.
 11. Provided election kit and published a pamphlet, "Free Trade: A Bad Deal for Women. Here's Why and What to Do."
 12. Provided easy access to information and dropped off information for debates and meetings.
 13. Held quasi-election campaign for knowledge across Western Canada.
 14. Established coalitions for mobilization in the United States.
 15. Strategized ways to intervene in public debates on Free Trade that included briefing notes
 16. Made the government recognize NAFTA as a women's issue.
 17. Continued to educate the public of the on-going changes, even after implementation.
 18. Directly linked concerns to policy, i.e., Maternity benefits (Cameron and Gonas 1999: 61-69).

This type of opposition advanced feminist understanding of the sweeping impacts of macroeconomic policies. This strategic resistance to NAFTA clarifies the importance of building coalitions to deal with multi-lateral trade agreements. The challenge of NAFTA lay in the structure of the agreement. NAFTA did not have one authoritative decision-maker, which illustrates the difficulty of challenging trade agreements with multi-state perspectives.

To be sure, this advocacy fell short of the mark in that both FTA and NAFTA were implemented. Nevertheless, the collective voices against this trade agreement created strong awareness and understanding of restructuring policies (Gabriel and Macdonald 1996:183). Women helped to advance a greater understanding of trade agreements so that trade liberalization is not perceived only as economic issues (Gabriel and Macdonald 1999: 183; Griffin Cohen 1996; Kerr 1996). As a result, even though this constituted a policy "loss", there were gains in the field of promoting alternative discourses and raising public consciousness vis-à-vis the impacts of trade liberalization

on people in general, and women in particular. Opposition to NAFTA also raised awareness about the importance of differences among women (Bakker 1996: 12). The theme throughout this women's movement effort was the recognition of differences between women from different geographical locations (Macdonald 1999: 63). The significance of this advocacy was that NAFTA became a women's issue. These lessons are critical when it comes to assessing how women can influence the WTO's policies. This experience highlighted the utility of networking, collaborating and coalition building.

Asian-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)

Globalization is a complex process and the impacts of this process are multi-layered. Therefore, a multi-faceted solution is required to deal with the impacts and repercussion of this process. Feminists need to play a key role in this process and engage in meaningful debates with each other so that strategic actions for successful integration can be formulated (Francisco 2001: 4). An example of feminist strategic integration is critically analyzed by Heather Gibb. Gibb provides a conceptual and strategic analysis of how women have been successfully integrated into APEC, which like the WTO, is also driven by the neo-liberal agenda. Gibb states:

Gender mainstreaming involves the full participation of women in all aspects of life and addresses access issues to increase women's participation in sectors where they are weakly represented. In the APEC region, governments have adopted various strategies to achieve this goal. In Hong Kong, China, a high-level Women's Commission had been tasked with reviewing government services and identifying priorities for action. Malaysia's "Networking Women" project describes an innovative, volunteer-led initiative to boost women's use of information technology. Gender mainstreaming also

involves adapting technology and tools to meet the needs of women, rather than women adapting to the machines. The Centre for Family and Women's Studies in Viet Nam undertook research and field testing to identify machinery that best met the needs and economic situation of Viet Nam's predominantly female farmers (Gibb 2001: 9).

Gibb analyzes gender mainstreaming by raising the question, "what different results, in impacts or opportunities, will this initiative have, respectively, on men and women?" (Gibb 2001: 7) This is an important question and reinforces why gender cannot remain an irrelevant factor within trade agreements. Integrating a feminist agenda is not aimed at overthrowing patriarchy for matriarchy, but at improving the policies to ensure equality and prosperity for all. Gibb states: "Mainstreaming gender means that women and men have equitable access to, and benefits from, society's resources, opportunities and rewards and equal participation in influencing what is valued and in shaping direction and decisions" (Gibb 2001: 7). An example of women's mobilization within APEC is the Women Leader's Network. This is a non-government network of women in business, academe, government and civil society from the various APEC countries (L. Macdonald 1999: 64). This type of promotion of civil society participation is required within the WTO to ensure good governance. This network proposed that APEC recognize and integrate the following gender considerations:

1. Build women's capacity for global competitiveness.
2. Promote participation of organization businesswomen in appropriate APEC structures and fora, like in the APEC Business Advisory Council.
3. Promote gender-sensitive, community-based micro-enterprise through institutionalized support services and facilities.
4. Promote access to credit for micro-cottage and small and medium enterprise.
5. Develop database on women in business and sex-disaggregate national economy level as well as APEC level database.
6. Provide business services, such as business matching and participation in trade promotion, for women.
7. Advocate women's concerns as a cross-cutting theme in APEC (Macdonald 1999: 65).

These are important strategies to begin the equal representation process within the WTO. Gibb's mainstream argument is very important to my hypothesis because the inclusion and participation of women in APEC illustrates, by example, that women's agendas can be implemented into international organizations.

However, it is important to acknowledge that just adding women to the equation will not alleviate the gender inequalities that exist. Not all women are feminists and not all women are opposed to the capitalist patriarchy that exists; thus, not all women act in the strategic interest of other women (Goetz 1998: 46).⁴ Changes have to go beyond institutional structures. Policy changes as well as changes to institutional processes need to be implemented. The challenge is multi-layered, which reinforces why coalition building between grassroots organizations and mainstream organizations is an important component for implementing alternative approaches into the WTO. Grassroots groups advance alternative methods and strategies while mainstream organizations will strategize how these alternative methods can be adopted. Working within and outside of the systems of power is a strategic approach to promote effective change. Gender mainstreaming requires more conceptualizing because the functions and structures of organizations have to advance new alternative ways of thinking and approaching policies

⁴ Numerical representation is an important feminist concern. Numerical representation at all levels of government and decision-making committees is a good start to ensure that gender aware analyses are part of deliberations of policies (Dobrowolsky 2000: 255). However, numerical representation, although necessary, is not sufficient. Substantive change is required and must be achieved through structural transformation. The Scottish Parliament is an example of how structural changes result in qualitative changes within traditional systems. Women mobilized in Scotland for improved numerical representation within the Scottish Parliament for a equal female male ratio in the legislature (IBID). Women also worked on substantive change through structural transformation. Consultative groups, such as the Scottish Women's Consultative Network helped to create new practical measures i.e., there is no sitting of the legislature during school breaks, to foster this new representative approaches (IBID).

(Gibb 2001: 9). This is evident by different aspects of gender mainstreaming in APEC outlined by Gibb:

- Gender-based analysis: a methodology for examining the difference in women's and men's lives and identifying factors that explain the differences
- Sex-disaggregated data: data classified by sex and presented separately for women and men
- The involvement of women in APEC: increased participation of women in APEC fora activities as well as increased attention to gender considerations in the identification, design and implementation of APEC activities (Gibb 2001: 7).

These three elements illustrate ways to engender mainstream organizations. However, engendering large international institutions, like the WTO, requires the state to also become engendered, since the WTO is a collective of state representatives. Currently the WTO does not calculate or indicate gender differences in trade policies; therefore, feminist organizations need to build their analysis upon experiences of the past, and press forward with agendas that mainstream gender into large multinational organizations like the WTO.

These different women's advocacy experiences provide strategies and lessons that are valuable resources for mobilization against the WTO. Women's mobilization reveals that a successful advocacy and restructuring of international organizations like the WTO is more likely to result with cooperative agendas or coalition forces.

Mainstreaming the WTO

Although mainstreaming has its limitations, as illustrated by UNIFEM, a multi-faceted good governance approach is most applicable to the task set forth to integrate a

feminist agenda into the WTO. This mainstreaming approach does not exclude critical interaction with disengaged feminist organizations. Mainstream feminist advocacy should complement all forms of feminist activism and cannot be perceived as an alternative to women's organizing (Miller and Razavi 1998: 6). Therefore, I perceive a feminist coalition focused on mainstreaming gender within the WTO to be the most effective strategy for effective policy changes. This mainstreaming approach provides the opportunity for qualitative change to trade policies that cannot be disregarded. Working in coalitions can provide a platform for both the grassroots approach with the mainstreaming approach to engender systems of power. Dismissing this mainstream approach suggests that there are no other alternatives but a separatist movement. Separatist movements are rarely successful and often become ostracized politically, socially and culturally, thus having no impact or contribution towards effective long-term change (Goetz 1998).

The WTO needs to be altered through mainstream public policy. Separatist's claim that the WTO is "incompatible" with women's issues is limiting because this approach inadvertently agrees with the claims that there are no alternatives to the globalization process (Griffin Cohen 1999: 3). Therefore, feminist groups need to illustrate exactly how the WTO can work with feminist issues. A multi-faceted good governance approach to the WTO's negotiation processes and trade policies is an important avenue to explore. Feminist organizations have to collaborate and work both within and outside of the WTO to effectively produce change.

The WTO is unlike any other international institution. Opponents to the WTO need to acknowledge this fact. The WTO is comprised of approximately 144 different

member nations. Each nation has a particular and different agenda. Adding to this already challenging equation is the diversity of activists and social advocacy groups with different concerns. These groups are not monolithic; therefore, they are not pressing forward with one common agenda. Although there is not a direct path by which a feminist agenda can be implemented into the WTO, the examples of the three feminist organizations and other women's collective action demonstrate that change is possible. The task now is to identify and locate the best methodological practices that will provide opportunities to advance a gender responsible agenda. I firmly believe that a political, social and economically responsible agenda can be integrated into the WTO, but this agenda may not take the form of one particular feminist method or practice, but that of a gender aware, socio-political agenda. The importance of pressure on nation states cannot be overstated (Gelb 2000: 5). Feminist organizations must continue to critically analyze and assess the WTO's policies and how these policies play out at the different macro, meso and micro levels. Successful implementation of a feminist agenda into the WTO will require a collaborative effort from various civil society organizations and feminist organizations. This requires building stronger alliances and networks throughout feminist communities.

The economic globalization process, driven by trade liberalization, which is the primary function of the WTO, cannot continue on this destructive path. However, the WTO is a powerful international organization with multiple nation state members. Therefore, the destruction or the dismantling of this organization is unlikely to happen. The WTO's institutional processes and policies need to be changed to effectively produce change. The WTO's agenda, policies and processes have to be transparent to the general

public so that governments are held accountable and responsible for trade liberalization and their participation in these policies and processes. Feminist organizations have to put women's issues on their domestic government agendas by denouncing gender-blind policies publicly and making gender inequalities a high political risk (Gelb 2000: 24). FAFIA's agenda demonstrates this type of approach where governments are held publicly accountable. Governments need to be held publicly accountable for failed national and international obligations. This approach is necessary because each government has an allotted vote within the WTO decision-making process. Therefore, the onus must be on individual governments to ensure gender equality at the WTO. Feminist organizations need to advocate to the general public and to illustrate why it is beneficial for both men and women to implement a feminist agenda into the WTO. DAWN's agenda illustrates this approach by raising awareness of the implications of the WTO and trade liberalization. Feminist organizations need to articulate the connections between how the current globalization system is exploitative for women in particular and the effects of this exploitation on all people. UNIFEM's agenda promotes this type of information dissemination for effective change. These links need to be articulated to the general public. This, in turn, will help to promote a more substantive democracy.

Mainstreaming bolstered by coalition building provides a forum for change to the systems of power that produce these policies. The most radical and significant changes can result if systems of power, like the WTO, are reconstructed to reflect the principles of good governance.

Conclusion

This thesis has argued for the implementation of a feminist agenda into the WTO, which is premised on the fact that gender is not currently factored into trade liberalization policies. As a result, trade liberalization produces unequal trade impacts for women, which currently go unaccounted. These impacts are not factored into policy analysis or decision-making processes and feminist analyses will rectify this exclusive institutional organization. As previously discussed, current economic globalization is saturated with neo-liberal ideologies that are supported by the neoclassical economic framework that excludes essential contributing factors to the economy, such as unpaid labour and social reproduction. The previous analysis of neo-liberalism and the neoclassical economic framework clearly illustrates why there needs to be a gender and trade analysis at the WTO.

Past women's advocacy experiences, as discussed with NAFTA and APEC, have reinforced feminist analyses that economic impacts are not confined to the economic sphere (Beneria 1999; Waring 1999; MacDonald 1995; Bakker 1996). Economic concerns directly implicate the political, social and cultural spheres. UNIFEM's agenda makes this particularly evident with trade liberalization policies and processes. Past advocacy experiences and the current advocacy of women's organizations like UNIFEM, DAWN and FAFIA illustrate why feminist analyses are important within large international institutions. Equal analysis and representation within international institutions will result in qualitative changes in discourse and consciousness. These past experiences and the advocacy approaches of the three feminist organizations reinforce

my argument for a multi-faceted good governance approach for mainstreaming gender into the WTO. Although, the mainstream approach is most practical within the WTO it does not have to take the form of a rigidly defined mainstream approach. This multi-faceted approach is complex and incorporates various forms of feminist organizing which are essential for practical change within the WTO. Moreover, the good governance approach illustrates how active participation of governments together with civil society and women's organizations can implement institutional and structural changes to trade liberalization policies and processes of the WTO.

This thesis has illustrated that the WTO is an international organization that is continuously increasing in importance and strength with economic globalization. This powerful multi-national organization cannot be dismantled. This organization requires institutional restructuring to alter policies and procedures and ultimately the way trade liberalization plays out internationally. A multi-faceted good governance approach will ensure gender issues are mainstreamed and will minimize the exclusion of these issues and concerns because of the active participation of governments, civil society organizations and, in particular, women's coalitions. The WTO, driven by the neo-liberal ideology, is not an impermeable structure, thus a feminist agenda can be integrated into this system by means of good governance to produce effective long-term change.

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