

THE GOOD TIMES

WEDNESDAY MARCH 8 2005

Beijing+10 celebrates women's power to transform the predominant economy

From their inequality, a large number of women are taking part in the construction of a more socially aware world

By **Eduard Good**
and **Philip Westleter**

YESTERDAY, the Beijing+10 conference held in UN headquarters in New York ended with a ray of hope: women, who continue to be a majority in the poorest of our societies, and have no political significance, are playing a crucial role in the transformation of society.

Ten years after the fourth World Women's Conference held in China, a large number of women still do not have their rights acknowledged, are undervalued for their responsibilities relating to the reproduction of the human race, the preservation of life and personal care, and are

excluded from political and economic decision-making.

However, it is evident from the World Women's March of 2004 and the latest World Report on Human Development, many women all over the globe are involved in initiatives aimed at "changing the world". Although they are often excluded from the control of resources, production and exchange methods, they are exploring new and different initiatives aimed at satisfying basic necessities such as food, housing, education, health or culture, with no consideration for market requirements and no obligation to "financial" benefits.

In all these cases,

women, and a large number of men (and in some cases, they have governmental support), are building new economic relationships based on solidarity and equality of the sexes. Gradually, they are creating production methods and lifestyles all over the world that are based on personal and community needs, fighting against the division of work, advancing in the acknowledgement of a large number of functions previously only performed by women, redefining social roles, valuing the "know-how" that guarantees social welfare, and helping many women to gain access to basic rights and resources.

The conference's fi-

nal declaration acknowledges the construction of an alternative world-wide economy based on women and their social awareness. A good example of this are the new wealth and labour indicators that some countries are beginning to apply, including the human, social and environmental costs associated to production, consumption and trade, and making women's activities visible.

Over the last decades, we have advanced in the acknowledgement of women and their place in the economic universe. Although there is still a long way to go to attain equality, another world is under construction.

News item 14 inspired by the Proposals Booklet: **Women and economy**, coordinated by Cécile Sabourin and Josée Belleau

Collection of Desirable News (1) inspired by 25 Proposals Booklets of the Alliance for a Responsible, Plural and United World, www.alliance21.org

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