

Quote, Unquote

As a Third World woman, it is disturbing to know that most women do not have ready access to this information - to breast cancer alternative therapies and environmental information. It's frightening to know that our countries are being inundated with harmful products in the name of corporate profits. We need to close our borders to cancer-causing agents. It is involuntary genocide. If breast cancer has become a metaphor for malignant development, then let's not let it metastasize in our countries.

(Dr. Iris Zavala Martinez, WEDO News and Views, September 1997, p. 10)

"... Western feminists have revolutionized academia by introducing the discipline of women's / feminist studies, Muslim feminists have a similar, yet more complicated task and responsibility ahead of them. Namely, ... to introduce the field of Muslim women's studies to both Western and non-Western institutions. ... Muslim feminists have to avoid the pitfalls of imitating androcentric patterns as mimicked by certain Western feminists."

(People's Rights Women's Rights, issue#4, March, 1997, p. 19)

"Recognition of the vital role of women in socio-economic life in both agriculture and non-agriculture activities, in accordance with the goals of the United Nations Decade for Women, is a prerequisite for successful rural development planning and programme implementation. Rural development based on growth with equity will require full integration of women, including equitable access to land, water, other natural resources, inputs and services and equal opportunity to develop and employ their skills. There is also an urgent need to expand knowledge and statistical data on all aspects of women's roles in rural activities and to disseminate this information in order to promote greater awareness of women's role in society"

(Kathleen Cloud, International Journal of Rural Development, vol.1 No. 1, Fall 1981)

"I am cooking now and I don't know when next I'll cook a proper meal and when I'll be able to live in a proper place; that is poverty, I am squatting because landlords would not accept me with eight children. It is depressing and frustrating."

(Choices: The Human Development Magazine, UNDP, Vol. 5 No. 2, October 1996, p. 7)

"smoking kills more women than alcohol, illicit drugs, car accidents, suicide, and homicide - combined. It's by far the number one cause of premature death in women, causing approximately 20 percent of all deaths, killing roughly one in seven - or 141,832 - women annually. Lung cancer, which has increased over 400 percent in women in the past 30 years, is now the biggest cancer killer of women - bigger even than breast cancer. ... women are uniquely vulnerable to certain smoking - related health problems. Women smokers are more susceptible to reproductive tract infections and cervical cancer, and those who use oral contraceptives have an especially high risk of stroke and heart disease. Smoking also wreaks havoc on women's hormonal systems - decreasing fertility, increasing the chances of premature

menopause and osteoporosis, and disturbing pregnancy."

(Sharon Lerner, Ms. Magazine, May/June 1995, p. 22)

"In developing countries women grow up to 80 percent of all food produced, but rarely hold the title to the land they cultivate. Worldwide they constitute one third of the wage-labour force. Much of their work, however, is unpaid. If global calculations of gross domestic product included household work, they would increase by 25 per cent."

(The State of World Population, United Nations Population Fund, 1995, p. 27)

"how do we make every woman know her rights and how do we make this process more simple? Further, after knowing their rights, how can women exercise them. Here, I am talking about specific, measurable and achievable actions that even poor community members can take. We all know that when our rights are abused, we can hire a lawyer and take the offending party to court, but who can afford legal costs these days? If I can't afford to hire a lawyer, then village women won't even contemplate hiring one. What I am saying is that there is a lot of legal rights education going on, but the recipients of knowledge continue to get frustrated because they cannot afford legal costs"

(Rose Muragiri-Mwololo, AWID News, Vol. 10 No. 1, March 1996, p. 4)

"Alone with her seven children, Houria could take it no longer. Everyone was fleeing the municipality; not a soul remained in the villages. The army watched the exodus of a whole people without budging. With a knot in her stomach, Houria donned her scarf and left for Algiers with nothing but a bag stuffed with second-hand clothes and a transistor radio sent by her brother in Paris. This time she left the gas cooker, the fridge, the black and white TV - along with a cow, its calf and a splendid vegetable garden - behind. ... Perched on the roof of a truck bound for Algiers, surrounded by her brood of kids, Houria weeps. From her lofty perch, she watches an endless stream of folk fleeing their land. Here a mattress strapped to a back; there a carpet rolled under an arm. ... Mutual hatred drives the war and annihilates all hope of an end. Houria no longer recognises the city, by day an overcrowded labyrinth of streets and alleys, by night deserted. Where black money and corruption flows as freely as blood. Mercedes and hearses, deposit boxes in the banks and coffins in the streets. ... Houria no longer has faith in anything."

(Selim Zaoui, Index on Censorship, issue# 3, 1997, pp. 49-50)

"Though women are forbidden to meet their male counterparts, own an office or personally meet men in the course of business, ingenuity takes care of most problems. They 'take tea' with other women and operate their business networks thus. By hiding behind the corporate veil, women have been able to wield real economic power domestically and internationally as independent agents. As Saudi enters the next century, and the wealth of these women grows, it will be interesting to observe how long they will be content to wield their economic power from behind their veils."

(Mai Yamani, Index on Censorship, issue# 4, 1996, p. 83)