

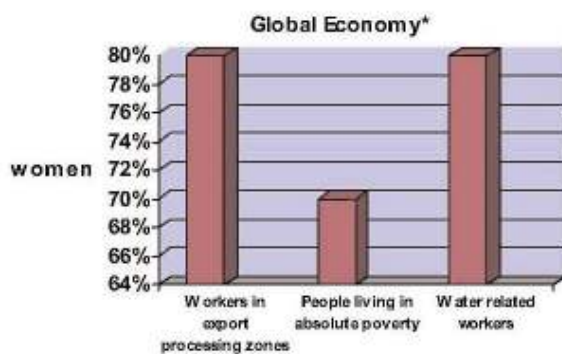
Women and Social Movements Against Globalization

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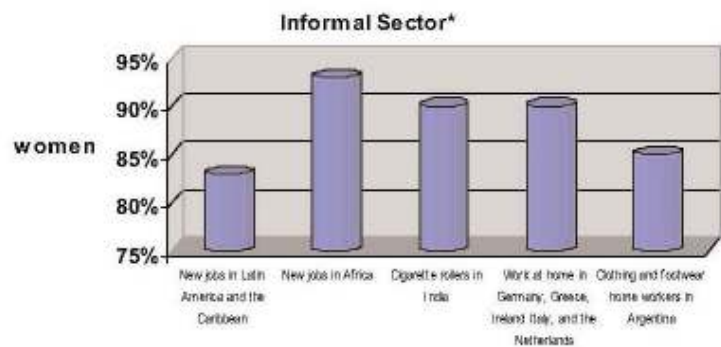
Broadly defined, globalization is the worldwide expansion and integration of economic, political, cultural, and social relations driven by capital accumulation. The term “against globalization” is misleading because it only partially describes what most social movements involved in struggles arising from global integration are about. What these social movements are against is capitalist economic globalization characterized by the expansion of corporate power and a lack of accountability and transparency in how global trade and aid arrangements are decided. This type of globalization is also referred to as corporate-driven globalization or globalization from above.

Most groups that reject this type of globalization, however, promote a grassroots-driven globalization from below that champions the rights of marginalized groups, respects diversity, and supports equality through democratic processes. Resistance to corporate-driven globalization has come from a wide variety of the political spectrum, from anarchists to democrats to right-wing nationalists. Many of the organizations within these movements at least mention the fact that the current model of economic globalization disproportionately hurts women, people of color, the poor, the elderly, and children. Concentration of land ownership, privatization of essential goods like water, creation of export processing zones (areas that are tax havens for corporations but where workers face unregulated working conditions), and the growth of informal, unprotected labor sectors are all processes associated with the concentration of economic power and the flexibility of capital- and they all disproportionately impact women. Although women bear the brunt of economic globalization and thus stand to gain the most from social movements against it, their visibility in some of these movements has been muted because issues associated with economic globalization are not always presented through a gender perspective, even though many movements against corporate-driven globalization acknowledge that poor women are the most vulnerable in the current global economy. Despite this recognition, “women’s issues” are sometimes articulated as adjuncts to the primary problems. This is not due to a lack of participation and initiative by women in these movements, however. It is because of women finding new spaces of resistance and survival in the global economy that we know women’s issues are inseparable from globalization.

How Globalization Affects Women



*Compiled from Athreya, WEDO, and Buenaventura



*Compiled from WIEGO

How Social Movements Against Economic Globalization Have Helped Women

- The Women’s Edge Coalition started a letter-writing campaign to the United States Trade Representative in 2003, recommending a study of how trade agreements affect poor women before solidifying any trade agreement. Shortly thereafter, the USTR agreed to study women’s employment as a condition of the Central American Free Trade Agreement negotiations (<http://www.womensedge.org/documents/whytakeaction.pdf>)

- After major demonstrations against the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Congress passed a law in 2000 requiring the U.S. government to oppose World Bank and IMF loans that promote user fees for health care and primary education. That opposition facilitated a reversal in the World Bank's policy on school fees, improving children's access to education. Tanzania, for instance, removed primary education fees, and as a result, 1.5 million children (the majority of whom were girls) were enabled to attend school (Mokhiber and Weissman, 2002)

Perhaps more far-reaching victories for women are the global networks and resources that have come out of movements against corporate-driven globalization, such as the following examples:

- Women's groups started a seed exchange and farming cooperative in Bangladesh that spread to over 60,000 farming households and reintroduced local varieties of crops (Akhter, 2001)
- Kenyan women initiated a boycott on coffee production (using their land for subsistence farming instead) and the reappropriation of land taken by settlers and the government (Turner and Brownhill, 2001)
- The Grameen micro credit system started in Bangladesh as a small-scale operation, and has now reached over 3.7 million borrowers (96% are women) and serves as a model on which other micro-lending alternatives have been built (<http://www.grameen-info.org/bank/index.html>)
- WIEGO is connected to the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) movement and considers the dearth of research on women in the informal economy a barrier to accurately assessing women's economic contributions. WIEGO promotes data-gathering that will help correct this and serves as a resource for researchers and activists working to improve the condition of women in the global economy (<http://www.wiego.org/main/about.shtml>)

Responses to Globalization

While the following movements often overlap (for example, movements focused on organizing labor are also usually concerned with trade and the economy), they are categorized by their primary concern.

1. Localization

Readings:

- Bennholdt-Thomsen, Veronika, Nicholas Faraclas, and Claudia von Werlhof (eds). 2001. *There is an Alternative: Subsistence and Worldwide Resistance to Corporate Globalization*. London: Zed Books
- Basu, Amrita (ed). 1995. *The Challenge of Local Feminisms: Women's Movements in Global Perspective*. Boulder, CO: Westview
- Hines, Colin. 2000. *Localization: A Global Manifesto*. London: Earthscan
- Kachru, Asha. "From Computers to Bullock Carts: A Woman's Tryst With Rural Poverty." <http://free.freespeech.org/manushi/94/kachru.html>
- Naples, Nancy A. and Manisha Desai (eds). 2002. *Women's Activism and Globalization: Linking Local Struggles and Transnational Politics*. New York: Routledge
- Norberg-Hodge, Helena. 1996. "Shifting Direction From Global Dependence to Local Interdependence." Pp 393-406 in *The Case Against the Global Economy*, edited by J. Mander and E. Goldsmith. San Francisco, CA: Sierra Club
- Shiva, Vandana. 2005. *Globalization's New Wars: Seeds, Water & Life Forms*. New York: Women, Ink

Websites:

- Green Belt <http://www.greenbelt.org>
- Growing for Market <http://www.growingformarket.com/>
- Land Research Action Network <http://www.landaction.org/category.php?section=41>
- Grassroots International http://www.grassrootsonline.org/brazil_partners.html

2. Human Rights

Readings:

- Bangkok AIDS Conference. 2004. "How Bush's Policy Punishes Women Worldwide." http://www.actupny.org/reports/Bangkok/bush_gagrule.html
- Bunch, Charlotte. 2001. "International Networking for Women's Human Rights." <http://www.cwgl.rutgers.edu/globalcenter/charlotte/globalcitizen.pdf>
- "Issue In Focus: CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women)." <http://www.feminist.org/global/issue.asp?issue=cedaw>

- “Issue In Focus: Global Gag Rule”
<http://www.feminist.org/global/issue.asp?issue=global%20gag%20rule>
- Morgan, Robin (ed). 1996. *Sisterhood Is Global*. New York: Feminist Press
- Rowbotham, Sheila and Stephanie Linkogle (eds). 2001. *Women Resist Globalization: Mobilizing for Livelihood and Rights*. London: Zed Books

Websites:

- Center for Women’s Global Leadership <http://www.cwgl.rutgers.edu/index.html>
- Women’s Human Rights Net <http://www.whrnet.org/index.php>
- Polaris Project <http://www.polarisproject.org/polarisproject/>
- AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP) <http://www.actupny.org/>
- Women of Color Resource Center <http://www.coloredgirls.org/index.cfm>
- Women’s Action for New Directions http://www.wand.org/wand_home.htm
- International Women’s Tribune Center <http://www.iwtc.org/>
- Feminists Against Sweatshops <http://www.feminist.org/>
- Women’s International Coalition for Economic Justice <http://www.wicej.addr.com/about.html>

3. Fair Economic and Trade Practices

Readings:

- Barndt, Deborah (ed). 1999. *Women Working the NAFTA Food Chain: Women, Food, and Globalization*. Toronto, Ontario: Second Story Press
- Genta Research Office. 2001. “Trade Liberalization: Impacts on African Women.”
<http://www.genderandtrade.net/WTO/TradeLibAfricanWomen.pdf>
- Nageer, Farah. 2004. “Women, Just Trade, and the Central American Free Trade Agreement.”
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- Riley, Maria and Christina Reyna. August 2001. “2001 Trade Trends in the United States and their Gendered Impacts.” US Gender and Trade Network.
http://www.genderandtrade.net/WTO/Ustrade_trends.pdf
- Rothstein, Jesse and Robert Scott. 1997. “NAFTA’s Casualties: Employment Effects on Men, Women, and Minorities.” http://www.epinet.org/printer.cfm?id=772&content_type=1

Websites:

- Association for the Taxation of Financial Transactions for the Aid of Citizens (ATTAC)
<http://www.attac.org/indexen/index.html>
- Global Exchange <http://www.globalexchange.org/campaigns/fairtrade/>
- Grameen Bank <http://www.gdrc.org/icm/grameen-info.html>
- Jubilee USA Network <http://www.jubileeusa.org/>

4. Mobilizing Workers

Readings:

- Barndt, Deborah. 2002. *Tangled Routes: Women, Work, and Globalization on the Tomato Trail*. Lanham, MD: Roman & Littlefield
- Featherstone, Liza. 2004. *Selling Women Short: The Landmark Battle for Workers’ Rights at Wal-Mart*. New York, NY: Basic Books
- Nisonoff, Laurie. *Men, Women, and the Global Assembly Line*.
<http://womencrossing.org/nisonoff.html>
- Rowbotham, Sheila and Swasti Mitter (eds). 1994. *Dignity and Daily Bread: New Forms of Economic Organising Among Poor Women in the Third World and the First*. London: Routledge
- Ward, Kathryn B. and Jean L. Pyle. 2003. “Recasting Our Understanding of Gender and Work During Global Restructuring.” *International Sociology*, 18 (3): 461-489
- Wintour, Nora. 2003. “Recognize and Revalue Women’s Work”
<http://www.globalpolicy.org/soecon/inequal/labor/2003/0306psi.htm>

Websites:

- United Food and Commercial Workers Women’s Network
http://www.ufcw.org/get_a_union/ufcw_works_for_you/equal_pay/whaththenetworkdoes.cfm
- (Self Employed Women’s Association (SEWA) <http://www.sewa.org/>
- HomeNet <http://www.newethic.org/homenet/html/homenet.html>
- STICH: Women Organizing for Worker Justice <http://www.stichonline.org/whowhat.asp>

5. Anti-Corporate/Anti-International Financial Institutions

Readings:

- Bello, Walden. 2000. "From Melbourne to Prague: The Struggle for a Deglobalized World." http://www.zmag.org/melbourne_to_prague.htm
- Klein, Naomi. 1999. *No Logo*. New York: Picador
- Korten, David. 2001. *When Corporations Rule the World*. Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian Press and Berrett-Koehler Publishers
- Shiva, Vandana. 2004. "Building Water Democracy : People's Victory Against Coca-Cola in Plachimada." <http://www.zmag.org/sustainers/content/2004-05/13shiva.cfm>
- Starr, Amory. 2000. *Naming the Enemy: Anti-Corporate Movements Confront Globalization*. London: Zed Books

Websites:

- 50 Years is Enough: U.S. Network for Global Economic Justice <http://www.50years.org/about/>
- Bank Information Center <http://www.bicusa.org/bicusa/index.php>
- Corp Watch <http://www.corpwatch.org/>
- Mobilization for Global Justice <http://www.globalizethis.org/>
- Structural Adjustment Participatory Review International Network <http://www.saprin.org/>

6. Anti-neoliberalism

Readings:

- "A Selection of Modern Anarchist Writings by Women." <http://struggle.ws/wsm/womenwriters.html>
- Brenner, Johanna. 2003. "Transnational Feminism and the Struggle for Global Justice." <http://www.wpunj.edu/~newpol/issue34/brenne34.htm>
- Fisher, William F. and Thomas Ponniah (eds). 2003. *Another World is Possible: Popular Alternatives to Globalization at the World Social Forum*. London: Zed Books.
- Mohanty, Chandra Talpade. 2003. "'Under Western Eyes' Revisited: Feminist Solidarity Through Anticapitalist Struggles." *Signs*, 28 (2): 499-536.

Websites:

- Anti-Capitalist Convergence <http://www.abolishthebank.org/en/faq.html>
- Colours of Resistance <http://www.tao.ca/~colours/index.html>
- Zapatista Women <http://www.actlab.utexas.edu/~geneve/zapwomen/enter.html>
- World Social Forum website for the annual global justice summit <http://www.forumsocialmundial.org.br/>

7. Reactionary/Right Wing

Readings:

- Antrobus, Peggy. 2001. "Local Realities and Global Action: Women Responding to Globalization." <http://www.dawn.org.fj/publications/docs/women&globalsept01.doc>
- Bacchetta, Paolo. 1994. *Gender in the Hindu Nation: RSS Women as Ideologues*. New York: Women, Ink
- Buchanan, Patrick J. 1998. *The Great Betrayal: How American Sovereignty and Social Justice Are Being Sacrificed to the Gods of the Global Economy*. New York: Little, Brown
- "Deceptive Website Attempts to Lure Anti-Globalization Activists to Neo-Nazi Movement." http://www.adl.org/PresRele/Internet_75/4130_72.htm
- "Women Living Under Muslim Laws international solidarity network statement to the World Social Forum - Appeal Against Fundamentalisms." 2005. <http://www.womennet.ca/news.php?show&2525>

Websites:

Concerned Women for America <http://www.cwfa.org/main.asp>

Independent Women's Forum <http://www.iwf.org/issues/default.asp>

8. Cultural Resistance

Readings:

- Barnet, Richard and John Cavanagh. 1996. "Homogenization of Global Culture." Pp 71-77 in *The Case Against the Global Economy*, edited by J. Mander and E. Goldsmith. San Francisco, CA: Sierra Club
- Duncombe, Stephen (ed). 2002. *Cultural Resistance Reader*. New York: Verso

2. *Beyond Borders: Arab Feminists Talk About Their Lives*.

http://www.films.com/Films_Home/Item.cfm/1/10687/ixs. Discusses the struggles of Arab women against repression within their own societies as well as against foreign penetration.

3. *DAM/AGE: A Film with Arundhati Roy*. <http://www.frif.com/new2003/dam.html>. A chronicle of how Indian author and activist Arundhati Roy used her fame to expose the detrimental effects of corporate-driven globalization on India's poor and the grassroots movements against the Narmada Valley dam project and privatization.

4. *Las companeras tienen grado (Zapatista Women)*. One of the few films about the Zapatista struggle in which the role of women is the main focus. Interviews women about why they chose to become fighters in the struggle for rights and autonomy in Chiapas.

http://www.latinamericanvideo.org/titles/detail.cfm?title_id=6715.

5. *Pain, Passion, and Profit*. <http://www.wmm.com/catalog/pages/c47.htm>. Founder of the Body Shop, Anita Roddick, follows women entrepreneurs in Africa and shows their contributions to economic development for women.

6. *Remote Sensing*. <http://www.wmm.com/Catalog/pages/c564.htm>. Discusses the globalization of the sex trade industry and its impact on women.

7. Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) has produced several videos on Indian women's work (including home-based employment and other work women do that is not recognized), organizing, struggles to get basic necessities, and the story of SEWA itself and how it has changed women's lives.

<http://www.videosewa.org/ourwork.htm>.

8. *The Global Assembly Line*. http://www.newday.com/films/The_Global_Assembly_Line.html. Portrays the lives of workers in free trade zones and illustrates the global "race to the bottom" as corporations seek ever-cheaper sources of labor.

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2. Athreya, Beth. 2002. "Trade Is a Women's Issue."

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4. Mokhiber, Russell and Robert Weissman. 2002. "10 (More) Reasons to Protest the IMF and World Bank." <http://www.commondreams.org/views02/0927-07.htm>.

5. Turner, Terisa E. and Leigh S. Brownhill. 2001. "'Women Never Surrendered': The Mau Mau and Globalization from Below in Kenya 1980-2000." Pp 106-132 in *There is an Alternative: Subsistence and Worldwide Resistance to Corporate Globalization*, edited by V. Bennholdt-Thomsen, N.G. Faraclas, and C. von Werlhof. London: Zed Books.

6. WEDO. http://www.wedo.org/global/wedo_primer.htm.

7. Women in Informal Employment Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO).

<http://www.wiego.org/textonly/fact1.shtml>.