



# TRANSFORMING ECONOMIC STRUCTURES

*for gender-equal and sustainable  
development*

# CONTENT



Prologue	3
Introduction	3
Economics: A male battlefield	4
Gender budgeting as a tool	6
The aims of the Swedish policy in the field of gender equality	7
The example of energy	8
Gender quotas as a tool	9
Economic gender inequality – a recipe for climate disaster	10
Attitudes and gender	11
Elements of development	13
Social banks	14
Gender analyses	14
Power over one's own body	15
Religion and the female body	15
From victims to active participants	16
CEDAW	17
Epilogue	18
Glossary	19
References	19

## PROLOGUE

Green Women (Gröna kvinnor) is a politically independent, feminist, non-profit organization with a holistic approach. We see the connections between social phenomena such as violence against women and violence against nature. Such phenomena may appear as restraints, through intimidation, of women's freedom of movement in public spaces, as accumulated climate change, and as unequal distribution of the Earth's resources. Green Women wants to make more people understand how everything is connected, and to act upon that knowledge. On our website you can read about the different aspects of society that are brought together in our analysis. By emphasizing how people, society and nature are connected, we want to empower women to take an active part in the public debate and in democratic decision-making processes. We also point to various tools that can be used in order to achieve an equal distribution of power and economic equality between men and women.

## INTRODUCTION

*At the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, a common Platform for Action was adopted. Every five years, the Platform is reviewed by the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). The next occasion will be the Beijing +15 review during the spring of 2010. The main chapter of the Platform is divided into twelve sections outlining different strategies. One such strategy concerns Women and the environment; another is devoted to Women and the economy.*

The section on women and the environment highlights the central role of women as bearers of life and providers for their families. The section on the economy describes the unpaid work of women as a labor that no country in the world could do without. These two aspects are completely intertwined, since women normally do not get paid to give birth to children or to assume responsibility for their upbringing. In Africa, for example, women produce 80 percent of the food but own only 1 percent of the land. Moreover, women are presently being evicted from their land by landowners who wish to launch large-scale, export-oriented production of food and agrofuels aimed at wealthier customers.

A key problem is that neither the underlying causes nor the consequences of the current economic ideas are paid much attention. Today, speculative flows take place on a greedy, unbridled market, where human rights apply only to those with economic power. What is more, these rights are not tied to any obligations.

## ECONOMICS, A MALE BATTLEFIELD

- *We argue that the current economic structures must be transformed.*
- *We consider gender budgeting and gender quotas to be useful tools.*
- *We maintain that gender inequality is one of the causes of climate change.*
- *We suggest a model that can be used to evaluate social development.*
- *We urge customers to change banks.*
- *We assert that shareholding should imply responsibility.*
- *We claim that corporate boards should be held to account for their actions.*
- *We call for the integration of gender analysis and gender expertise in all spheres of society.*
- *We insist on women's right to control their own bodies.*
- *We strive to increase women's influence in decisions on climate aid.*
- *We propose a non-hierarchical set of rules and strategies for dealing with conflicts.*
- *We work to shift the UN focus from women as victims to women as active participants.*

**F**or centuries, economic theory has been developed by men, for men. The study of the economy in society as a whole – macroeconomics – has up till now been conceived as a gender-neutral field, with “the economic man” as the norm. In the 1930's, John Maynard Keynes explained how this male prototype made informed decisions based on full knowledge of the existing alternatives. In case of a sudden imbalance between supply and demand, the state should intervene to solve the problem. Our economic system still rests on the same assumption. In the transformative process required by the holistic approach, this perspective must be complemented with a notion of the “economic woman”.

**Aggregate values** and processes such as investments, production and consumption have generally not been analyzed in terms of individuals and individual choices; thus, they have been perceived as genderless. However, already in 1932 the Swedish writer Elin Wägner, in her book *The Dialogue Continues*, wrote about women's struggle for influence in a world ruled by boys, for whom the construction of society seemed to be barely distinguishable from playing with Meccano. Wägner urged women to stand up to men and not be afraid to “displease” the men they loved. Even today, a woman who stands firm can be called “bitch” by any man.

**Long before Wägner**, female philosophers and researchers had repeatedly criticized the fact that not all human needs were taken into account by economic theories. It was observed that “an excluding frame-





work of pure theory must be regarded as utterly and singularly male.” In the 19th century, Charlotte Perkins Gilman pointed out that humans are the only species in which the female is dependent on the male for her daily survival. Perkins Gilman based her observations on the continuous institutionalization in Europe at the time, a process that reduced the economic independence of women even further.

**The economist Hazel Henderson** introduces a broader perspective on the human being and her available choices in her book *Building a Win-Win World* (1996). Henderson presents an economic model in the shape of a cake. The large piecrust at the bottom is Mother Earth, the basic condition of all forms of life. Then follows a thick layer of unpaid work and a heavy coat of affective labor and services. Trade, industry and banks represent a minor part of the cake, while the icing on top consists of monetary transactions. The icing is unimaginable without the base, and yet today everything is focused on the icing – in the media as well as in the political debate. The holistic perspective is lacking. It was only a few years ago, when Al Gore presented his views on the state of the world (in a traditional, patriarchal, Anglo-Saxon way), that environmental issues were squarely put on the political agenda. But the totality, i.e. the interrelations of the economy, the environment and gender equality, is still not understood and communicated as a single context.

**Despite the fact that the contemporary economic calculations are outdated, we continue along the same old lines.** A car accident followed by an emergency rescue operation still leaves a positive mark on the GDP. An accident creates work, since a new car must be produced or an old car repaired, while injured persons need healthcare. Whether the car trip was necessary in the first place is not considered, nor are the carbon dioxide emissions. The destruction of potential agricultural land through road constructions is similarly unaccounted for, as is the suffering and possible work impairment resulting from the accident. The knowledge acquired by the injured parties through education and life experiences is also left out of the economic calculation. The same goes for their parents' investments and effort in bringing up their children.

**As the following example shows, these deficiencies can be remedied through a transformed budgeting process.** If some consumers (i.e. women) request a more extended network of public transports in order to avoid car trips, this is made visible in a gender budget, where investments are compared to actual, gender-specific demand. Such changes in behavior may have positive health effects by encouraging people to go by foot or cycle more often, which in turn improves the environment by reducing carbon dioxide emissions. Through gender budgeting, it becomes possible to attribute economic value to transformations of this kind. For the inhabitants of Stockholm, the biggest nuisance is noise, and the situation gets worse as the number and speed of car transports increase. A person who chooses not to take the car, and thereby contributes to reducing noise and diminishing the need for new roads (and thus saving public land from being exploited for road construction), creates an economic value that can be expressed in monetary terms.

A lifestyle that improves health and does not impair the environment should perhaps be rewarded. A number of interesting options could be contemplated in this regard, not all of them necessarily involving money.

**A first step would be to make visible the impact of our behavior and our attitudes, and to invent a fair and gender-equal budgeting model for present and future generations. Such an approach, in which gender budgeting is proposed as a tool, would be instrumental in bringing about the paradigm shift needed to save the environment and to stop further climate change.**



## GENDER BUDGETING AS A TOOL

*"In addressing the economic potential and independence of women, Governments and other actors should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programmes so that before decisions are taken, an analysis is made of the effects on women and men, respectively."*

The Platform for Action obliges all states to integrate a gender perspective into decision-making processes. In the chapter on the economy, it states: "In addressing the economic potential and independence of women, Governments and other actors should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programmes so that before decisions are taken, an analysis is made of the effects on women and men, respectively."

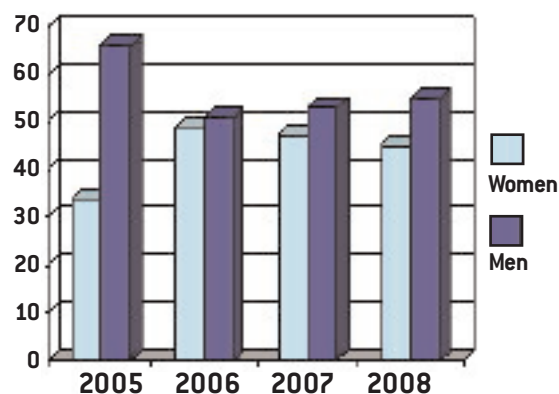
**International organizations** such as the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the World Bank and the UN consider gender analyses of economic policies to be a vital tool to achieve gender equality. In the Commonwealth of Nations, the ministers of finance have even decided that a gender perspective should be integrated into the budget processes in all member-states as of 2005!

**During the summer of 2006, some sixty projects aiming to develop national budget processes were taking place** under the heading of "Gender Responsive Budgeting" (GRB). Since the 1980's, Australia has been integrating a gender perspective in the budget process at both federal and state level, covering economic as well as social policy. England, Ireland, Belgium, France and Spain have all applied Gender Responsive Budgeting, and some initiatives have also been launched in South Africa and Tanzania. The city of Berlin was among the first to introduce gender budgeting, although the process now seems to have stalled. In another German city, Freiburg, all seven political parties decided in the fall of 2007 to initiate concrete work on gender budgeting. However, as a first step it was agreed that the decision would cover only non-mandatory areas such as culture and leisure.

**In 2006, the Nordic Council of Ministers made a decision** to integrate a gender equality perspective into the national budgets of the member-states. The cooperation in the framework of the Nordic Council includes Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, as well as three autonomous territories: the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Åland. In Sweden, a government committee in 2007 explored how gender mainstreaming could be achieved in the budget process through integration of a gender equality perspective.

An "Appendix on Gender Equality" was previously attached to the annual fiscal policy bill of the Swedish government. Today, gender equality aspects are integrated into all policy areas, and there is also a specific section on gender equality in the budget statement. However, this is not matched by concrete measures to achieve gender equality, as is made clear in the figure below from the national budget in 2009.

INCREASE OF EMPLOYMENT DUE TO REGIONAL BUSINESS SUPPORT



**The clear bias of the table**, which shows how invested tax money is unequally spent on men and women, ought to be a basis for targeted measures and affirmative action. Statistics provided by banks indicate that women in general request less money to launch enterprises, develop their businesses less quickly and take fewer risks. Paradoxically, the big banks are unwilling to lend smaller amounts, causing female entrepreneurship to suffer as a consequence. The rise of so-called "social banks," and the growing regional demand for local business projects, may be part of the solution when it comes to strengthening gender equality on the labor market.

**The purpose of integrating a gender equality perspective is to devise concrete strategies for achieving equality between men and women.** Gender equality aspects should be given consideration in the planning, implementation and evaluation of policy measures that affect people's life. Decision-makers should translate this into practice. Such undertakings may result in the questioning of norms and the redistribution of resources – to paradigm shifts, in short. This would be fully in line with the obligations of the state-parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

In 2007, the Swedish Women's Lobby carried out a feminist analysis of the fiscal policy bill of the Swedish Government, while Green Women scrutinized, from a gender equality integration perspective, the section on the environment in the same budget proposal. The European Women's Lobby (EWL) has put together a handbook on gender budgeting with a special focus on the EU. The handbook urges the member-states to call for the implementation of gender budgeting on the national level, and on the community level it exerts pressure on the European Parliament to introduce gender budgeting methods.

## THE AIMS OF THE SWEDISH POLICY IN THE FIELD OF GENDER EQUALITY

The overarching vision of the Swedish gender equality policy is that women and men should have equal power to shape society and their own lives. This objective can be subdivided into four targets;

### 1. Equal distribution of power and influence.

Women and men should have the same right and access to active citizenship and to set the conditions for decision-makers.

### 2. Economic equality.

Women and men should have the same possibilities and be subject to the same conditions when it comes to education and salaried labor that imply economic independence throughout life.

### 3. Equal sharing of unpaid household work and affective labor.

Women and men should take equal responsibility for household work and should have equal possibilities to perform and be the objects of caring duties, on the same conditions.

### 4. Men's violence against women must stop.

Women and men, girls and boys, should have the same right and access to physical integrity.

In the same vein, the Swedish Women's Lobby has published a handbook of its own, proposing a number of parameters to facilitate the integration of a gender perspective and to promote the introduction of gender budgeting at all levels of society. The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions is working along the same lines through education and training. Any gender budgeting work must start by analyzing the aims of the national gender equality policy. The next step is to determine what gender equality actually means in terms of the local situation. Statistics should then be adjusted to the local context and broken down by gender to make possible an equal distribution of resources.

Making room for the human dimension, as a vital component of the social infrastructure, requires that everyone – not only the men in Keynes' theory – has a possibility to make their voice heard. In 1961, the feminist author Eva Moberg wrote an article in which she introduced the concept *jämställdhet* (gender equality) in Sweden, and a year later, in another article, she drew attention to the dual role of women. Already in the early 1960's, Moberg realized that men must share responsibility in all spheres of life in order to grasp the totality of things and thus become capable of making wise decisions. Today, we might call such a position anti-patriarchal. Elin Wägner, an early feminist well-known Swedish author, pointed to women's equal right to meaningful labor and life, bearing in mind the basic conditions for human survival on Earth. In her 1940 book *At Peace with Earth*, written together with Elisabeth Tamm, Wägner introduced a holistic perspective that emphasized the need for humans to live in harmony with the Earth. The Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess similarly stressed the interplay between the individual level and the political level in his book on Mahatma Gandhi from 2001. The nuclear power debate, in which nuclear power is variously portrayed as a clean source of new energy and as a life-threatening activity, is a good example of how cause and effect are discussed without regard to the holistic framework

## THE EXAMPLE OF ENERGY

*The development of solar power is driven by local and regional enterprises, a non-patriarchal structure.*

**D**uring the three decades that have passed since 1980, when the Swedish people in a referendum voted to phase out nuclear power, various independent polling agencies have carried out a series of surveys on the issue. The nuclear industry has commissioned its own surveys, using predictably biased questionnaires. In the meantime, two reactors have been closed, while the capacity of the remaining ten has been boosted. As a result, the amount of electricity provided by nuclear power has increased rather than decreased. Independent surveys indicate that women to a larger extent than men want to invest in natural resources such as sun, wind and water.

**Women are more concerned by security issues** and by the unresolved problem of nuclear waste. The current plan is to find a safe way to store, for several hundred thousand years, radioactive waste that is extremely dangerous for both humans and the environment. And yet, men dominate the debate and decision-making concerning the choices of energy sources and the infrastructure required for production. The conservative and liberal media advocates an extension of the nuclear program and claim emphatically that nuclear power has nothing to do with nuclear weapons or the risk of plutonium falling into the wrong hands; they also contend that uranium can be extracted in a way that does not harm the environment. Nuclear power requires large investments and a high level of control measures to prevent terrorist attacks. In short, it is a good example of patriarchal infrastructure.

**The development and use of solar power is advancing rapidly all over the world**, and is currently the fastest-growing industry. During 2009, the price on investments in solar power fell with 50 percent. In Europe, Germany is taking the lead, with ten times the number of solar cells per capita as any other country. In a so-called "feed in system", German legislation requires electricity utilities to buy back surplus energy from consumers at a price that makes investments profitable.

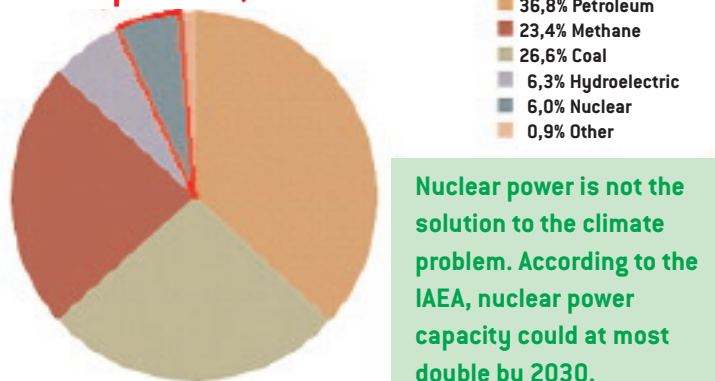


Austria is the country with the most developed solar heating systems, and expansion is in full swing also in Spain, Greece, Italy and France. In Spain, all new buildings must use solar heating. This development is driven by local and regional enterprises: a non-patriarchal structure.

*In her book **Creating a Caring Economy, the Real Wealth of Nations**, Riane Eisler elaborates an economic foundation based on partnership. In Eisler's model, all human beings are considered to be equal, just as in the key UN message of human rights.*

### THE SOURCES OF THE GLOBAL ENERGY PRODUCTION

#### Nuclear power 5,5



Source: Energy Information Administration, 2005 data.

At the level of regional planning, this implies that present and future inhabitants of a region should have as much influence over the construction of infrastructure as those who exercise the decision-making power. Today, men dominate both the decisions concerning infrastructure and the companies that do the construction work. An efficient way of working against antiquated attitudes would be to introduce gender quotas and legislation that enhances the local influence over decision-making processes.





## GENDER QUOTAS AS A TOOL

*The fact that women only represent 18 percent of those active in politics means that 82 percent of politicians are men!*

Some ten years ago, the Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO) launched the global campaign "50/50" to boost women's representation in political decision-making positions. Although the share of women in national parliaments is currently only 18.2 percent, this is actually the highest number achieved so far. 22 countries have reached the threshold of 30 percent, a level often considered to constitute a critical mass. Rwanda is on top of the list with 56.3 percent.

### **Gender quotas are used in politics all over the world.**

Some 100 countries have introduced quotas in some form, and about 50 countries use quotas at the constitutional level or in electoral legislation. Different electoral systems also affect the possibilities of women to run for posts and be elected. A system with proportional representation makes it easier to change obsolete attitudes and to secure a greater number of seats in parliament for women, while a plurality voting system of the British type raises more obstacles for women. The fact that women only represent 18 percent of those active in politics means that 82 percent of politicians are men!

**From a Swedish perspective** this number may seem astonishingly low, since women's representation in the

Swedish parliament is currently at 47 percent.

However, women were given the right to vote in general elections no earlier than 1921, and it was only in 1994 that Sweden assumed the leading position in terms of women's representation in politics. This development was preceded by strong pressure from women's organizations, and also by threats from women's groups to form a new women's party. Today, Sweden is ranked number four in the global gender equality league.

**According to the index used by the UN**, Norway holds the top position. In Norway, gender quotas for company boards have been introduced, with the result that women's representation has increased from 7 percent in 2003 to 40 percent in 2009. Finland has since 1995 used mandatory quotas for municipal bodies, as well as for governing and administrative boards of corporations with public majority ownership. Sweden has not yet introduced gender quotas. In 1998, under the threat of new legislation, women's representation in public companies increased to 40 percent. On the boards of listed companies women represent only 19 percent of the members, and in the executive bodies only 13 percent are women. It seems obvious that the Swedish Companies Act needs to be amended in order to promote gender equality through quotas.



## ECONOMIC GENDER INEQUALITY – A REASON FOR CLIMATE DISASTER

*When the issue of women and the economy is discussed in the context of climate change, it becomes clear that the collective behavior of men has a negative impact on the climate.*

**W**hen the reflections on women and the economy are connected to the issue of climate change, it becomes clear that the collective behavior of men has a negative impact on the climate. Men have more money, and they spend it in ways that are not climate-smart. Moreover, men constitute the norm in society, which means that those who show a greater degree of climate awareness do not fit into the dominant social construction. In the consumer society, media and capital work relentlessly to preserve the existing norms according to the model proposed by classical economics, that is, paying the highest possible dividends to ensure the highest possible returns on invested capital. This approach is supported by the Swedish Companies Act, which stipulates that profits should be maximized. World leaders now have a responsibility to restrain capital within the limits of what is sustainable.

**At the UN climate conference in Copenhagen in December 2009**, when the governments of the world were supposed to agree on new climate targets, the countries participating were overwhelmingly represented by men, who are traditionally brought up in the spirit of competition and contest. In the documents that were tabled, women were for the most part depicted as victims of climate change. So far, women's expertise and recommendations when it comes to curbing climate change have not been adequately recognized. Across the globe, women now call for a paradigm shift that will allow them to participate and take the lead in decision-making processes affecting the very survival of families and communities.

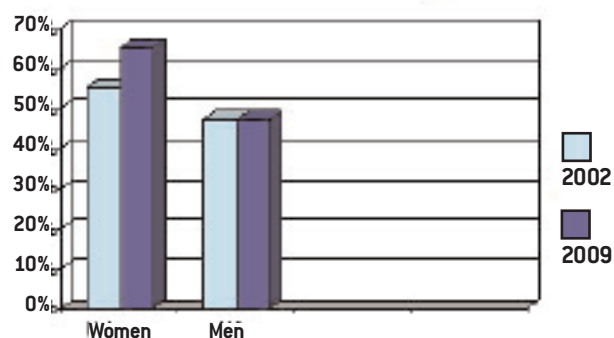
### **Competition leads, as is well known, to exclusion.**

All countries cannot excel in everything – the notion as such is not only impossible but also ridiculous. Good enough is good enough, and through cooperation surplus value can be yielded and used for collective ends. After all, humans are social beings with no other option than to share a common Earth.

### **In a follow-up report to the Beijing document**

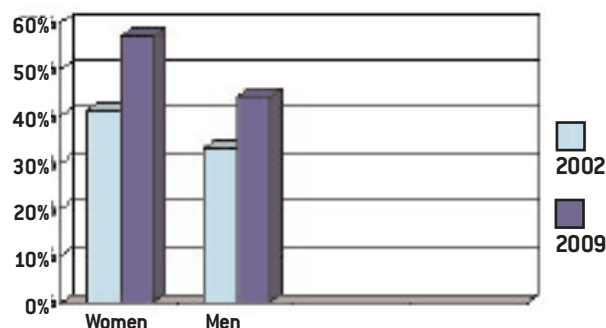
produced by the EU, women and the environment is described as a problematic field, since parameters to measure women's influence are still lacking. The fact that no parameters have been developed with regard to the environment proves how the UN has ignored the ways in which environmental issues are connected to the question of women's power and influence.

### CAN SWEDEN CONTRIBUTE TO SLOWING DOWN CLIMATE CHANGE?



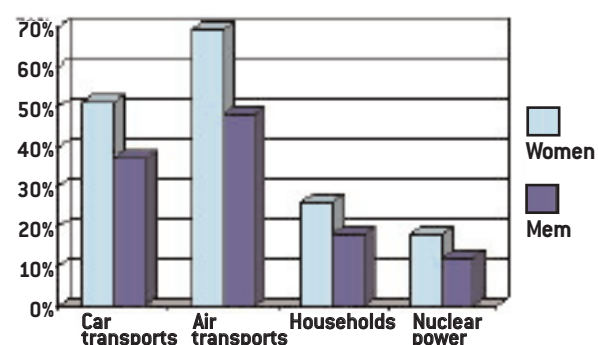
In 2002, 55 percent of the women and 47 percent of the men answered "yes, definitely."  
In 2009, 65 percent of the women and 47 percent of the men answered "yes, definitely."

### CAN YOU CONTRIBUTE TO SLOWING DOWN CLIMATE CHANGE?



In 2002, 41 percent of the women and 33 percent of the men answered "yes, definitely."  
In 2009, 57 percent of the women and 44 percent of the men answered "yes, definitely."

### TO WHAT EXTENT DO THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES DRIVE CLIMATE CHANGE IN 2009?



Car transports 51 % women and 37 % men.  
Air transports 69 % women and 48 % men.  
Households 26 % women and 18 % men.  
Nuclear power 18 % women and 12 % men.

Since 2002, the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency has regularly studied how men and women perceive sustainable development. A conclusion is that women in general are more willing to change their own behavior in order to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases; women also are more prone to believe that actions taken on the individual level can make a difference. The figures below show some of the results of the surveys.

An interesting feature in these surveys is that they show that the demand for climate-neutral goods and services has increased between 2008 and 2009, thus opening possibilities for private companies to develop climate-smart alternatives. However, a prerequisite for such a development is that entrepreneurs (men, in most cases) realize this potential. Instead of waiting for entrepreneurs to act, banks with a social and ecological awareness can facilitate the shift towards sustainable and gender-equal development. Responsible banks could also encourage women to take loans to invest in sustainable business projects. For far too long, the EU and the West more generally have regarded microcredit as an option exclusively reserved for women in developing countries. This view is completely wrong, since the supply of microcredit benefits all small-scale, locally adapted businesses. In the EU, loans up to ? 25,000 are defined as microcredits.

## ATTITUDES AND GENDER

### Women and men affect society in different ways.

Men in general have more money, and they spend it in ways that have a negative impact on our environment and our climate. Men also dominate, to an overwhelming degree, the political processes that are supposed to regulate unethical and environmentally damaging activity; likewise, they own and control the private corporations mainly responsible for climate change. The reason is not that most men are evil, but rather that the rules of the game encourage profit maximization across the board, based on an obsolete and unsustainable economic theory and a world view that can no longer be supported. Today, men and women with insight into economic processes raise a flag of warning and publically advocate alternative economic systems that would be more responsible and be based on a holistic approach.

Early in 2010, the governor of the central bank of Sweden declared that “we are heading towards more rigorous rules for the financial system.” He also urged banks to raise their buffers to cover risks. What he did not say was that Swedish banks since ten years have the right to use customers’ current accounts, which offer no interest rate, for investments and speculation. To address this issue, international initiatives have been considered (including a proposal from the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision) to reinforce the rules on bank capital requirements. But while the central bank chief underlined that the financial system needs to be better prepared, he did not say that banks should take fewer risks, nor did he urge them to assume responsibility for investments to prevent climate change and social exclusion.

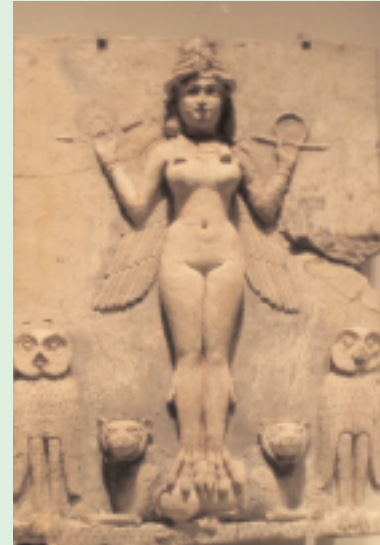
The economist John Kay takes a different view. In the beginning of 2010, he declared that “*things may get even worse.*” According to Kay, central banks are not as active as they should be, and their proposals for new rules are not sufficiently far-reaching. As old patterns remain and banks go ahead with business as usual, a new bubble will sooner or later develop. When it will burst, and what will happen then, nobody knows. Kay argues that following the last three breakdowns – the Asian crisis of 1997, the dotcom bubble at the turn of the millennium, and the most recent (and most severe) credit crunch – chances are that the next crisis will be extremely serious. In many countries, the public sector has already hit rock bottom. Consequently, Kay proposes to split up banks to stop them from using customers’ savings for speculation, a reform that would reduce risk in the banking sector. Kay thus wants to make structural changes that would prevent history from repeating itself.

***The reason is not that most men are evil, but rather that the rules of the game encourage profit maximization across the board, based on an obsolete and unsustainable economic theory.***



**Is a new financial system possible?** The fact is that it is necessary, and urgently needed. While governments ponder how they can effect a smooth transition period that will avoid upsetting voters and cause them to lose power, and while the fossil fuel lobby is going out of its way to cast doubt upon the findings of the UN Panel on Climate Change, progressive movements are growing. One such movement is “Transition Network,” an organization promoting concrete, local work in order to facilitate change in residential areas. In Sweden, the Transition Network cooperates with the Swedish Village Action Movement. The decision to award the 2009 Nobel Prize in Economics to Elinor Ostrom was indicative of what is currently going on in many parts of the world: people act together; they organize on a voluntary basis, with a view to creating viable institutions through which fragile resources can be managed and taken care of. Ostrom’s book *Governing the Commons* is replete with excellent examples of the social skills among individuals and their willingness to work for the common good. However, success requires well-defined rules, clear principles of accountability, and strategies for solving conflicts. According to Ostrom, growing privatization is an obstacle to such a transformation; instead, cooperation is her solution, her mantra.

**In the run-up to the climate conference in Copenhagen,** the economist Pavan Sukhdev proposed a new way forward for the world’s economies. Sukhdev is the head of an EU project to put a price on, and estimate the value of, biodiversity. He points out that the annual loss of forests costs more than the amount governments so far have spent to save their economies from the financial crisis. Following the Stern Review of 2006, Sukhdev emphasizes that the economy must quickly be adapted to account for the impact on the climate. Neither Stern nor Sukhdev display any knowledge of gender issues. What is more, the insufficient representation of women in decision-making and economic processes is not even mentioned, nor is the fact that women and children make up the most vulnerable group in society, the poorest of the poor. Although three years passed between the two reports, the Copenhagen Conference did not deliver the impetus needed. The countries present at the conference showed, in various degrees, a willingness to restrain markets through environmental regulations, but the ability to cooperate was nowhere to be found.



**A gender perspective must be an integrated part of the entire process** and its outcome. From other political processes we have learned that gender equality aspects must be included in the negotiated texts, if governments are to be held to account for commitments made. The entire debate over climate change must be linked to the issues of human rights and sustainable development.

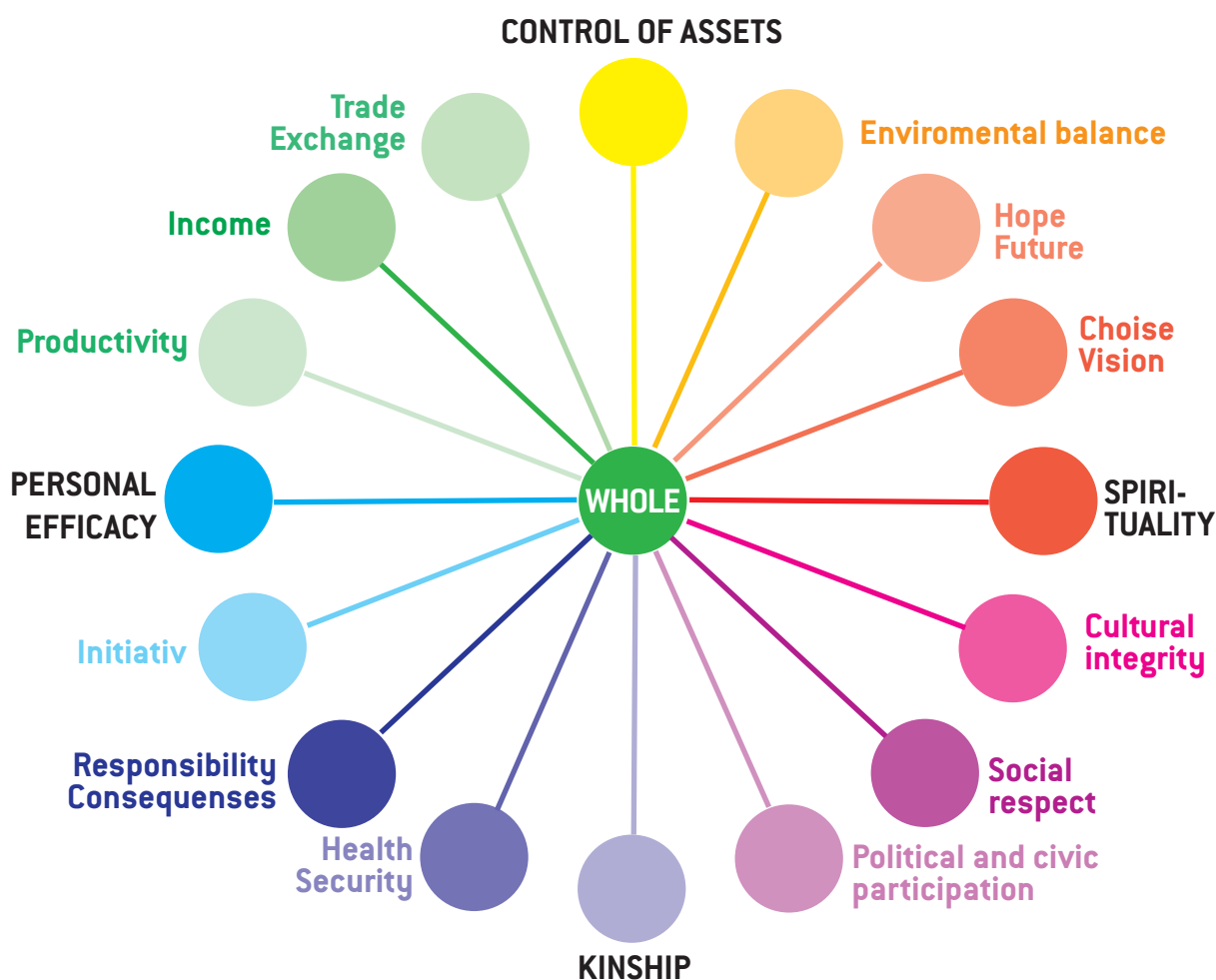
**Economic incentives also need to be clarified,** as can be done through gender budgeting. Statistics show that global military expenditure currently stands at over \$1,460 billion. Saving the climate would, according to some estimates, cost somewhere around \$135 billion. **Take a close look at the figure to the right.** The model comes from the First Nations Development Institute and is called “Elements of Development.” Here it is presented in a simplified form, but the essence of it remains. Remember that the entire circle, comprising 16 different parameters, correspond to an individual level, a community level and a global level. We are all a part of each level. The figure is a tool to describe financial, human and sustainable development – because environmental balance is measurable, as are feelings of hope and belief in the future. Spiritual and cultural integrity can also be measured, and the same goes for

**What can be done to change the rules of the economy in such a way that they start working for and not against the climate?**  
**How to make the economic system gender-equal and socially acceptable?**

the degree to which society respects the different needs of individuals. In fact, everything can be measured and ascribed value in a budget process. Consequently, it is not enough to reform neoclassical economic theory and put a price on the environment, while maintaining the current definition of private property and opting for economic growth. The figure presented below points to the complexity of things. The entire structure must be transformed, and economic theory must begin to see the economy as a system of interdependence, a system that invests both in people and in the environment, and redistributes – gives back – to the benefit of people and nature. Nothing and no one should be left out. What we need at this stage are banks that take their responsibility and deserve our trust.

**In philosophy, it is generally agreed that people often are perfectly willing to change a self-interested behavior, provided that the reasons why they should do so are made clear to them.**

One can assume that people who take responsibility for all phases of life, and show concern not only for their own generation but also for others, are more prone to change their ways of life than people who only think about themselves. Therefore, we need images that can bring about greater understanding. It is a fact that women are still mainly responsible for the upbringing of children and for other unpaid household work. At the same time, surveys show that women are generally more supportive of measures aimed at reducing carbon dioxide emissions; and to a larger extent than men, women are also willing to change their lifestyle to the betterment of environment. Furthermore, as was already mentioned, women believe, to a greater degree than men, that their own actions can make a difference. Perhaps the image below can make more people understand that changes are needed that would benefit everyone and contribute to a higher quality of life. Social banks represent a useful tool in this endeavor.





## SOCIAL BANKS

*If investors would choose banks that were socially and economically responsible, the system would become self-cleaning.*

**A** social bank is a bank based on trust, in which money is invested in real values. Individuals are not made secondary to growth, and invested money is used only to finance sustainable projects that benefit both people and the climate. Customers in the bank may choose for themselves how their savings should be used, since the bank is completely transparent in terms of its investments.

There are already a number of small social banks in the world today (a Swedish example is Ekobanken). In Europe, this is a fast-growing phenomenon. Representatives of social banks are meeting more and more frequently – not to plan mergers and expand, but to create surplus value through networking and exchange of knowledge.

**In the EU, heads of governments are now declaring** the need for new regulations to oversee the financial markets and the banking sector. New bodies are to be established, financed by taxpayers. If investors, large and small, would instead choose to invest in banks that are socially and ecologically responsible, the system would become self-cleaning. Some supplementary provisions, such as holding corporate boards to account for their actions, and exempting small banks from some of the rules that apply to big banks, would facilitate a transformation of this kind. Furthermore, shareholding should imply responsibility, not only when it comes to claiming dividends, but also in terms of the social and ecological behavior of corporations. Such a reform would bolster the already growing tendency to engage in social entrepreneurship. Social business enterprises are based on partaking and reinvestment of profits in one's own business or in similar projects. Such a business concept combines democracy with self-empowerment and self-help. Through entrepreneurship, social businesses strive to match the individual's need for work and society's need for goods and services. In Europe, social businesses have already created hundreds of thousands of jobs. This is where things stand at the moment. Now it is up to us to take action and change banks.



## GENDER ANALYSES

**Gender analyses describe the different ways** in which men and women assess their possibilities to make a difference and take responsibility. Women and men have different attitudes when it comes to making savings and, more generally, taking precautions. This is not the place to engage in the debate over how these differences should be explained – in terms of biology and/or social constructions, etc. Suffice it to say that there are probably a number of correlating factors and complementing world views that need to be taken into account. What we know for a fact is that if decisions in business and politics are to be based on a broader perspective, in which women's knowledge and experiences are also included, women must participate, on an equal footing, at all decision-making levels in society.

***Gender affects behavior. We want women to understand that they are part of the existing structure, which they also contribute to upholding. A precondition of democratic development is that everyone is allowed to participate, so that all experiences can be acknowledged. The most basic prerequisite is the right to control your own body.***

## POWER OVER ONE'S OWN BODY

*In a survey conducted by Green Women, the government of Malta claims "there is no demand for abortion."*

**A**n unbelievable number of women die each year in childbirth. According to WHO estimates, 550,000 women and 3,5 million newborn babies died in 2009 alone. Most deaths could have been avoided if women had the right to control pregnancies. About 215 million women do not want to get pregnant but lack access to effective contraceptive methods. If the world community would double the amount of aid given to family planning from 12 to 24 billion dollars, maternal deaths would be reduced by 70 percent, and women would be able to decide for themselves whether and when to have children. This would also grant women better access to education and employment, which in turn would strengthen their economic and social position in society, as well as their possibilities to run for posts in elections. When women are allowed to fully partake in the economic development of a country, this is to the advantage of the entire transformation needed to combat climate change.

**Women must be allowed influence over the financial resources** that the governments at the Copenhagen Conference pledged to climate aid. Such aid could then be used to promote the education of women and family planning programs in countries where women are still excluded from the structures of power. Thus, climate-smart development would be possible, without having to repeat the mistakes that the EU, Russia and the US historically have committed. It would already take three Earths to meet the total demand of the world's consumers, and it is the most vulnerable groups, the poorest of the poor (i.e. women and children), that pay the price. Consequently, it is only fair that these groups should have a say in decisions regarding climate aid and the building of infrastructure.

### RELIGION AND THE FEMALE BODY

**There are an increasing number of obstacles** to women's right to education and sexual and reproductive health. One such obstacle is religious fundamentalism. In some countries, fundamentalist movements want to enforce Islamic Sharia law, abolish education for women and force women to have children at a young age. In some parts of Iran, women are subjected to more painful forms of capital punishment than men, e.g. execution by stoning. In parts of India, women are deemed inferior; women are even treated like commer-

cial goods that must obey their husbands and are not allowed freedom of movement in society. In Somalia, women and children are extremely exposed, in part because of religious fundamentalism. In Saudi Arabia, women are not allowed to show any part of their bodies in public, not even their eyes.

**But even Malta, an EU member,** negates women's right to control their own bodies by claiming that "there is no demand for abortion." In Poland, where the church was separated from the state already in the beginning of the 20th century, legal amendments are underway to curb women's right to abortion even further. Then of course there is Ireland, where the state is so thoroughly permeated by religion that the authorities deny any religious influence on the form of government whatsoever. In Sweden, there are illiterate immigrant women who are secluded in their own homes in the name of honor. Such problems must also be discussed, and we must forcefully pressure our governments within the EU to comply with UN conventions and the "Platform for Action," because at the level of international cooperation, Sweden sticks to the common EU position.



## FROM VICTIMS TO ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS

*In general terms, women tend to give higher priority to education, health and care than to the production of weapons.*

*This has been confirmed by surveys conducted by the Swedish SOM*

*Institute, and also in studies carried out by the WEDO, Women's*

*Environment and Development*

*Organization and various UN bodies.*

In the Platform for Action, we do not find expressions such as "ways of life," "responsibility," "ethics" and "morals." In contrast, words like "victim" and "aid" abound. Green Women wants to launch a dialogue and debate focusing on how things are fundamentally connected, and to what extent it is our responsibility to make a change, to transform the norms and structures that affect us in our daily lives. The historical role of women as active, participating and empowered subjects has not been adequately documented. But those who seek can easily find women with power and influence as far back as in ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt – in fact, women had prominent roles in all of the ancient civilizations. In medieval Europe, it was considered perfectly natural that women made their own decisions. However, as the institutionalization of nation-states, modern societies and religious authorities progressed, women were increasingly excluded from decision-making processes. As guilds and craftsmen's associations were consolidated, skilled women professionals were driven out of trade. History has repeatedly shown that where rigid, hierarchical rules prevail, men come to power. The EU and the UN are illustrative in this regard: the top positions are filled by men. Such patriarchal structures also include the Vatican City, ruled by the Pope, and the mosque, where the Imam holds the supreme position. The situation is similar in private business, where the male dominance grows with the value of transactions.

Since both men's and women's experiences are needed to achieve gender-equal, sustainable development, complementary reforms must take place. In the EU and the West in general, where we find those mainly responsible for the current climate changes, women must become involved both in politics and in private business.

*In parts of the world where women provide for their families and take care of children, family planning and education must be made available. This would allow women to control their own lives and influence the development of society.*

In general terms, women tend to give higher priority to education and healthcare than to the production of weapons. This has been confirmed by surveys conducted by the Swedish SOM Institute, and also in studies carried out by the Women's Environment and Development Organization and various UN bodies. The EU follow-up report to the "Platform for Action," presented in 2009 by the Swedish EU Presidency, the following observation is made regarding the environment and the economy: "Women's participation is fundamentally a question of equality and fairness. As such, it needs no further justification. At the same time, it should be kept in mind that the awareness of women's rights and of gender equality does not increase automatically, unless women are included in negotiating delegations." Consequently, national delegations are encouraged to invite gender equality experts at all levels of decision-making processes. Appointing advisory groups of experts to deal with gender equality may be a step in the right direction, but only if there is a genuine willingness to follow up on the recommendations of such groups.

The Swedish governments review of the Platform for Action makes it abundantly clear that expertise in equality issues is lacking in the field of environmental policy. The review does not offer any possibilities of measuring the impact of gender. According to the approach taken, everything should be mainstreamed – in other words, gender equality should always be an integrated aspect. However, it is not possible to find out how this should be done, nor how women affect and are affected by the contents.

The Swedish government has established a Council for Gender Equality, where information flows in a patriarchal way, i.e. from the top downwards. Bringing together women's expertise, and inviting representatives of women's organizations to participate in decision-making, seems to be a much less favored option. Perhaps a new Agency for Gender Equality would be needed to tackle structural discrimination and to enforce the international conventions that Sweden has ratified. Also within the UN we need better coordination and better structures to allow us to act on an equal basis. A number of UN bodies and UN-associated agencies support the demand for equal participation of women.

## CEDAW

*Men's wages may on average be too high. But the fact remains – the gap must be bridged.*

Last year marked the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), adopted by the UN in 1979. The 186 states that are parties to the Convention are regularly asked to report on what measures they have taken to implement its provisions. What makes CEDAW unique is the fact that it requires governments to work towards the elimination of discrimination against women both in the public and in the private sphere. This is the backdrop to the third objective of the Swedish policy for gender equality. During the last few years, Sweden has been criticized by the CEDAW monitoring committee. The criticism has focused on the fact that violence against women only rarely leads to prosecution, and to even fewer sentences in court. At this moment, projects are under way to educate police officers, and proposals for closer cooperation between the police and prosecutors have been put forward. However, since many judges do not give priority to these issues, they have declined offers of training in this field. Decisive measures on the part of the Swedish government would be needed to improve the situation.

Meanwhile, the wage gap between men and women remains. In 2009, women received on average 84 percent of men's income. In the world of statistics, the male is posed as the norm. A useful thought experiment would be to turn the equation around and say that men earn 119 percent of women's income. Men's wages may on average be too high. But the fact remains – the gap must be bridged.

There is nothing to complain about in the unique Swedish parental leave system, which grants individuals on parental leave 80 percent of their monthly income to a level up to 33,000 Swedish crowns (equivalent to \$4,540) for a maximum of 440 days – on the contrary, it is an example for others to follow. Parents may decide for themselves how they should split the months between them, but two months are reserved for the father. It is worth noting that only 22 percent of the men use their full share. As a result, 78 percent of the mothers claim most of the parental allowance, a tendency that does not promote gender equality in the family or on the labor market.

Preparing for the climate conference in Copenhagen, the CEDAW Committee, during its 44th session, made a



statement on Gender and Climate Change. The Committee expressed concern about the lack of a gender perspective in the work on the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and also in other global and national initiatives in the field of climate policy. The Committee referred to research showing that climate change affects men and women differently, and that women are not helpless victims but “powerful agents of change,” whose leadership is essential. The statement concluded by emphasizing women's right to participate at all levels of decision-making, a right that must be ensured in any future program to combat climate change.

The Global Gender and Climate Alliance (GGCA), which brings together 38 organizations, including UN agencies as well as NGOs, makes a similar point by stressing the fact that women in the global South traditionally have been perceived as victims. In the debate preceding the Copenhagen Conference, the GGCA noted that if women's experiences and gender perspectives were now represented in the international negotiations, it was only by virtue of a long struggle. When the negotiations began in 2009, there were 43 references to women and gender in the draft documents. On the eve of the conference in December, only a few remained. It is uncertain whether any such reference of significance made it to the final session. And yet, any effort to frame a common vision without referring to gender would undoubtedly seem impossible and futile to the women of the world, who represent over half of the Earth's population.

## EPILOGUE

**T**he purpose of the present paper is to launch a debate about our responsibility to reorient and transform destructive behavior to the benefit of gender-equal and climate-smart ways of living. Only when you understand the complexity of how everything is connected, you are in a position to make a change. In the beginning of this text, 11 concrete measures were described as proposals that would facilitate a transformative process. Then a number of arguments focusing on gender were presented, all of which stressed the need for proper implementation of signed and ratified international conventions.

**As the Swedish Environmental Protective Agency** has shown in several studies since 2002, women and men have different notions of their individual responsibility. If decisions in private business and politics are to be based on a broader perspective, where women's knowledge and experiences are also taken into account, women must be allowed to participate on an equal basis in the development of society, including in Sweden.

**In 2007, the Swedish Environment Advisory Council** presented a report on "gender equality as a prerequisite for sustainable development," concluding that women globally have a more sustainable way of life than men. Women leave smaller ecological footprints and do not impact on the climate to the same extent.

**For us, it is all the more important** in this regard to call attention to social norms and different values as to what constitutes a good life. What Mother Earth needs is first of all a significant reduction of activities that are harmful to the climate. In this context, we can learn a lot from women's experiences. To put it bluntly: men should start acting more like women. In Western countries, this would lead to a more extensive use of small-scale infrastructure and collective means of transport. In other parts of the world, the same principle would translate into investments in education and healthcare rather than military prowess and religious fundamentalism. For all countries, it is a matter of using energy more efficiently and promoting renewable energy sources, since any other option would be futile in the long run. The prerequisites, as well as the possibilities, lie in gender equality.

*No climate  
justice  
can be reached  
without gender  
justice*





## GLOSSARY:

### **Gender mainstreaming**

A strategy to integrate gender equality issues into all policy areas and at all decision-making levels, including at the level of implementation. State agencies should also organize the internal work with a view to ensuring **gender equality** in their main areas of activity.

### **Gender perspective/ gender analysis**

In gender analyses, gender-specific statistics and other data is analyzed and evaluated in terms of the stated aims of the gender equality policy.

### **Sex and gender**

In academic research, these terms may refer both to biologically defined sex and to socially constructed gender.

### **Gender blind**

A term denoting lack of consideration of gender perspectives or sex. Gender discrimination occurs when someone is unjustly treated, directly or indirectly, because of his or her gender.

### **Gender pattern**

refers to the order made visible when data, statistics and needs are broken down by gender.

### **Patriarchy**

A concept used in social science to describe social systems in which women are subordinate to men.

## REFERENSER

**Peking 1995**, UN fourth Women World Conference

**CEDAW** statement Aug-09

**Sweden ´s report Beijing +15 2009**

**Gender CC**, UN Climate Conference in Copenhagen 2009

**Beijing + 15**, EU-report from Swedish EU Presidency 2009

**Shadow report** Beijing + 15, Swedish Women ´s Lobby 2010

**National Secretariat** For Gender Research, Jämi, in Gothenbourg

**Swedish Environmental Protection Agency**, gender reports 2002-2009

**Swedish Environment Advisory Council**, report MVB 2007:02

**A report from the research institute of the swedish defence, FOI** 2009

**WHO:s recommendations on** unfpa.org

**Michael Moons** ph.dr. essay "Green Ideology and Its Relation to Modernity 2009

**Rebecca Hagman**, On a Gendered Road to Copenhagen 2009

**Ewa Larsson**, report on Gender in Healthcare 2009

**Ewa Larsson**, report on Patriarchal structures behind choice of energy systems 2007

**Ewa Larsson**, report, Religions ´ influence women ´s right to her body in EU

**Drude Dahlerup & Lenita**

**Freidenvall**, Quotas, Stockholm University

**Raewyn Connell**, About Genus 2009

**John Kay**, columnist, Financial Times 2010

**Arne Neass**, Gandhi, 2001

**Elinor Ostrom**, Governing the Commons 1990.

**E K Hunt**, Property and prophets; 1992

**Hazel Hendersen**, Building a Win-Win World 1996

**Riane Eisler**, Real Wealth of the Nation 2007

**Elin Wägner**, Dialogue continue 1932

**Elin Wägner & Elisabeth Tamm**, At Peace with Earth 1940

**David C. Korten**, The Post –Corporate World 2000

**David C Korten**, Agenda for a New Economy 2009

**NIKK magasin** 2.2009

**Genus Perspective Swedish ECO-bank (Ekobanken)**, about Social banking 2009

**DN Debatt** 31 Dec 2009

**Transition Network** organisation "http://www.transitiontowns.org/" www.transitiontowns.org

To see actual world gender-quota : www.quotaprojekt.org

Author:

Ewa Larsson, social scientist

Copyediting:

Vivianne Gunnarsson, economist

Layout:

Anita Sand

This project has been financed by the Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs and was made possible through a lot of voluntary work.

[www.gronakvinnor.se](http://www.gronakvinnor.se)

## Green Women

Green Women is a politically independent organization  
advocating gender equal and sustainable development.

Green Women takes a holistic approach and shows how everything  
is connected by:

making visible the feminization of poverty throughout the world and  
pointing to the relationship between the destruction of the environment,  
economic systems, gender inequality and patriarchal structures;

highlighting men's violence against women and children as an essential  
issue in the struggle for gender equality;

reveal the patriarchal structures behind the choices of energy systems and  
keep focus on the connection between nuclear power and nuclear weapons;

improve knowledge about the ecologically disastrous and life-threatening  
effects of uranium extraction, and also about the still unresolved issue of the  
disposal of nuclear waste.

Green Women wants gender equality now!

**Welcome to join us!**

**[www.gronakvinnor.se](http://www.gronakvinnor.se)**

Author: Ewa Larsson, social scientist  
Copyediting: Vivianne Gunnarsson, economist  
Layout: Anita Sand



Januari 2010

This project has been financed by the  
Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs and was made  
possible through a lot of voluntary work.