

**Report on the
International Workshop on Feminist Economics in China and India
11-13 November, 2013,
New Delhi, India**

DAY 1: 11th November 2013

Session 1: Welcome, Inaugural Address and Introductory Remarks

Jayati Ghosh (Jawaharlal Nehru University) opened the workshop by welcoming all participants to the conference. She introduced the workshop as one that was meant to bring together feminist economists from India and China for a dialogue, rather than for a conventional conference where speakers make presentations and address the questions and comments received. She hoped that this kind of format would lead to a more meaningful engagement with the challenges facing feminist economics.

Sayeda Hameed, (Member, Planning Commission) lauded the workshop which brought together academics from two different countries that faced similar problems in terms of issues related to gender equality, and were thus going through a similar process. She discussed the difficulties of ensuring that the planning process was not gender blind. She demonstrated how the simplest, and most fundamental things faced great opposition, sometimes simply because of lack of understanding. She also highlighted the important role that organisations like the UN Women and the Ford Foundation had to play in the ongoing process of mid-term appraisal of the Twelfth Five Year Plan, and argued that these organisations can provide a powerful voice to gender issues.

Kavita Ramdas (Representative, India, Nepal & Sri Lanka, The Ford Foundation) made her opening remarks by referring to Rabindranath Tagore's poem, "Where the mind is without fear", and said that the conference represented perfectly the breaking out of narrow domestic walls and the dreary desert sand of dead habit; it epitomizes out-of-the-box thinking.

Lakshmi Puri (Assistant Secretary-General & Deputy Executive Director, UN Women) added to the discussion by detailing the efforts being made by UN Women for bringing about greater gender equality. According to her, this conference provided an ideal opportunity for meaningful discussions as it not only brought together economists from the two biggest developing countries, but also because these countries provided the biggest development labs in terms of economic and social issues.

In the course of the discussion, Lakshmi Puri said that it was important to think about how we can make sure that women's rights, interest, perspective and agency must be taken into account. We must strategize about how we can make a difference, at least as far as Indian and Chinese economic policy is concerned. She spoke of the historic juncture economics as a field was at, and how this juncture provided an opportunity for putting issues of gender at the centre stage of economic and social policy. This would allow for not only bringing the issue of gender to mainstream, but for changing the mainstream itself.

Women's equality and gender empowerment has taken centre stage in the development agenda. There is a convergence of three very important processes which can, and need to be, influenced. The first of these processes is the evolution of the post Millennium Development Goals development agenda. The new generation of MDG-plus development goals is seeing a convergence between poverty goals and sustainability goals. In this context a gender goal has been put forward by UN Women with three dimensions, namely, ending violence (linked to physical security and bodily integrity) against women; enhancing access of women and girls to resources and capabilities; and improving their condition in terms of their voice, participation, leadership, agency and decision making. These goals should take centre stage in households, in the private sector, in public institutions, labour unions and civil society. It is crucial to have gender balance in decision making.

Elizabeth Knup (Representative, Ford Foundation Beijing Office) talked about the work of the Ford Foundation in China. She commented on how, even though the foundation does not exclusively focus on issues of gender, but these have cut across everything that the foundation has worked on. There has always been a gender aspect, as gender is not a standalone question, but is part of economic and social issues in every country.

Indira Hirway (Director, Centre for Development Alternatives) made her opening remarks by commenting how, despite the fact that gender equality has inspired all their efforts, still a lot remains to be done. In that context, she expressed hope that the conference will be able to crack the key problems and contribute towards bringing about gender equality.

She pointed out a few things that need to be considered at the workshop. Firstly, as far as economics is concerned, she said that there is clearly something wrong with the economic model as, despite high rates of growth, growth of employment has been slow. As a result, labour in general, and women in particular have suffered greatly. Secondly, it is important to consider social norms and how economic empowerment affects social empowerment. Issues of land ownership, performance of labour etc should be considered. Thirdly, the issue of unpaid work of women is very important. Without tackling these issues, it is difficult to move forward.

Session 2: Setting the agenda: Framework based on IAFFE discussions

The session, moderated by Indira Hirway, began with **Gita Sen** (Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore) outlining the background of the processes that have taken place so far. She stated that this was an initiative to strengthen work on economic rights with a particular focus on feminist work in this area. In its first phase it started as a workshop titled “Advancing a Progressive Agenda for Women in Asia”, held in June 2011. Thereafter there was a workshop of women’s Rights activists from the three big countries of this region – India, China and Indonesia as well as other countries from the region. The core concern of the workshop was the capacity of women to engage in policy spaces. The issues that were discussed during Barcelona and Palo Alto discussions were on gender equality and the policy of Rebalancing in China towards social sectors. The inception workshop for the research strategy took place in August 2013 in Delhi. The research project involved India, China and Indonesia and included within it issues such as mechanisms for implementation and accountability. One of the central questions was, under what structural configuration and in response to what kinds of actors are states more likely to respond positively to the demands of gender egalitarian policy changes. In this context, she noted that this research project will address some of these issues about implementation and accountability of gender sensitive strategies, policies and predictions. Some priority issues that are being looked at are the different processes of accumulation, inequality and decentralisation (the question of national framework v/s local implementation). It was noted that this project is primarily on learning from the similarities and differences between India and China and the major issues and challenges confronting both the countries. Gita Sen concluded by saying that in a nutshell the three processes being looked at are: a.) Activism and Advocacy, b.) Specific questions on State’s responses and c.) In terms of development of research work, an engagement which will be a long-term sustained interaction.

Xiao-yuan Dong (University of Winnipeg, Canada) presented a comparative analysis of the strengths and common challenges faced by India and China on social, economic and political indicators. She highlighted the emergence of a social policy in China (Policy of Rebalancing) which focused on the development of a people-centered, harmonious society. Two types of social policies were introduced - reducing inequality and increasing social security and labour protection measures. During this period (2002-2010) the labour force participation rates increased for both men and women, but faster for women. However, she stated, that the challenges to gender equality and women’s empowerment persists widely even till date. The basic problem is that, in China, the concept of gender inequality is poorly understood among mainstream economists and policy makers. The traditional patriarchal values are so entrenched in the Chinese society that the value of unpaid care work is still

not recognised and women's unpaid care work is completely ignored and unacknowledged by the State, their employers, and their families.

The presentations were followed by exciting discussion with Gita Sen acknowledging that the systemic thrust in the direction of rebalancing in China has had a significant impact on society, especially women. She noted that the commentary on the impact of rebalancing in China, suggests that except in the area of the care economy, on many other fronts there has been a systemic policy improvement over the ten years period. It has had a significant impact in terms of equality, poverty and so on. This gives scope for women in China to change and influence policies.

Rebecca Tavares (UN Women, New Delhi) also recognised that the strategy of rebalancing in China has had far reaching results for the country, which is very appreciable. This however also needs to be examined from the point of view of its effects on the women in the country. She further outlined some of the potential areas of research for the group such as whether the focus should be on specific targeted policies or general policies in the country or the empowerment of women, given the multiple differences that exist; exploring the specificities in an intersectional framework; how to integrate care economy into the mainstream economic evaluation in China (going beyond the time-use surveys, seeing it as a contribution to the national development and as a value addition to the productive economy); research on formalisation of the domestic workers (going beyond the social approach and using analytical models to quantify the value added, such as in Brazil which has formalised domestic work by giving these workers equal rights and equal labour standards); studying the linkages between women's agency, gender equity and economic development (till now research has traced the associations, not established a causal relation or a convincing hypothesis and this needs to be looked at); the issues related to migration of women (its economic impacts, cost-benefit analysis, issue of migrants rights, etc.).

Lakshmi Puri (Assistant Secretary-General & Deputy Executive Director, UN Women) put on table the need to study further the issue of global integration in all the spheres such as trade, governance, climate change etc. and its effects on women, the very construct of feminist economics. She also suggested that there is a need to focus on the issues of rural women, poverty eradication, inequality and discrimination in the rural set-up. The issue of increasing inequalities owing to the increasing rural-urban migration and increasing urbanisation also needs to be researched.

Devaki Jain (Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era) stressed the point that the situation pertaining to women and their status needs to be traced back to the political decisions that led to the current situations with respect to both China and India. In China,

there have been some recent revolutionary reforms which are very difficult to implement in a country like India with its democratic set-up.

Session 3: Women in agriculture; food and nutrition concerns

Session 3 focussed on issues of food security and nutrition in India and China, locating them within the larger context of agrarian distress and rising macroeconomic vulnerabilities in case of India and the situation post a rebalancing of growth policy in China.

Liqin Zhang (China Agriculture University) in her presentation located the issue of feminisation of agriculture in China in the context of 30 years rapid economic growth that had led to agriculture losing comparative advantage to industry and the world's largest labour migration from rural to urban areas. Her study based on official data concluded that though there had been some feminization of agriculture, women were also migrating almost as rapidly as men from farm to nonfarm activities. However, women in agriculture had lower access to economic resources, including land, credit and market. Female-managed farms had lower productivity due to lesser inputs. Lower productivity in food crops decreased food security and with women being disadvantaged in cash crop production and livestock rearing, the wellbeing of left-behind women was an issue of concern.

Wang Zhen (Institute of Economics, China Academy of Social Sciences) in the discussion on "Child Nutrition in China: with Some Comparison to India" located these issues through a survey of National Programme of Action for Child Development in China in the 1990s, 2001-2010, and 2011-2020. She argued that the goal, task, and design of policy on child nutrition were carried out with the goal of reducing prevalence of various forms of undernutrition including stunting prevalence, underweight prevalence, low birth weight prevalence and child anemia (for children under 5) by 2011-2020. The strategy and measures designed involved increasing public expenditure on child development and strengthening the existing health care system for children. Improving child nutritional status, promoting mother breastfeeding, intervention on supplementary nutrient feeding, interventionist programmes on child nutrition and health for pre-school children were other policy measures included. Data in his study brought out a rapid decline in undernutrition prevalence and substantial improvement in child nutritional status with the implementation of these policies. Though these measure, wherever comparable data was available, showed some improvement in India also, China left India far behind on all nine

nutritional indicators. In this context, he highlighted the need for understanding the very different performance of child nutritional status in China and India in terms of their different social, economic, and cultural environments. Challenges faced by China on child nutrition included a rising urban-rural gap due to rapid urbanisation, leading to a “within-urban dualism” due to the unequal access to health services for rural migrant workers as compared to urban locals. Also there were issues of lack of adequate access to care for left-behind children given rising urban migration.

Smita Gupta (Institute for Social Studies) began by emphasising that the discussion with regard to India needed to be set within a broader prevalent discourse on farmer’s suicide, poverty of cultivators, etc, especially those in dry lands. She raised three fundamental issues in this context. Firstly, in public policy in India, women are rarely recognised as ‘cultivators or farmers’ rather they are seen just as ‘paid workers’. Secondly, the number of women cultivators is increasing in a scenario in which the viability of agriculture has decreased for a variety of reasons such as rising input costs, reduced public investment in agriculture, etc. Feminisation of landholding of small and marginal farmers is also increasing. Thirdly, there has been a high growth in female headed agricultural plots. Women as farmers who were in-charge, also increased to roughly about 20%. However, female ownership of agricultural land was still only about 2%. This was especially true in dry lands where access to irrigation and electricity is the worst. Therefore women were suffering from the problems that most marginalised sections face as a result of neoliberal policies. All this had resulted in increased drudgery for women in supplementing household food security that was increasingly monetised and marketised with large scale displacement from common property resources, massive evictions, etc. Some remedial measures such as the Forest Rights Act, which were instituted, have been ineffective as the Act has not taken off and community rights had not been protected. She also highlighted how the recently passed Food Security Act failed to address most of these issues in course of its passage through the Parliament. The diluted version lacked adequate teeth to address the current food security concerns, especially as it failed to provide universal coverage.

A.K. Shivakumar (Independent Consultant) began by stating that state-wise comparative statistics showed that one can trace the extremely high prevalence of poor child nutrition status in India (ranging from 18 to 60 % in different states and 44 % on average) to the poor nutritional status of mothers. Intergenerational transfer of nutritional status was implied in the very low BMI of women, inadequate access to care for newborn children and pregnant mothers. It showed also that, other than access to food, health and other resources were also significant factors. Therefore the care economy is very important for the elimination of undernutrition. He highlighted the failure of the diluted form of the Food Security Act in including some significant food security measures like universal coverage, addressing issues of vulnerable and marginal groups including women. However he was of

the opinion that the bill needed to be seen as the right beginning and it left scope for inclusion of more comprehensive measures and wider access through future amendments and initiatives by the respective state governments.

In the discussion that followed, **Jayati Ghosh** noted that given the disparity between Indian and Chinese nutritional status indicators, it was clear that despite the relatively high growth in India, there had been no stabilization of nutritional status and the history of evolution of state institutions and the rise of inequality, unequal asset and land distribution could have played a big role in determining this outcome. In this scenario, FSA could be seen as 'desperate measures for desperate times' but was not enough to address these fundamental inequalities.

Vibhuti Patel asked Liqin Zhang as to how women farmers in China were coping with climate change. **Ritu Dewan** wanted to know if any work had been done on how displacement affected agricultural productivity. **Gita Sen** wanted to know if productivity differences were attributable to labour that differently managed farms were able to bring in the case of China. She also wanted to know if the better, focused interventions on improving agricultural productivity in China were more responsible for the decline in nutritional disadvantage than interventions related merely to nutritional issues.

Yamini Mishra wondered if one of the big differences in China and India, was the uncritical endorsement of PPP in India. She wanted to know if there was any similar dilution in the principle of state provisioning and funding of these services in China. **Asha Kapoor Mehta** wanted to know what we could learn from China's policies on combating poor nutritional status and the one child norm. **Mridul Eapen** talked about the better experience with nutrition in Kerala and its relationship with extensive land reforms. She wondered if enough food grains were already available to meet current requirements and if the issue was really a matter of how it was distributed. **Dev Nathan** commented that the fat consumption in India had risen while in China the consumption of both fat and protein had increased, which might be one of the factors responsible for the better nutritional status. According to **Indira Hirway** the problem of food security in India needs to be understood in two stages – the first stage was about the absence of generation of productive and decent employment opportunities, the second about generation of adequate distribution through public expenditure. The first phase leads to marginalisation, and the second phase tried to cover up, but only weakly. Given the massive incentives and subsidies to corporate sector, there were far less funds available for the social sector. **Subhalakshmi** wanted to know how the component of women's right be strengthened in the current macroeconomic policy environment.

In his response to the discussion, **Liqin Zhang** stated that lower quantity and quality of inputs were responsible for lower agricultural productivity in female headed farms. As far

as climate change was concerned- it had relatively little effect on Chinese agriculture, similarly was the case of natural disasters. Displacement issues were also a small part of problem in China. Government intervention enabled the smooth transition of displaced people into other industries or provided land of comparable or better quality. However, the Chinese data on family labour was not of good quality,

Smita Gupta in her response emphasised that poverty of cultivators was an endemic phenomenon. In tribal areas and dry lands, farmers' suicides were really high. All dry land farms should be covered under policies for stabilisation of productivity in dry land areas taking care of environmental regeneration concerns as well. However, the state policy of cash transfers just compounded the problem as it was often spent on other unproductive activities. So there was no guarantee that putting cash in women's accounts would help nutritional indicators. In tribal areas, 10 per cent of land has gone out of the hands of households, 80 per cent of which was due to displacement, adversely affecting food security. While the FSA could be seen as a good beginning, for her it was more of a missed opportunity. With the resources available, in the short term, much more could have been done. Medium term and long term concerns could have been combated with long term support policies for increasing agricultural productivity.

Wang Zhen responded that the Ministry of Health in China understood improvement in child nutrition in terms of economic growth in China which raised income per capita, mother's education, and public health care system for mother and child. There are also many intervention programmes such as provision of micro nutrient bag. Most intervention programmes were funded by central government. However, urban rural gap could be understood as reproduction of rural urban dualism. Even though migrants work in urban areas, they are not recognised as urban workers under the *hukou* system. Dualism between urban locals and rural migrants, social services for rural migrants etc. are provided by rural hometown. This led to a reproduction of rural urban dualism even in urban areas. **A.K. Shivakumar** commented on how growth had not translated into improvements in female literacy and other social indicators in India. China has had a comparatively far more equitable expansion of such capabilities with growth.

Session 4 -Women as unpaid workers and Education, skill development and "employability"

The session gave an overview of women as paid workers. It highlighted the gender discriminatory trends observed in both China and India and identified what are the major factors leading to this adverse market situation for women and how policy changes can be brought about. This session also included a discussion on the gender inequalities prevalent in the current discourse on Education, Skill development and employability of women.

This session was moderated by Gita Sen in which the first presentation was made by **Jing Liu** (Central University of Finance and Economics) who stated that in China, the employment situation is very discriminatory in nature. There are wage differentials and high rates of sexual harassment being reported. Employers in pursuit of profit maximisation refuse to hire women employees because female workers' reproductive role increases labour costs of the company. However, he pointed out that some encouraging changes have taken place in China in the recent years. Women have started to voice their demand for anti-employment discrimination policies and the law makers and the concerned authorities started taking measures to ensure gender equality in employment. He highlighted that some relief came in 1995, in the form of a Labour Law: The Law on the Protection of Rights and Interests of Women. A Milestone came with the enactment of the Law of the People's Republic of China on Promotion of Employment, 2008. This law has specific articles about gender employment discrimination and statements about how to fight the discrimination. The National Programme on the Development of Chinese Women (2011-2020) will lead the way forward. On the whole, however, he stressed, there is a dearth of an overall plan for fundamental transformation.

Yuaho Ge (Renmin University) talked about the employment discrimination and gender wage differentials that are prevalent in China. Wage ratio in China has witnessed an increasing trend in recent years, however, when coupled with the reforms in the country and the Asian crisis do pose a question on whether these developments have had a positive impact on women in China. Yuaho Ge presented a study which aimed at understanding the diverging trends in the wage ratios and comparing the employment discrimination and wage discrimination. Study found that both male and female labour participation rates were dropping; and for females, it was dropping faster due to the prevalent employment discrimination, which has increased over the period. The study also tried to trace out the differential between the wage discrimination and employment discrimination and found that the diverging trends of wage ratio were mainly explained by employment discrimination rather than wage discrimination.

Jin Feng (Fudan University) pointed out that since the mid-1980s, the demand for paid domestic workers has been on the rise. Due to the declining family size in China, there has been an ever increasing need for a perennial supply of domestic workers. Among female migrant workers, paid domestic workers are the most disadvantaged group. The minimum wage policy in China is not applicable to paid domestic workers and compliance of Labour Laws is minimal in this sector as domestic work is unregulated. Also, there is very little official information of migrants from the gender perspective and there is a lack of sex disaggregated data for assessing the number of female migrant workers. In China, elder care work is undervalued. Amongst the domestic workers, elderly care is viewed as the worst occupation. Jin Feng also made comparisons and drew similarities on the situation of

paid domestic workers in India and China. She suggested policies for future development in China including establishing trade unions for paid domestic workers with a mandate to increase their bargaining power for better wages and benefits and most importantly to transform social perceptions on domestic workers.

Ratna Sudarshan's (Institute of Social Studies Trust, New Delhi) presentation highlighted the scenario of India's high gender gap and low women's participation in paid work. The important question that came up in this presentation is how credible the data is on women's participation in paid work as most of the work in India is in the informal economy, implying that there is a high likelihood that it is not adequately recorded and there may be severe undercounting and undervaluation of women's work in the process. There is also a need to recognise that women work differently in the economy from men. There has been a lack of investment in reducing the burden of domestic work which has resulted in an ever increasing burden of the domestic work on women thus reducing their participation in formal employment. There is a need to explore other viable options for women.

Vibhuti Patel (SNDT University, Mumbai) outlined the gender gap and gender inequalities prevalent in the current discourse on education of girls and their employment situation in India. She noted that state governments across the country are reducing their budgetary allocations and thus investment in education is on the decline (even though education is a state subject in India). Given this situation, the girls in India are facing major challenges. Also, individual women find it difficult to make breakthroughs because the whole sub-culture is so patriarchal. Affirmative action coupled with the pressure from women's groups is now challenging the sub-culture of patriarchy. She emphasised on the need to have a 'Critical Minimum' (at least a certain minimal percentage) of girls in every industry. Wide dissemination of important information on education, employment and equal remuneration is imperative to create awareness in society.

In the ensuing discussion, **Gita Sen**, the moderator, summed up by highlighting the findings of the presentations on labour markets and what the laws can do and its limitations. Then she opened the floor for questions and discussions. The major issues that were put forward were on under counting of women's employment in the unpaid segment, social security for domestic workers, agencies of domestic workers in Beijing and Shanghai and the positive discrimination in laws for women in the workplace.

Jing Liu asked Jin Feng, if there are any other differences between paid domestic workers and organised workers in China. He also wanted to know, the best ways in which social protection can be provided to the paid domestic workers. From Ratna Sudarshan he

enquired about the social security schemes for paid domestic workers and organised workers in India.

Albeena Shakil speculated if employers will stop hiring women if there are too many protective laws for women and requested Jing Liu to comment on it. To Jin Feng she queried about the size of the survey of domestic workers mentioned in the presentation and the debate surrounding employment based social security in China

Indrani Mazumdar commented that the question on domestic workers is linked to social reproduction and the state's role. She indicated that both in India and China, the question of care burden of women, to a certain extent, has now been resolved along class lines – by lowering the burden by employing cheaper available workers. In this context, she posed a question to Jing Feng, asking whether there have been any discussions in China in this regard. She also asked Ratna Sudarshan to comment on the issue of under-counting always being a challenge and on the trend of decline in women's employment even in the unpaid segment. **Sharmistha Sinha** pointed out that the labour force participation rate is declining in China, especially among women. So she wanted a clarification from Yuhao Ge on this decline in spite of the increasing educational rates among women. She also inquired on the situation of the female labour force in Chinese industries after the financial crisis in 2008. **Sona Mitra** highlighted that in the context of the economic slowdown, unpaid work has subsidised the other sectors. She asked Ratna Sudarshan, whether under these circumstances investments would be made in care work in such a way that it will free female labour to get into paid work. Sona Mitra also posed a question to Jing Feng about the nature of the agencies of domestic workers in Beijing and Shanghai, and if these agencies are under any Government regulations in China.

Jing Feng in response to the questions raised stated that there should be some positive discrimination in laws for women in the workplace. For instance, a mother should be allowed to take a break during work to attend to the care needs of her baby. On the other hand, too much protection of female employees may lead to non-hiring of women in industries and enterprises. In response to Jing Liu's question, Jing Feng stated that there should be no difference in social security for paid domestic workers and employees of the formal sector. He added that today, social security in China is almost universal. The point is that if there are differences in social security schemes across formal and informal sectors that will create misperceptions and stigmas about informal work. The direction of the policy on social security programmes should not be discriminatory. He concluded by stating, that in China, there is an ever increasing demand for domestic and care work. There is a demand for the household burden to be shared. But the supply of domestic workers is declining especially in big cities. In response to Sona Mitra's question, he shared that agencies for recruiting domestic workers are sheer private profit making enterprises. Huge number of these agencies are emerging in cities due to increased demand for

domestic workers. Some of them are organised by communities but they are profit making in nature. The government also provides these agencies with tax concessions.

In response to Sharmista Sinha's question, Yuhao Ge said that the labour markets are in favour of men, it is discriminatory towards women even if they both have the same level of education. Yuhao Ge answered Sharmishta Sinha's other question by clarifying that female workers were not hurt by the financial crisis of 2008 because the Chinese government launched a policy to protect and regulate its economy in 2009. So there were no natural shocks for women workers and the macro economy.

Ratna Sudarshan, in response to the Jing Liu's query on social protection, affirmed that currently, social security for paid domestic workers is being discussed widely. She underlined the fact that there are draft bills of the proposed Act but at the moment there are no measures in place. She emphasised that some states have stipulated minimum wages for domestic workers and they are entitled to pensions and so on. But there are no specific protection measures. Vibhuti Patel complemented Ratna Sudarshan's response by adding that some trade unions especially in Maharashtra and Kerala are using the Protection of Unorganised Workers Social Security Act, 2008. When it comes to domestic workers, the state is only interested in the regulatory aspect of it, to mainly deal with the theft and murder cases of senior citizens. Nothing is done for the welfare of these workers.

This was followed by Ratna Sudarshan's response to Indrani Mazumdar. She highlighted that India's surveys on labour force participations are inadequate. Many important questions get omitted about women's previous work experience and the reasons why they discontinued work: the externalities that are operational are ignored. She noted that one of the important reasons for withdrawal of women from the labour force is the amount of work that is required in basic household provisioning, for instance, amount of time spent in fetching water. Ratna Sudarshan stressed on the need to make investments in these quarters for further research. She recognised that our policies are constantly talking about women's work so she believed that there is definitely an interest in this subject and this opportunity should be used to generate better data and analysis and prioritise sectors which need investment.

Gita Sen brought this session to a close with a food for thought. She noted one thing that is striking in this discussion is with regard to paid work. During the period when both China and India were rapidly growing, the difference between the two countries in terms of women's labour market participation was that for China it rose but for India it stagnated despite rapid growth. In India, Gita Sen indicated, it has been going in the opposite direction and this is linked to the nature of policies and growth which is the larger issue behind this. So this trend will also have an impact on the policies that the government will

follow in the future– if women are going with the stream of growth or against the stream and accordingly policies will need to be formulated.

Session 5: Women as Unpaid Workers

Session 5 focused on the issue of the unpaid work of women. The four panelists: Liangshu Qi, Dev Nathan, Indira Hirway and N. Neetha Pillai highlighted different aspects related to the unpaid work performed by women in this regard.

Liangshu Qi (Tsinghua University) in her presentation on women's unpaid work and anti-poverty policies in China, highlighted that even though the anti-poverty programmes claim to be responsive to the needs of women, this is not the case as the programmes directed towards helping poor women are marginal and implemented on a small scale. By and large, China's anti-poverty programme lacks a gendered perspective. She spoke about the high burden of unpaid work on Chinese women. In addition the high participation of Chinese women in the labour force implied a double burden on them. Because of this double burden, she suggested, women live under great stress and poor health status, even if their income is above the *Diabao* line, or the income poverty threshold. She then argued that by ignoring women's burden of unpaid work, gender neutral social policies lead to greater poverty of women. This can be remedied by integrating the notion of unpaid work into poverty reduction programmes by, inter alia, developing multidimensional indicators of wellbeing, introducing a gender perspective into design and implementation and by integrating time-use into the Diabao line.

The next presentation by **Dev Nathan** (Institute for Human Development) was on the bargaining and intra-household allocation of resources. He argued, that extra household position, in addition to endowments influence intra household positions. These factors allow for differences to emerge in how men and women can change their endowments to bargaining power. It is a matter of income, assets, public entitlements and social networks.

Regarding income, he argued that what matters in the context of bargaining power is comparative income. He doubted whether higher income of women affects the share of household work done by men. And if it did have an effect, how much higher does the women's income have to be for this change to occur.

He further argued that in the translation of endowments into capabilities, voice, or bargaining capacity assumes importance. In this regard, there is an information asymmetry: men most often are aware of the activities of their wives, but women are more often than not unaware of how much their husband earns. There is also a power

asymmetry. In the event of exit from the household, it is easier for men to remarry. This gives them greater bargaining power. Additionally, there are social norms which dictate the duties of women. These norms can be changed over the long term by the bargaining system. Social movements present another way of changing norms. These work in a more top-down manner, but can be effective nonetheless.

All of these factors bring about changes in the non material aspects of the bargaining position of women which allows the better translation of assets into capabilities by women.

Indira Hirway's presentation highlighted the 'Continuum of Paid and Unpaid Work' in understanding women's socio economic burden. She began by bringing out how unpaid work could be understood to lie within general production boundary while paid work lay within the production boundary. Unpaid work was significant in size and constituted 40-50 % of total work within general production boundary. Its estimated value came to about 30-60 percent of the GDP, contributing substantially towards and supplementing the mainstream economy. However, it was shared very unequally with about 70-90% of its total burden falling on women. It also remained invisible and still lay mostly outside the purview of policy making. Its significance was neglected within social hierarchies and it was also inferior to paid work in terms of its being repetitive, boring, without prospects of upward mobility, and also lacked regulation and retirement benefits. Time use surveys of women were found to have time stress for women since women worked 50-60 hours in a week resulting in human capital depletion. Poor women in particular spend 20-25% of their time within the production boundary on unpaid work depriving them of anytime for education, social networking, sleep and rest. India fared especially badly in terms of time spent by women on unpaid work and this time dimension of gender poverty has been found to be very significant. Unpaid work also displayed cyclical behaviour, falling with growth in business cycle and rising with depression increasing the distress caused by these cycles for women and vulnerable groups during adverse economic circumstances. Thus it was important to stress the continuum between paid and unpaid work since the forced distinction in economic literature had led to neglect of due recognition of such work and its gendered dimensions. This was a core macroeconomic issue and led to sub-optimal use of labour in the economy where the division of work was based on gender and not on principles of efficiency or productivity. Public policy in this context had not been able to provide visibility to time use surveys. What was needed, however, was going beyond valuation issues and working towards its reduction, transference to the mainstream and integration into broader macroeconomic policies.

Neetha Pillai (Centre for Women's Development Studies (CWDS)) complemented the thoughts presented by Indira Hirway, and said that it was important to look at unpaid work on the continuum of paid work. However, work on this issue was limited by the fact that there has been only one time use survey. Despite this, there is no doubt that women spend

a significantly higher portion of the day on unpaid care work, and the gender differential is big in this regard. She said that the amount of unpaid work done by women depends on, inter alia, the presence of children, sick, and elderly at home, and this varied across occupations. She highlighted the expansion of service sector employment among women, with a concentration of women in certain services such as education or domestic services. This, in effect, can be thought of as the extension of unpaid care work into the market.

In this regard social policy has been very piecemeal and haphazard. Moreover, there has been of late a withdrawal of state in terms of expenditure on social services. In addition, social policy displays a complete lack of understanding of burden of care work and women's disproportionate role in performing care work. The absence of social protection has resulted in emergence of care deficits in their households with attendant implications for the health, education, and wellbeing of the members of their household.

In the discussion that followed, **Kavita Ramdas** stressed the need to distinguish between layers and gradations of female exploitation within the hierarchy of unpaid work where even domestic workers were able to pass on the burden to someone even more vulnerable such as migrant girl children from their extended kinship networks. **Vibhuti Patel** wanted to know what was happening regarding bonded labour given the rise of SEZs (Special Economic Zones), EPZs (Export Processing Zones) and increasing competition between developing countries with no enforcement of labour standards. She pointed out in this context, the ability of urban middle class women to hire more and more helpers at home was perhaps linked to rising agrarian distress. **Ritu Dewan** wanted to know the role of unpaid work in allowing a reduction in state subsidies and its impact on unpaid care work of women.

In her response **Neetha** pointed out the absence of migrant networks in urban setups leading to huge care work deficits, giving instances of women tying their children to unused railway tracks while going for work to highlight the immensity of the problem. **Indira Hirway** concluded by stressing the importance of time use studies in assessing the impact of macroeconomic strategy on purchasing power, social protection policies and labour standards.

Day 2, 12th November 2013

Session 1: Women and Migration

The session traced the trends witnessed in the migration by women in both China as well as India and explored what are the major factors leading to migration by women, the effects of the migration on both the women as well as the children who are left behind in the native place.

The session, moderated by Dev Nathan, began with the presentation by **Junxia Zeng** (Renmin University of China) who highlighted the psychological and educational effects of parental migration on the left-behind boys and girls in China. She began by giving a background on how migration has been increasing in China over the last few years, with an increase in migration by women and young girls. Such migrations result in many children (under 18 years of age) being left behind in the native place. This in turn affects the children significantly. The existing research has explored such effects and come up with mixed conclusions; while some studies have found positive effects on children who are left behind due to parental migration, some have found negative effects while some others found no effect on the children. However the gender perspective in such studies is missing. Junxia Zeng then presented their own study conducted to study these effects in greater details from a gender perspective. Their study has looked at two indicators of well-being of the children, as measured by standard mental health test score (the higher, the worse) and standard math test score (the higher, the better). The study, conducted in rural areas of two poor provinces in northwest China in September 2012 and in May 2013 found certain interesting results: a. parental migration, especially mother's migration, has a significant negative effect on boys' mental health, and b. parental migration, regardless of the type, had no significant effect on boys' or girls' math test score. Also, parental migration duration studied in this paper is less than 8 months, so it's just a short-term migration. The study also looked at some of the key reasons why children are left behind by the parents while migrating to other areas.

The next presentation was by **Indrani Mazumdar** (Centre for Women's Development Studies (CWDS)), who looked at the trends of migration by women, the nature of this migration, as well as livelihood scenario for the migrants post-migration. She began by observing that female migration has become an important issue for discussion and debate, following the demand from the women's movements. She went on to show that the data reveals that migration is higher among the females and primarily due to marriage and not for employment. The fact that increase in marriage migration is associated with a decline in the work participation by women, which is related to social devaluation of the work done by women was also highlighted. She presented the findings of a study conducted by CWDS on women and migration which found that most of the women migrant workers (rural and urban combined) identified poverty, debt, decline in income, lack of local employment or loss of such employment as their reason for migration and the majority however bore their migration costs out of household savings/borrowings. Further, while women migrated more with family members, men migrated alone. Study also explored whether migration was undertaken independently or mobilised by contractors. Regarding the types of occupation taken up by migrant women, she noted that despite some diversification and expansion of occupations among urban migrants, findings show that four occupations, namely agricultural labour, paid domestic work, construction, and brick making dominate

and together accounted for more than 60 per cent of all the migrant women workers. Jodi based wage labour combined with piece rated payment in brick making, leaves no scope for independent work/activity and income for women. Women's individual entitlements in such forms of labour have not even been conceptually recognised in the labour law regime.

The ensuing discussion covered a wide range of issues; the availability of similar data for China, land rights for women, the laws and policies governing migration; integrating some other variables for the analysis to develop a better understanding of what is happening on the ground.

Indira Hirway started the discussion by noting that India already has in place the Inter-State Migrant Worker Act 1979. She wanted to know from Indrani Mazumdar whether this act has any role to play in practice with regard to migration in India. She also queried about the condition of the migrant women given the fact that female migration is high in China (especially single women migration) as well as whether migration is more contractors-based and whether it is regulated. She also enquired about the impact of migration on women and how different are the conditions of women who migrate with families, from those who migrate for work, and correspondingly from the men who migrate for work?

Mary E. John wanted to know from Junxia Zeng whether and how the analysis on migration can be disaggregated according to income inequality, by factoring in the income levels in the study on rural-urban migration. She posed the same question to Indrani Mazumdar, as to if the Centre for Women's Development Studies' study had looked at the income-disaggregated scenario and whether income quintile differential entered their analysis. **Yueping Song** enquired from Indrani Mazumdar about the condition of women post-migration, especially when they start a family and how they deal with the different situations that they face. **Jin Feng** raised the question whether in India migrant population had similar access to social provisioning as the locals and whether the people in cities view the migrants in a negative light, responsible for increasing crime and unnecessary pressure on the cities.

Junxia Zeng was then asked by **Devaki Jain** whether there is similar data available for China, as was presented for India in CWDS study. **Gita Sen** requested Indrani Mazumdar to give her perspectives on the other possible reasons for migration apart from marriage or associational migration for the rural migration, and some other reasons that she had gathered through the fieldwork during the study.

There was also some discussion on the *hukou* system in China, which provides location-based entitlements. During the discussion on the strict norms that govern the issuing of *hukou* for the urban areas, Indira Hirway wanted to know from Junxia Zeng about the possibilities of getting permission to stay in urban areas in China. In a follow-up question, **Elizabeth D. Knup** also asked Junxia Zeng as to how do the migrants get permission to stay

in urban areas when they migrate? She also mentioned that she had heard that when migrants are given permission to move to urban areas, they have to give up their land, and wanted to know if that was true. **Sharmishta Sinha** enquired about the structure of land rights in China and whether women in China have any land rights.

In response to Devaki Jain's question, Yueping Song said that China did initiate a national level survey seeking such information. Also the Commission of Family Planning conducts a round migrant population with a very large scale sample. Jin Feng added that the Human Resources and Social Security Department also published data on migration but it didn't have gender disaggregated data and lacked gender perspective. In response to the queries by Indira Hirway and Elizabeth D. Knup, Junxia Zeng (with some inputs from other Chinese participants) noted that different cities have different regulations for migrants. However, one doesn't require permission to stay in urban areas; migrants can stay in urban areas without permission. But what is adversely affected is access to social services which are dependent on having a *hukou* (which is non-transferable from place of residence). There are various norms in different cities that determine if one can get *hukou* in the city of migration. For example, in Shanghai, there is a point system at work which depends on one's educational qualifications, work experience, period of stay in Shanghai, how many years one has contributed to social security, one's occupation and other such factors. Also, if one can buy an apartment, then also they get a *hukou*. On the same lines, some cities also have a score system in place, in which one gets points for meeting different eligibility conditions. One can get long term permission to stay in city without having a *hukou*. In that case one just pays for the services at market rate. It was also pointed out that the migrants don't have to give up on their lands to get urban *hukou*. In response to Sharmishta Sinha's question, she said that by law women do have land rights. But after marriage they go to their husbands' houses and the land usually passes onto the brothers.

Responding to Indira Hirway's questions, Junxia Zeng said that migration in China has been analysed on the basis of age as well. Very young women (just after junior high school) go to cities to work and once they reach marriageable age they come back to the rural areas and start families. Also, once their kids are old enough (reach 10 years of age) they go back to cities to do jobs. There has been an increased trend of female migration. Also, migration has a marked effect on females. After living in urban areas, there is a change in their attitudes, they become more knowledgeable, have greater opportunities, have greater control over household resources, etc.

In response to the question on the effect of migration and income variable, Junxia Zeng noted that migration does have an effect on different income quintiles. Migration is primarily undertaken with a view to increase household/individual incomes, and often the migrants send money to their native homes. However in the sample studied, there wasn't any significant difference in the incomes levels. Moreover, it needs to be noted here that in

China, symbol of wealth is the houses that are constructed and not so much the money income. Also as far as protection for migrants is concerned, there isn't any welfare protection for migrants in China.

Indrani Mazumdar, in response to Indira Hirway's question, said that even though, India has the Interstate Migrants' Act, it is useless in practice. Law came into existence due to the struggle of workers' unions in Odisha. But it has primarily remained as a registration system and enforcement is missing. Also the very structure of the law and the way it was constructed and approached is flawed. For example, if there is a problem then the migrants are repatriated, but it doesn't work to address the concerns that migrants face. Answering Mary E. John's question, she said that they had thought of the weaving in the income dimension to the study, but this aspect didn't enter the current analysis. However it will be included in the future round of study. In response to Yueping Song's and Jin Feng's questions, she observed that there is a pattern of families following the migrants and starting families post-migration. However, unlike China, India doesn't provide location-based social entitlements on the lines of *hukou*. The social entitlements are not linked with the place of residence. However, one does require a proof of residence for various identification criterion and paper work which poses a big problem for the migrant population in accessing such entitlements. This is a bigger problem for the poorer migrants, for whom fighting for basic entitlements is a constant struggle.

Indrani Mazumdar also responded to Gita Sen's question by saying that they did map the migrant sample across different age groups and in the process dowry came up as a big problem, especially the way it had accelerated among the lower income backward sections. To this Jayati Ghosh added that marriage has strong implications for the labour process and women are seen by their families as labour force, which has a great significance. In this context, Indrani Mazumdar cited the example of brick kiln workers where the recruitment is done in pairs (as a couple). In order to get this kind of employment one does need brides to marry. Such intricacies do add different dimensions to the entire discourse where women are concerned.

In response to the question regarding migrants causing congestion in cities, Indrani Mazumdar observed that increasing migration and correspondingly increasing number of migrants is a worry for the city dwellers as well as the city governments. Sometimes the government will do something positive for votes, but such occurrences are very rare. Also the migrants are often posed in a negative light which adds to the condemnation against them and makes people view them as a liability on the public provisioning and the resources in the urban areas. To this Gita Sen added that there are also other tendencies at work when talking about increasing migration rates in India. For example some people say that India needs to be urbanised, which is not similar to the China's case. In such scenarios

we are dealing with land issues and displacement issues. Also, there are construction mafias at work who want the lands of the poor. So these factors also complicate the picture. Jayati Ghosh further added that one of the big things in India has been the urbanisation over the last ten years, where even the small villages have become small towns (not cities). But these are not recognised as towns and hence don't have municipalities, which adversely affect the governance in these places. Elizabeth D. Knup also noted that the entire debate on urbanisation is a part of the fiscal concern and might pose a problem in urban areas. Given that there is talk about large scale urbanisation in the next 15 years; both through physical movement as well as through urbanisation of villages, such debates need to be resolved soon.

Dev Nathan closed the session by summarising some of the key issues raised. He talked about how through the discussion and through comparisons, we are talking about mobility in entitlements and we need to see if we are making a case for portable entitlements. Also how we view family as a unit when we talk of entitlements is something that needs further discussion.

Session 2: Health Issues

The session, moderated by **Renana Jhabvala** (Self Employed Women's Associations), sought to address how and why health transitions had varied in India and China, and what were the major concerns with respect to health and how public health policies impacted women and girls in particular.

The session began with **Hongmei Yi** (Center for Chinese Agricultural Policy, Chinese Academy of Sciences) making a presentation on the "Evolution of New Cooperative Medical Scheme (NCMS) and Its Impacts on Farmers in Rural China". She traced the emergence of the new scheme to the rapid decline in the use of medical services in rural areas that had been witnessed in the years following economic reforms in China. This had occurred as people were not able to afford health services, which had earlier been covered by the state, once the health cover was withdrawn post reforms. To deal with issue NCMS was launched as a heavily subsidised health insurance program for rural population in China with its focus on protection of catastrophic medical payments and enrolment on a voluntary basis. It was introduced in 2003 and had seen three stages in its implementation, with the third stage (improvement of design) seeing an almost universal coverage with 97.5 per cent enrolment. The findings of her study based on a national survey looking at the effectiveness of the scheme were that per capita funding levels increased over time, with the vast majority of additional funding provided by the government with 85% of per capita funding came from the state by 2011. Nearly 80% of funding was used for reimbursement for inpatient services. By 2011, the nominal reimbursement rates had risen to 80% for inpatient services at THC level, 70% at county hospitals, and 30% at provincial hospitals.

Overtime, NCMS had expanded to all villages. Meanwhile, the enrollment rates also rose over time and enrollment rate among females was significantly higher than males. If the survey in 2008/2012 was truly representative, this implied that more than 90% of China's 900 million farmers (or more than 800 million people) now had some form of health insurance. This supported the government report of nearly universal population coverage. While real reimbursement rates also rose (though at a lower level than nominal rates), given that medical expenditures rose rapidly in the past decade both in China as well as globally, out of pocket expenses of inpatients still remained much higher than the local per capita rural net income in 2011. The Chinese government accordingly introduced the National Essential Medicine Scheme in its most recent reforms. Its four key components were National Essential Drugs list; zero-mark-up policy; public procurement; reimbursement for drugs on the list. The goals were to improve medicine availability, affordability and safety and cut the profit link between health care providers and medicine. In the study sample, all THCs were already covered by this programme by the end of 2011. And there were ongoing reforms being undertaken in village clinics.

In the next presentation, **Gita Sen** traced the pathways of health in India and China from 1950s, highlighting the similarities and the differences. She presented select indicators to demonstrate the severity of India's problems in the health sector and how ironically and perversely during the reform period, Chinese indicators had come down much nearer to India's on many fronts. However, it was worth noting that despite all the setbacks, China had recovered and done well as far as provisioning of health services is concerned post 2000. It had put in place the requisite set-up to provide universal health coverage. The major difference between the two countries could be traced to the role of the private sector in health care, drugs, medical education, coupled with the difficulties of controlling mixed system in India. Moreover, the differences and the similarities between the two economies could be traced along the lines of health care delivery, healthcare priorities, human resources, differences in the public health systems, social determinants of health as well as health investment by the government. While China had much better health indicators, India showed high untreated morbidity, significant rural-urban differences and gendered differences in health indicators. In addition, out-of-pocket expenditures on health were on an average more than 70 per cent due to poor quality and uneven reach of government healthcare services and highly unregulated private sector. Moreover, unintended collateral damage of economic reforms – privatisation and decentralisation has also had adverse impact on the health sector in India.

She then went on then to locate the situation in India and China within a larger global discourse which had been emerging post the UN conferences of the 1990s, where women's movement threw a spanner in the traditional thinking on the human rights approach to the health issues framework. Vienna International Conference on Human Rights 2003, Cairo

International Conference on Population and Development 1994, and Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women (1995) together affirmed a new meaning for the right to health (i) for women and girls in particular, the right to health was put forward as not only about obtaining health services but about rights to decision-making, control, autonomy, choice, and freedom from violence and fear of violence (ii) for men, this approach spoke not only of duties towards women and girls, but also of the need to break away from 'destructive masculinities' that result in self-destructive behaviours, violence and death. Like all human rights, the emergence of the agenda of women's human rights to health had been contentious. Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) Rights were contentious to begin with and continued to be so because they challenged existing power in society. But these rights were central to laws, policies and programmes that could respect, protect and fulfill the health of girls and women.

In the ongoing debates around the Post-2015 MDG goals, there was a demand for a goal regarding universal health coverage. However though UHC talks of promise of universality, realisation of the right to health, reintegration of social determinants of health, the question remains as to whether UHC can help health systems to overcome the E - Q - A syndrome? (equality, quality and accountability). Questions remain as to whether UHC will integrate human rights and, in particular, make it possible to integrate sexual and reproductive health rights that are so critical for women? UHC has not done well so far in recognising other bases of inequality - gender, race/ethnicity, disability, age, etc. - intersecting with each other. Women and adolescents are together too large a group to be 'added on' as an after-thought - they have specific health needs and susceptibility to power relations that cannot be collapsed into income/wealth status. Hence, to be consistent in achieving women's sexual and reproductive health, she underlined the need to ensure under UHC, inter alia, girls and women are centrally included (not only in maternal health, family planning) through a recognition of the importance of a rights focus - addressing critical elements of gender inequality that govern the acknowledgement of women's health needs, the practices and behaviours within homes, communities and in health centres that govern access and affordability. Also ensure that services packages include essential services for women's health and that girls' rights regarding early marriage, access to schooling, against violence, etc. are also built in it.

Aasha Mehta (Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi) began by outlining the health situation in India and noted that there had been an increase in both communicable as well as non-communicable diseases in India. There remained issues of increasing care burden of women due to medical issues, questions of affordability, high out of pocket expenditures, questionable credibility of data on female morbidity, shortfalls in the health infrastructure as well as shortage in health personnel. India was still trying to achieve the targets that it had set for itself with respect to attainment of basic health indicators.

Gendered differences in Infant Mortality Rates and child mortality rates remained high and the recognition of violence against women as a health issue was yet to seriously incorporated. Claims under universal coverage of healthcare needed to be assessed more cautiously as there was a need to question the attainment of better indicators of healthcare coverage by covering those who were easiest to cover, rather than the most vulnerable among them. As against the global average of public expenditure on health of at least 2.5 per cent of GDP, in India the figures remained far below at 1 per cent of GDP. However, in a sleight of hand, using the global discourse on broader health coverage, Planning Commission estimates recently added support services like water and sanitation etc. to this estimate, even after which it reached a mere 1.9 per cent of GDP. This highlighted the need to both increase as well as define clearly what was covered under different health care expenditure estimates.

In the discussion that followed, **Indira Hirway** wanted to know what the current understanding on the concept of malnutrition was given that it was increasingly being projected that malnutrition was no longer a major issue post economic reforms in case of India. **Devaki Jain** wanted to know whether there any major issues of corruption in China given so much emphasis on delivery through state machinery. **Gita Sen** wondered whether incentivisation to catch people early within a system focussed more on preventive and primary health care through higher deductibles for higher payments etc. in case of the NCMS in China is not leading to the problem of higher out of pocket expenditures for catastrophic medical payments and lesser use even of the new investment in big clinics. **Mridul Eapen** wondered if the higher out of pocket expenditure under NCMS were because of outpatient services not being covered as was noticed in case of Kerala where inpatient but not outpatient services were covered under health insurance. She also wanted to know if the UHC still had two components - the essential and the supplementary component which would allow for both narrow and broad coverages. **Renana Jhabvala** wanted to know if the trend towards health insurance and deductibles in health service provisioning currently in vogue was proving to be effective at all, again given the example of China where the amount people were paying with enrolment had gone down only slightly under the new scheme. Also she wanted to know more from the speakers on where the two countries were on issues of prevention such as water and sanitation and immunisation at present.

In her response to the discussion, **Hongmei Yi** stated that the reason behind everyone not being covered under the new scheme could possibly be the inability of migrants to access health services under the *hukou* system in the villages as a result of which even women married outside their villages often found it difficult to access *hukou*. The possible reasons why out of pocket expenditures remained high under the new scheme could be non

coverage of outpatient services as well as some inpatient services. Also again there was the problem of migrants not being able to access health care under *hukou* system. Though corruption was known to exist in the delivery system, she had not found it to be very common in the villages she surveyed. **Gita Sen** in her response stated that water, sanitation and nutrition, etc. were not supposed to be included under the health budget in the 2.5 per cent figure given by the Planning Commission for estimates for health expenditure. The figure had to be understood in terms of corresponding global figure for services covered under that figure elsewhere. And the broader definition of right to health remained critical, while these issues were merely a red herring to the larger debate. As far as the right to health was concerned, she felt it was critical to integrate it within a human rights framework and redefine it in terms of women's right to bodily autonomy, bodily integrity, etc. for effective campaigning against the rising incidence of violence against women. In this context it was important to move beyond an understanding merely based on provisioning of health services and move towards a broader rights based understanding of health.

Session 3: Economic and social roots of violence against women, changing sex ratios and social and political empowerment

The first speaker of the session **Yueping Song** (Renmin University), noted that violence against women is the typical manifestation of gender stereotypes and masculine social norms, which induces higher morbidity and mortality among women. However, in China, the prevalence of violence against women has reduced and the victims' accessibility to aid and assistance too has improved significantly. In the recent years, there has been a progress on the issue of domestic violence in terms of national laws and policy processes but unfortunately all these laws and policies face challenges at the operational level. The important issues put forward by Yueping Song for future research: how can increased economic empowerment be translated into changing the lives of women at least at the household level and what are the impacts of women's greater access to resources on gender relations and social norms?

Mary E. John (Centre for Women's Development Studies (CWDS)) presented the challenges with regard to declining child sex ratios in India, especially in the period when the economy registered high economic growth. The presentation highlighted that there has been a peaking of the practice of conducting pre-natal tests for sex determination of the foetus and sex selective abortions and the son preference-daughter aversion notion is on the rise. Families are now planning sex composition of their children in order to match their resources. The reasons for low child sex ratios were to avoid intergenerational transfer of resources, the burden and the new 'costs' of having a daughter. The 2011 Census reveals that this decline is seen across the length and breadth of India. This trend is worrisome and has severe implications of where the society is heading to. The big question that emerged

from this presentation is, “what is it that is making our girls more of a burden today than ever before”?

Govind Kelkar (Landesa, Rural Development Institute, New Delhi) outlined that state level studies show that women own less than 9 per cent of land titles in India. She highlighted the importance of economically empowering women by giving them their land rights. Land ownership is directly related to women’s better social and economic status within their families as well as in society. Land ownership improves the economic agency of work – the autonomy, the decision making, etc. and it improves the agricultural productivity. She pointed out that the biggest challenge is that the agricultural sector has a gendered system which is discriminatory in nature. Women lack the rights to control land and related assets. Studies show that economic inequality accumulates over the life course of women and cripples their economic agency to manage and innovate with agricultural assets. While concluding, she stressed on the need for a bold and transformative policy change for women in the ownership and the rights to control land and other productive assets.

Kalyani Menon Sen (Feminist Learning Partnerships, Gurgaon) highlighted that violence is centrally built in the urbanisation strategy adopted in India and there is a well-coordinated and conscious strategy to make this violence invisible. There is a construction of migrants as scroungers on the urban. This construction has made it easy to perpetrate violence against migrants. Another important area is the issue of public safety in urban areas. Safety has become very visible on the policy front over the recent years. She indicated that the whole discourse on safety in public policy actually fragments the issue of violence and makes it look like episodic. The fact that the focus is on street violence essentially hides the fact that this street violence is actually domestic violence which has moved out from homes and is playing itself in the public spaces. There is also fragmentation in terms of data and naming the crime as street harassment, eve teasing, sexual assault, etc. She emphasised that the politics of language tends to fragment and prevent recognition of this kind of violence and thereby tends to prevent change. The women’s movement has also been unable to challenge this fragmentation. The issue of violence is working in a different space than the issue of urbanisation. There is a need to address this issue.

The moderator, Kavita Ramdas opened the floor for questions and discussions. The discussion started with **Sona Mitra** asking Yueping Song if with the increase in work participation rates of women in China, the violence against women is seen to be outside the purview of domestic violence. She also wanted to know from Kalyani Menon Sen, if there is anything happening within the policy circles on urban planning in the context of safety. Especially, in the aftermath of the December 16, 2012 rape case if there any alternatives to make urban planning safer. She enquired if there are any safety mechanisms for women for instance, for those who have to travel at late nights.

Commenting that in a ten year period, such drastic rates of decline in violence are questionable, **Yamini Mishra** said that even though with intervention, violence does decline but the figures that were presented are surprising. She enquired if the figures being provided by the Chinese government are accurate. From Mary E. John she wanted to know where the Indian government is failing in the context of the government's responses and policies such as Dhanalaxmi, Ladli Scheme, etc., (where the girl child gets conditional cash when she gets registered).

Devaki Jain posed a question to Govind Kelkar on the Land Acquisition Act. She enquired as to whether there are any special arrangements for women in the Act and if there is a land rights Act in China which gives land rights to women. **Jayati Ghosh** commented on the importance of land rights for women, but she stated that joint *pattas* (joint ownership of land) is a bit of a double-edged sword in the context of women's marriages. A lot of the recent violence on women, for instance, in Punjab and Haryana, has been linked to the fear of losing land to other groups and communities. The control over women, the lack of agency and the Khap Panchayats (traditional local counsels) decreeing who women are allowed to marry is linked directly to the fact that they now have a right over family land. Along with land rights we need to look into this aspect simultaneously because things have become worse for women with them having got land rights. Regarding the sharp decline in the incidence of violence against women in the survey conducted in China, Jayati Ghosh wanted some clarity on how large the survey was and who it covered. She questioned the validity of this survey because some other figures from China points to low child sex ratio, falling sex ratio, increasing incidence of prostitution in large parts of the urban areas, etc.

In response to Yamini Mishra's and Jayati Ghosh's questions, Yueping Song stated that there has been a decline in violence due to stringent laws. Men have to pay high costs, fines and penalties for violence. Divorce leads to wives getting more assets and thus there is a fall in figures. **Xiao-yuan Dong** added that there is a new law that prohibits violence against women. Divorce is now being accepted in China and in this context violence is less likely to occur. But she stated that these statistics/figures presented need further investigation. Xiao-yuan Dong further noted that with the Amendment of the married law, women get a lot of assets after divorce from the former husband and this could be one of the reasons why violence has declined. **Feng Yuan** further added that if figures show that domestic violence has declined it is probably due to the fact that domestic workers and girls are kept out of the counting procedures. School girls' face a lot of sexual assault and harassment but this is under-reported or in most cases not reported at all. Rapes occur in China almost in the same numbers as in India, but the cases are comparatively less reported.

Yueping Song in response to Devaki Jain's question in the context of gender arrangement in Chinese land rights laws stated there is a local practice to protect the land rights of women

and their right to get revenues from the land. In some places, the revenue is paid to the native households and women don't get it in their hands. In a few places, the money is directly paid to women even if they are married in another place.

Kalyani Menon Sen in response to Sona Mitra's question on urban planning highlighted that urban planning does not address the safety and violence against women. Even after the December 16, 2012, rape case in New Delhi, the latest version of the new Urban Planning Policy/Urban Renewal Mission does not include the safety and violence aspects. The discussion of urban safety of women is only taking place in women space/circles. The few interventions that are taking place are local and in pilot projects. It only deals with specific forms of violence. She stated, how public violence gets defined becomes the filter for some violence to be acknowledged and most being left out. In this context, she pointed out that while, as a part of the discourse on public safety, there are several policy proposals made in Delhi to verify the antecedents of domestic helpers (a result of the conscious framing of domestic helpers as potential assaulters of employers), there is no policy measure to ensure the safety of women domestic workers, where violence is much more prevalent but is simply not mentioned as an issue of urban safety issue. Another problem she stressed on is the huge increase in policing and the focus on the quick delivery of justice rather than vigour and how this has its own violent repercussions. These are some of the challenges which women's movements today are facing.

Govind Kelkar in response to Devaki Jain's question on Land Acquisition Act highlighted that if women don't have any land, they don't get any compensation. Even in matrilineal communities, there is no compensation provided to women. In response of Jayati Ghosh's question, Govind Kelkar shared that in Haryana, a study was conducted in 2005 on how many women can claim their inheritance rights. On one hand, women who were cultivating their lands claimed that their status in their own families had increased and that there has been a decline in physical violence carried out on them. On the other hand, there is a conscious effort to prevent the agency of women to marry outside their own families and communities because of the fear of losing their ancestral land. Govind Kelkar then pointed out that many state level and micro level studies show that many women have ownership of land. For instance, in Andhra Pradesh 5000 women were given land allocation by the government. She recommended that a study should be conducted on the nature of violence that is being perpetuated against women who are land owners.

Mary E. John in response to Yamini Mishra's question shared her opinions on the schemes that the Indian government has authorised. In addition to banning the practice of sex selective abortion and sex determination testing, the government has tried to boost the birth of girls through various schemes – where the government makes some payments i.e. cash transfers in the name of the girl child at various phases - at birth, after immunisation, during and after schooling. The condition is that the girl should not marry up to the age of

18 years and then she gets a lump-sum. In most places, it's locally called the 'dahej scheme' or the 'dowry scheme'. She stressed on the fact that everything is wrong with this scheme. She contested that policy-makers have not really understood the nature of the economic dynamics that's driving sex selective abortion and sex determination. Their scheme is off-target. The scheme is only for below poverty line families. There is a scrambling of this scheme with population control. There are many conditionalities, such as – sterilisation after the first girl child or sometimes after the second girl child; girls' only families are the most prevalent form of this scheme so the daughter aversion, son preference concept is completely misunderstood. There is a whole lot of procedure and paper work that is involved for registration etc. So the big question is whether the one hundred thousand rupees will be given to the girl child and whether it will be worth anything 18 years later.

Indira Hirway added by sharing the findings of a study conducted on mega cities in India that showed that the urbanisation development paradigm has changed in the last two decades particularly. There are four features of urbanisation: firstly, local bodies are becoming less important, state bodies are becoming more important, secondly, urbanisation is moving towards making urban areas look glamorous (malls, parks etc.) but not towards investing for infrastructural development, thirdly, there is a lot of displacement in the process, but this is not adequately addressed and fourthly, the mafias are becoming more powerful in the urban areas as a result of which poor people suffer. She shared her concern that this process is highly unjust especially to the poor and affects women and children the most.

Session 4: Integrating Gender into Economic Policies

The session, moderated by Mary E. John, had a series of interesting presentations outlining how gender concerns are placed in the macro-economic framework and policies in both China and India and how they can be further integrated in the macro-economic strategies.

Feng Yuan (Centre for Women's Studies at Shantou University) in her presentation dwelt on the need for engendering economic policies and bringing in the perspectives on women's rights and gender equality. The need is to come up with gender transformative economic policies, where the knowledge produced must focus on both the supply side (where there is a scarcity of data, models, etc. to support and refine economic policies) as well as on the demand side (where the need is to focus on how demand for a transformative gender economic policy be created). Further, there is a need to highlight, through research, how gender inequalities, in particular in interaction with other inequalities and injustices have adverse implications for human development as well as pose constraints on the growth of an economy. She noted that there is a need for interdisciplinary research, networking and advocacy with policy makers, to develop a

global perspective, and rethink different issues confronting women from a different perspective.

Devaki Jain (Development Alternatives with Women for a new Era) put forward several proposals for joint endeavours that can be undertaken by China and India and that may influence outcomes and improve the conditions of women in both the countries. Joint exercises and analyses of looking at women's role, condition, participation, etc., could lead to changes at various levels and have significant impacts in these areas. In this context she mentioned that there is a need to look at trade regimes in the context of globalisation and liberalisation and analyse its impacts on women as well as re-look at institutions, in particular at the possibility of reviving the cooperative system, as a way of empowering women. In short, there is a need to empower cooperatives/institutions which enable women. This could be both for learning and improving capacities of both countries but it could also be added to the reconstruction of economic growth models as these could be more enabling and lead to less unequal growth if one uses the cooperative institution rather than only the corporate institution. She emphasised that such research will provide knowledge to influence economic growth and policies in both the countries.

Xiaopeng Pang (Renmin University of China) began by outlining the scenario with regard to village elections in China and looking at the participation of women in this process. Looking at voting as an indicator of political participation, the study looked into the trend in political participation of women and the factors responsible for the observed trend. The study found that factors such as low educational levels of rural women, lack of income and the traditional cultural norms which exclude women from political participation play a significant role in explaining the observed trends. She also pointed out that interventions to correct these can help in increasing the participation rates by women.

Mridul Eapen (Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala) spoke about integrating gender into macroeconomic/development policy framework, citing the experience of Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) in Kerala, often taken to be an example of successful efforts in integrating gender into the macroeconomic framework. She argued that macroeconomic policies fail to take into account women's unpaid reproductive labour and remain largely gender blind. She then spoke about how budgets are an important tool for integrating gender in the macro framework. She highlighted how GRB methodology recognises women's 'reproductive' unpaid labour and the extant unequal gender relations, providing tools to integrate gender into budgeting/planning. In this context, she outlined the 5-step framework to conduct Gender Responsive Budgeting. Citing the example of Kerala, a state which has successfully 'engendered' its entire planning process in both the so-called women specific sectors as well as the so-called 'indivisible' sectors, she emphasised how gender budgeting can be an important tool in engendering Planning/Budget making, which is an important part of the macro-economic structure.

Ritu Dewan (Department of Economics, University of Mumbai) outlined how gender concerns are placed in the overall macroeconomic framework, amidst the on-going debates that govern the economic space. In her presentation, Ritu Dewan traced the gender aspects in some key areas such as trade, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), monetary and fiscal policies as well as infrastructure. She highlighted how women are placed in these key sectors/areas and how the dynamics in these areas affect women. Recognition of the gender concerns in some key areas makes a stronger case for acknowledging gender as a variable that is affected by and in turn affects all the spheres of policy and planning in the economy.

Dakshita Das (Formerly with Government of India) said that given that Gender Budgeting in India is about to complete a decade in a few years, it is time to reflect critically about the strategy and see where it is heading to. She said that GRB in India is an exercise limited to analysing the expenditure side of the budgets to understand their gender implications. She stressed the need to go beyond just analysing the expenditure side when looking at GRB as a strategy to mitigate the key disadvantages faced by women and girl children in the country. In this context, she noted that revenue policies in the country also have significant gender implications and need to be looked at more closely in our analysis. As a model, gender budgeting has a huge potential, especially with the recognition that fiscal policies too are not gender neutral. There is a lot that can be done on the side of taxation policies that can have far reaching impacts on women and this aspect needs to be explored more.

Summing up the various sessions **Jayati Ghosh** (Jawaharlal Nehru University) noted the key research issues thrown up by the workshop, that need to be taken up for further research. She stressed on the fact that feminist economics is not just about feminism, it is about having a different and an alternative perspective to the whole discourse and across different sectors. She highlighted that some issues need special focus in future research such as intersectional inequalities across social classes, issues related to women's employment, violence against women, etc. Further, there is a need to look at how the inter-country comparison of the two countries can help in adding to the rich discourse and advocacy for addressing women's concerns. Reflecting on the comparative analysis of gender related issues in India and China, she said that we need to learn from both the differences as well as similarities and develop our own perspectives accordingly. Mobilisation of voices and stronger advocacy honed by this comparative analysis will go a long way to further our cause.

She acknowledged that some issues such as the impact of the global financial crisis on women, have not been addressed adequately in the on-going debates and discussions, and they too need to be explored. She highlighted the fact that social policy and social protection is very important and has significant impact on women. Till now the discourse

views it as a luxury, however the recognition that these too can help in shaping up and creating a means for growth needs further study and emphasis in our research.

The ensuing discussion was rich and covered a range of interventions. Certain issues that have remained outside the ambit of research were highlighted, such as adopting a practical approach towards advocacy and going beyond just the ideologies of gender equality, a more comprehensive approach towards unpaid care work of women, the issue of how social differentiation could weave into the discourse on feminism was discussed. There was also lot of discussion on drawing comparisons between the two countries on their economic and political structures as well as with respect to condition of women. Such comparisons can go a long way in strengthening the respective advocacy strategies in both the countries.

Anamika observed when looking at the context in India with regard to the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) it is seen that even though we have a reservation policy for women in PRIs, in practice it is the men who have the power; husbands and other family members of the elected women leaders do the decision making and do not allow women to exercise their powers. Also there are instances of women coming from the ruling classes (where the male members of their family were village heads) and declaring themselves as the village heads. How can this be countered? Also, is the situation similar in China?

Talking about the trends in the labour forces in both the countries, **Dev Nathan** noted that from the presentations and the discussions it has been seen that there is a difference in the labour force in India and China, where the bulk of the labour force in India is in the unorganised sector, while in China it is in the organised sector. He wanted to know from the panellists as what they thought were the reasons for such a difference. He further pointed out that these differences lead to different outcomes, which needs to be taken into account in our analysis.

Gita Sen said that this should not sound like it's a critique of development in India and China, however there have been marked differences observed in the governance in both countries, with also differences in the respective starting points, middle point strategic directions, etc. Chinese had a very clear sense of what they were trying to achieve, in which creation of employment was seen as central. This has made a huge difference. India too brought in a series of reforms but these reforms were not job oriented reforms. These were capitalist reforms and they were brought in without the acknowledgement that they lead to a decline in the female work participation. She also noted that it is not the case that capitalism always has a negative impact on female work participation rate, but it is more often the case. She agreed with Dev Nathan that we have not really explored the reasons for the observed differences and the different trajectories that have been followed due to the

different approaches in both countries. India never had a support-led path that was prevalent in China. Such differences need to be explored more.

Taking the discussion forward, **Govind Kelkar** outlined some areas that could be taken up for future research in a collaborative way by both the countries. She said that we could demarcate certain areas and have focused discussions on those to prioritise some key issues for research. She stressed on the need to look more closely at the process of change and the learning one can take from this. Citing an example, she said that India has a strong network of civil society, which has been critiquing the government since long; however this phenomenon is still new in China. What are the avenues for mutual learning for both the countries? How has the assets-based expansion taken place; are just some of the possible themes for further research. **Feng Yuan** observed how both India and China have witnessed so many similar and yet so many different phenomenon at work. The similarities as well as the differences can be traced across various spheres, be it politics or social structures or culture. While India has multi-party system, China doesn't have such a system in place. There are cultural differences and similarities. While India is a strong democracy, China is not open to constitutional politics. These need to be contextualised and mapped in our research. **Devaki Jain** spoke about the different growth paths and trajectories that have defined growth in both the countries. Both the countries have followed trade led growth. While China had followed a growth led by cheap-commodity trade, the market for this has been shrinking. Now China has come up with the idea of inward looking economy after experiencing a decline in demand from the US and the Europe. The focus in China now is on reviving domestic demand. Similar debate has been followed in India for a long time now. The question is, why don't we break away from the trade-led growth that has proven so vulnerable? Can we build an alternative to this?

In response to the questions, Xiaopeng Pang answered that India and China are different from each other in various perspectives. A major difference has been with regard to the space being accorded to women in the public spaces. While women's voices are being heard in India, it is not so in China; and it is something that China can learn from India. Also when we talk of the reservation for women, both countries present different stories, one presents an affirmative, the other presents a counter-view. She stressed that we need to collate more evidence on such issues to strengthen the advocacy with the senior government officials. Due to the political systems in China, once the top officials are convinced of something, the thing gets implemented fairly quickly, which doesn't happen easily in India.

In her closing comments, Mridul Eapen reiterated the point made by Dakshita Das in her presentation and said that we need to go beyond just analysing the expenditure side of the budgets and start looking at the revenue side of the policies from a gender lens. This can have far reaching implications for women. Also, when we compare both the countries and we look at the huge differences in the political regimes that govern the two countries, how

we account for this fact when making any comparisons, is something that needs to be looked into more closely. On the same lines, may be a viable comparison would be on the decentralised governing systems which are there in both the countries. In India, Kerala presents a good model of decentralised planning. However this system continues to be governed by the prevalence of family ties, which too have been declining overtime. This is something for further discussion and research. Ritu Dewan observed that both the countries have had very different development experiences, not just political but also economic. One stark example is the almost universal land rights/holdings in China. She outlined two areas worth looking at for further research; the ownership of land resources, the expanding land resources and the subsequent access of women to this. How this ties-up with the work participation rates of women, is something worth looking at. Also, with the whole debate on urbanisation and seeing two very different patterns that have emerged, we need to look at it through both retrospective approaches as well as from a point of anticipation. What role women can play in this context is something that economists can focus on. Dakshita Das made two important points in her closing remarks, one on the need for looking at the data from China on urbanisation and secondly how China can learn from India's experience on engendering the government policies. She noted that China is yet to institutionalise the process of engendering government policies, where India has made significant strides in this domain. China can thus learn a lot from India's experience and develop a course of its own to follow.

The closing remarks by the panellists were followed by an open discussion on the way forward for future debates and discussion. In this context, N. Neetha Pillai noted that the work participation rates of women in both the countries present a very striking picture. While the scenario with respect to feminisation of paid domestic work is similar in both the countries, an area of further discussion and research can be the unpaid work by women in these countries.

In response to the observations of Chinese participants about the space that women get in India to voice their concerns and issues, Gita Sen said that the Chinese colleagues are of the perception that in India, women's political participation is high and their voices are heard in public policy spaces. She however said that there is a difference between 'having a voice' and 'being heard'. She said that we have to shout to get our voices heard, but in reality those whose voices are actually heard, don't need to shout. The nature of the Indian process is dominated by 'Run-away Capitalism'. This is one of our big challenges. She also pointed out that what drives the difference between India and China is that China's market oriented socialism has not addressed the core gender issues; in fact there is no recognition of the gender concerns in the whole development approach in China.

Xiao-yuan Dong and Feng Yuan pointed out that there is no Chinese translation for the word gender. The Chinese equivalent (word) means sex. In response to this Mary E. John pointed out that except in English, no other language has a word synonymous with 'gender', and that too is a relatively recent construct. She further pointed out the need to understand the perspectives to be gained from our respective histories of women-gender-feminism questions which can pose very interesting debates. She said that value will be added if we have future discussions, some of which will be more layered in terms of including actual policies, their implications; local self-governance, revenue versus taxation, etc. and some can be more conceptual – looking at the history of socialism moving towards market-socialism and the Indian history of developmentalism moving into neoliberalism. These reflections will help us connect with various policies, political economy, etc. and these need to be built into our discussions more explicitly.

Bringing in the advocacy perspective, Xia-yuan Dong highlighted the need to contextualise the feminist research and arguments further. She pointed out that World Bank has published two Gender related Reports in which China has been left out. So, China and India need to be together in solidarity to bring out what feminism means based on both the countries' perspectives, development and knowledge generation. She observed that there is also a need to ponder how the joint research can add value to advocacy efforts with the government officials, for which specific, context-specific arguments based on solid research are required. Hence, what is needed is knowledge-based advocacy. The need of the hour is to go beyond criticisms and build-up a plan of action that would address the key demands that are put forth by us (feminist economists). She also noted that maybe it is time to go beyond mere terminologies and ideologies and work out what will actually work in practice. Focus should be on enabling advocacy research, rather than just floating the ideologies of gender mainstreaming and gender equality. The question of how we approach the question of social differentiation was also put forward by Indrani Mazumdar as a key research area. She noted that the need to approach the issues from the view of intersectional inequalities and to deal with the process of differentiation amongst women. Another question worth seriously thinking about is the approach to the unpaid care work of women, and how one can build a comprehensive framework regarding this. These questions are important for answering some of the basic issues confronting women in both the countries.

Indira Hirway noted that there are several capitalists and political economists lobbies at work in India which play an important role in decision making determining the priorities of the government. When these lobbies can advocate so successfully with the policy makers, why aren't the policy makers convinced about the gender arguments? And how do such lobbies work in China?

In response, Xia-yuan Dong said that in China, the diversity among different groups is huge in terms of class differences, urban-rural divide, gender inequalities, etc. The human rights argument cannot be used in China because it makes the government defensive. The issue then remains as to how to make the government understand how crucial this is. There is a need for engaging with the government in China on issues that focus on social implications of gender inequalities and violence against women. The major challenge that remains is, on how to build a convincing instrumental argument to convince the government. Indira Hirway then queried as to why the whole macro-economic argument of sub-optimality of labour force in the economy is not used to convince the officials. In response it was noted that China has a dual-earner family structure that dilutes this argument. Xia-yuan Dong further observed that there is a need for some tactical calculations on the communication strategy that ought to be used for advocacy with the Chinese government for gender equality.

Jayati Ghosh observed that it was the Communist Revolution in China that preserved the dignity of labour and labourers; however the very same revolution doesn't talk about dignity to women. In this context, advocacy has to be thought about differently in China. It is the communist revolution that has made China the way it is today; however such a revolution didn't occur in India thus making it markedly different. So we need to evolve new strategies for China.

The session emphasised on the need for working closely to come up with concrete advocacy strategies for advocating for women's rights and gender equity, bringing in some more areas under research and focusing on those aspects of gender discourse that have so far remained outside the ambit of the current discourse.

Session 5: Closing Remarks and Plans for the Future

The session began with Gita Sen and Feng Yuan thanking the organisers for the wonderful planning and execution of this third workshop in the series and stating that based on the inputs, and discussions of the workshop, they were going to work on plans for a blueprint for the future. The Chinese participants said it had been a learning experience for them and it had helped them understand several aspects of the similarities, but also the differences between the development challenges facing the two countries. Yueping Song, Liangshu Qi, Jing Liu, Yuhao Ge, Hongmei Yi all commented that the workshop had helped them place the policies of their government in a relative perspective and Wang Zhen stated how he had come to understand the importance of cultural differences in understanding the different socio economic outcome and indicators in the two countries. Xiaopeng Pang, Junxia Zeng and Jin Feng also spoke about the gendered challenges that lay ahead in understanding the Chinese experience. Liqin Zhang spoke of a tendency recently noted amongst urban Chinese women to prefer to withdraw from the workforce and revert to

their traditional roles as housewives. Rebecca Tavares expressed the hope that they would be able to carry forward the agenda and the diverse and rich discussion of the past few days. She summarised the finer points discussed including the questions of paid and unpaid work, the need to locate gender within a larger framework of socio political and economic intersectionalities, the questions of jobless growth and development paradigms and the understanding that growth could not be at the expense of equity. She referred to discussions on gendered violence and the questions of bodily integrity using a human rights and social justice framework. She also mentioned how the discussions had put forward the need for sound economic analysis of benefits of gender equity for society in general and for economic growth, to strengthen women's voices which might not be heard otherwise. In India there seemed to be laws but not proper enforcement. The other issues discussed were the effect of migration and expanding informal service oriented work on marginalised communities, especially women. She also pointed that the discussion had brought to the foreground the need for understanding the impact of trade, taxation, rise of extractive industries, environmental degradation and public provisioning of services on women's rights, etc. She ended by highlighting that UN Women would be interested in supporting such regional and cross national analysis based on women's rights based research in future also. Elizabeth D. Knup and Kavita Ramdass added their thanks to the organisers and expressed how it had been a learning experience. Kavita Ramdass also expressed the hope of seeing more senior Chinese scholars and younger Indian scholars in future to rectify a slight imbalance in the composition of the present workshop. She also highlighted the fact that while there were many differences between India and China, the workshop had attempted to bring forth similarities which were significant enough to provide potential for future collaboration and research between the two countries. The workshop ended with a vote of thanks by Jayati Ghosh.