

**VIII**  
**GENERAL**  
**BODY**  
**MEETING**  
JUNE 1, 1998.  
PUNE

**The Reports**  
**From The President,**  
**General Secretary**  
**And The Treasurer**  
**1996 - 98**

**INDIAN ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN'S STUDIES**

## **PRESIDENT'S SPEECH FOR THE GENERAL BODY MEETING**

1 JUNE 1998.

It is my pleasant duty to welcome all of you, friends and fellow-members of the Indian Association of woman's studies, to this general Body meeting of the Association. Though we had last met in December 1995, this EC did not begin functioning till June 1996. I am rather proud of the several things that we managed to do during this short period of two years and would like to briefly mention these for your information.

Right from the beginning, this EC had felt the need to expand the network of this body : we felt sure that there were many more who were interested in gender issues in different parts of this vast country but found it difficult to build channels of Communications with a centralised organisation. Because this EC had representation from almost all regions, we could begin the process; we encouraged each member of the EC to locally initiate, on behalf of the IAWS, some activity of immediate interest in her region. As a result, in 1997, as many as nine such regional initiatives, quite often held in the local language, took place. They were spread all over the country from Trivendrum to Shillong to Chandigarh. This report includes at the end a list giving details about these activities, all of which apparently had got an excellent grassroots response. I am very grateful to the Ford Foundation, whose funds mainly saw us through these modestly organised activities and to my colleagues in the EC who carried out the task with great enthusiasm. They have certainly helped the Association to reach out to many more people than ever before.

We had another purpose in mind in sponsoring these regional activities. In a rapidly changing economy and society, many times we find that the official data system is neither fast enough nor gender-sensitive enough to keep us abreast of the diverse, region-specific changes in women's positions. The regional workshops, which had involved many local workers, filled in some of the gaps in our information; unfortunately, in the period since, we have not had the time to publish the excellent reports that the co-ordinators had prepared from the proceedings. Only the report on the reservations workshop at Calcutta was published and is available here for sale.

Our other big activity was organising the national seminar on the Early Years of the Independence at Baroda in August 1997. Since we have managed to give all of you a booklet commemorating that seminar, I will not talk

about it except to hope that, the Association will have the resources to organise many more such in the future.

Kavita Panjabi, one of the very enthusiastic members of the EC, was entrusted with the task of editing and producing the newsletters of the IAWS. She promptly put together a very impressive editorial team in Calcutta which brought out four newsletters in these two years. In spite of Calcutta's reputation for poor communications, Kavita managed to get together information from many quarters of the country to make the newsletters truly readable.

Kalpna Kannabiran, our young joint secretary, has performed wonders co-ordinating at the apex level the work of the organiser of the large number of sub-themes for this conference. She too found that it was not always easy to establish communications across the country; but nonetheless, she did a very efficient job of putting together whatever material she got. Most of the sub-theme co-ordinators too, readily took to their work and, as you saw in the last three days, did a wonderful job of organising the papers. I feel sure that with so much young enthusiasm coming forth, the Association has a very bright future ahead of it.

Apart from these academic activities, our very efficient secretary, Chhya Datar, has managed to sort out a lot of the administrative muddles; given that the Association has no permanent office or staff, these problems are not easy to avoid. I do know however, that in many cases, Chhya has now created simple but adequate programmes to deal on a routine basis with difficulties such as renewal of memberships. I earnestly request all of you to check carefully whether or not your own membership details have been correctly entered.

In spite of Chhya's best efforts at mobilizing friends to help us to get income tax exemption for the Association, the file is still languishing in Delhi. I hope the next EC will follow up the matter and get the clearance soon.

We are very happy to report that the elections for the next EC went off smoothly and the new EC will be able to take the reins of the Association immediately after this conference is over. I am grateful to Dr. Usha Thakkar for the very efficient and smooth "Operation Elections" that she carried out. The list of the elected members of the new EC is given.

Reports of the secretary and the treasurer will give you the details of the generous grants that we have received from several donors during these

two years and which made our many plans for the Association's activities and for this well provided conference a reality. I am personally very grateful to Kamla Bhasin for her role in achieving this. Without her constant help and advice, I at least would not have known how to go about this. Chhaya, with the help of the Maharashtra Stree Abhyas Vyaspeeth has managed all the details of the conference; sitting in Calcutta, I was not of much help with any of these.

Throughout these two years, Neera Desai has been a great support for me personally. We both go back a long way in the history of women's studies and movement in this country. I remember the first occasion when I met her in 1978 at the IDS conference on the Subordination of women at the Sussex University. That our ideas constantly jelled well together was perhaps due to the similarity in our ages; but it was also because we share a very live interest in the issues related to gender in India. Although Neera was not an office - bearer in this EC, she has continued to put in seminal work in the cause of the Association as witnessed by the draft she has prepared for amendments to the IAWS constitution. Rohini Gawankar, another old friend, came to this EC with a considerable experience of its work; on a number of occasions, her cool common sense put the breaks on our runaway ideas. I am grateful for her continued support and friendship.

Members of the Association, I invite you to the proceedings of this general body meeting of the IAWS.

STATEMENT AND REPORT  
BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY  
TO THE GENERAL BODY MEETING,

June 1, 1998, Pune

It gives me a great pleasure to greet and welcome you all of you to this VIIIth General Body Meeting and the city of Pune, which has played a significantly historic role in the reform movement of 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century which contributed to shaping the ideas of women's liberation. We have tried to present some glimpses of these historic events through the programmes we arranged. I take this opportunity to pay my tributes to the zeal and commitment of the women activists and the organisations whose close collaboration and solidarity has made it possible to include some of these programmes as a part of the conference.

The important thing I realised as I was working as a general secretary of the IAWS was that one gets connected with so many women from such diverse backgrounds as academics, scholars, activists, development professionals etc. that the one is able to affirm the need for the IAWS as a forum to bring persons from different streams together to dialogue with each other and consequently thus enrich the women's studies as a discourse. It has been noticed that increasing institutionalisation of women's studies was somewhere blunting the sharpness of the movement. But at the same time, if the experiences from the movement are not documented properly then they would not enter the mainstream academic disciplines and would not become the body of knowledge which is used for teaching. The literature generated through movement must get due acknowledgement and should inspire the next generation. IAWS provides forum for this literature and gives legitimacy as well as makes women's studies capture dynamics of transformation.

The Executive Committee of the IAWS has always reflected the diversity of regions, of activities, of passions, of ideologies. This time too we felt enriched because of diversity and could organise regional level workshops focusing on different themes. Before describing those activities let me first introduce the EC members, the office bearers first and others later. Appointing senior person like Nirmla Banerjee as President was the most important decision we took since her name carried weight at several occasions as well as her advice became most useful in many tricky situations. Suniti Pathania was the vice president who came from Kurukshetra, Hariyana and Kalpana Kannabiran was the Joint Secretary and may be one of the

youngest and hence most active EC members, who belonged to Andhra. Chhaya Datar was selected as the General Secretary and hence any blame for non-performance of some of the aspects of the IAWS as an organisation is due to me, and my pre-occupation with several other routine tasks at my work place. Rohini Gawankar was elected as a Treasurer, and both of us being in Mumbai we could really team for systematising of many accounting and financial practices. Kavita Punjabi was the Editor of the Newsletter which gave us the continuity and sense of connectedness with each other and the members. Neera Desai and Kamla Bhasin were with us as ex-officio members and yet they were tremendously active.

Usha Thakkar with whom you must be familiar with as the Returning Officer, represented the Institutional seat from S.N.D.T. Women's University, Devki Jain was another member and an ex-president of the IAWS as well as a senior person in the women's studies discourse whose experience proved tremendously useful for deciding the priorities of various themes to be pursued by the IAWS which has a national character. Her insistence on supporting a workshop in Assam helped introduce the IAWS in the North-East in a big way. Gabriele Dietrich who is very active as a member in National Alliance of Peoples' Movements (NAPM) brought fresh ideas to select the over-arching theme of the conference. Manu Bhaskar from Kerala and Ratna Kumari from Andhra Pradesh brought their regional concerns into the thematic selections for the workshops. Manjeet Bhatia from Delhi and Usha Kanhere from Ahmedabad were other two members who too were on the forefront on organising the regional workshops. Bhavana Mehta's contribution was useful for organising the seminar at Baroda, which is the special feature of this EC. We were honoured to organise this seminar on the 50<sup>th</sup> year of our independence, reflecting critically on the early years, i.e. the Nehruvian years, from the gender perspective.

The EC had six meetings during the last two years and most meetings were spread over two days in order to give adequate time for getting to know each other, discussing things in detail, for planning new activities. The office of the IAWS was located in TISS and I must thank the earlier secretary Kamla Bhasin who had secured the resources from Swedish International Development Agency,(SIDA) for running the office which enabled me to appoint a co-ordinator to help me do the routine job of answering letters and systematising the membership record. However, getting an efficient person to work for a temporary job is very difficult. A lot of burden falls on the general secretary who is not a full time person. I should take a pride in reporting that the SIDA grant got over this year but we



could secure the Ford Foundation grant for next five years to enable us to pay for the EC meeting which requires a large amount for people to travel as well as to maintain office and pay for the office personnel, and communication. However we have to remember that this was the last grant the Ford Foundation could give us since they are winding up their women's studies folio hence forth. One has to think of some better option after exhaustion of this basic grant in five years.

This time, we tried to key in all the membership records in the fox pro system which enables the updating of the record in an alphabetical manner as well as sorting records by categories such as regions and towns etc. However, in the enthusiasm of not leaving any name behind and also looking for complete addresses we allowed the typist to key in some old records along with the present one prepared by my predecessor. I admit that you may have noticed some duplication of names as well as certain typographical errors but will also concede that I would not up basic editing as I was pressed hard for time. Also we used the second name, i.e. surname first system which confused many people. Also, last time the 5 years category ordinary membership had created some problems and thus many people found their names omitted. We had to include those names too and hence we had to dig out many names, for whom many times the joining date record could not be found. I must say the existing membership records suffer from incomplete and incorrect addresses, may be because the members have left their place and not informed. Hence, we notice that many letters, and the newsletters are returned, almost 100 of them each time. I will appeal to all the members here that they should check a their own addresses as well as those of any friend they know and also add telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses in the files maintained at the registration counters. Our system of mobile office as well as not following the uniform system every time the secretary changes, creates a lot of such problems. But I must say that we should be able to pass on better membership record to the next EC.

Another achievement is the systematising of the accounts and audit system which also includes the filing of income tax returns every year which was helped by the auditor Mr. Mhatre who is a very methodical person. He and his close associate Mr. Vaze helped us to apply for the exemption of income tax and channel the application to the New Delhi office via the submission of relevant documents at the Mumbai office. We are waiting for the order of exemption which needs to be renewed every three years. Thus the IAWS will have no more irregularities on account of defaults in the procedures.

The newsletter got published four times in two years and the credit goes to Kavita Punjabi and her team in Calcutta which consists of Jasodhara Bagachi, Pramila Banerjee, Shivani Banerjee Chakravarty, Kalpana Kannabiran, Mandira Sen, to make it so much readable and informative. However, I must say that there was very little response from the members of the IAWS to the appeal published in the newsletter to send their responses. We were particularly keen to get some comments and feedback on the theme of the next IAWS conference. Very broad title was announced in the June newsletter of last year appealing the members to send their reactions. This was done following a suggestion by Beena Agarwal to involve the members in this activity and make it as democratic as possible. Also, announcement has been done for suggesting changes in the constitution which could be ratified in this meeting. However, on that front too very dismal situation exists.

However, I am very happy to announce that many members took interest in contesting the elections themselves or, suggesting somebody else's name both in life membership category and also in an ordinary member category. But the response was very poor in student and institutional category. It really proves that the IAWS forum is perceived as a vibrant forum and the organisation is going to get more strength in future. The election results are announced subsequently and are recorded at the end of this report. The membership of our association stands as 700 in life category, 340 in ordinary category and 100 in student category. The corporate membership has not increased and stands at seven only. The institutional membership has declined from 50 to 34 only. These are the figures at the time of going to the press.

## **ACTIVITIES**

There are three main activities we performed; The Regional workshops, The Seminar in Baroda between August 9-1, 1998, entitled "The Early Years of Indian Independence", and the VIIIth Conference in Pune. And the achievement is that we were able to complete everything within the given time frame of two years. The elections too were conducted within the same period and we now plan to hand over the reigns of the IAWS to the next elected members on June 3, 1998, in Pune. June 7, 1998 is the day of expiry for this EC.

### **Regional Workshops:**

Each one of us EC members got an opportunity to organise a workshop on a theme we found relevant in our environment. This was supported by the Ford Foundation, from the grant which was secured earlier but was not



used. The brief reports were published in the newsletter on June 1997. The list of the themes is attached herewith. The first time the IAWS's activity was spread over such a wider geographic locations and could become accessible to many more members and also to the non-members who could get exposed to the IAWS and what it stands for.

### **The Seminar at Baroda**

“The Early years of Indian Independence” seminar was inspired by the elderly members such as Neeraben and Nirmala Banerjee who could seek collaboration from the Centre for Women's Development Studies (CWDS) in Delhi and who contributed to shaping its theme and identifying the speakers etc. along with the financial contribution. The responsibility for logistical arrangements was done by the Women's Studies Resource Centre located in University of Baroda. Amita Verma a founder member of the centre as well as a long time life member of the IAWS was the real resource who inspired many of her colleagues, prominent among them are Nandini Bhattacharjee and Bhavana Mehta, who was also an EC member. The major funding came from two foreign donor organisations. The balance grant from the Jaipur conference from EZE was allowed to be used by the agency for this purpose. And the fresh grant was made by the HIVOS, Dutch organisation. The celebration committee set by the then United Front government sanctioned the small amount much later, after the conference was over, and still the remittance is not done.

The seminar was a great success and the brief report of the seminar is being circulated to you all in your kit. Some papers have been selected by the Economic and Political Weekly for their six monthly Women's Studies Special issue to be published in May. And some more papers are yet to be submitted by the respective presenters which can be published as a collection, if pursued properly by Kavita Punjabi who has undertaken the responsibility for the same.

It was a small seminar and mainly meant for local people, yet there were 200 participants and apart from 20 speakers and the 15 EC members 15 more members from outside attended the seminar, which provided good historical reflection on women's issues; their portrayal and the treatment at the time of Indian Independence.

### **The VIIIth Conference**

As you are aware that this is the main activity of the IAWS. The conference of this size is the real collaborative efforts mainly of the local women's organisations. The Maharashtra Stree Abhyas Vyaspeeth (MSAV) has been

inspired by the IAWS and has got initial support from IAWS. Neera Desai has been its mentor, and Rohini Gawankar has been the founder member for the MSAV. Thus it was but natural for us to select the MSAV as the collaborating organisation for this conference. It was Meenakshi Apte who is present secretary for the MSAV and the Puneit who has taken the brunt of the logistical organising on behalf of the MSAV. I must thank her profoundly. Similarly, Poornima Chikarmane who is in charge of the subcentre of the Adult and Continuing Education Dept of the S.N.D.T. Women's University has provided the necessary logistical support of not only providing office space but also keeping us informed about all plausible difficulties due to Pune weather, the management culture of S.N.D.T., and many more things.

Kalpana Kannabiran is the joint secretary and hence it was logical on her part to shoulder the maximum share of responsibility for coordinating the subtheme coordinators and later putting the rapporteurs' manuscripts together for the final report. The best contribution by her is the brochure she managed to get in a professional style at a much cheaper rate. The collection of abstracts too is her responsibility and you will agree that she has managed it well.

Comet Media Foundation took the responsibility of organising the Stree Vividha, an exhibition of crafts and products by the women's groups searching for sustainable alternatives in the production of information and products of different kinds. For them, Stree Vividha was not an opportunity for sale of these products only but also an opportunity provided for interaction between women scholars and women who are practitioners of innovative alternatives in different sectors. We appreciate this point of view and sincerely thank the organisers for taking these immense efforts, particularly when one of their organisers had to withdraw to provide support to her husband who has had a heart attack. Thanks go to all the producers' groups who responded so well and brought their products from far and near.

The idea of the feminist walk was very innovative and although it could not be fully materialised because of the time constraints, it did give some glimpses of women's history of education in Maharashtra. This could be obtained through the visit to the Phule Wada, where Savitribai Phule lived and got inspiration to start a school for girls.

We were very proud to get two popular artists for the cultural show from Maharashtra. The show really provided the opportunity to introduce the talents in Maharashtra within the feminist movement.

I have to specially thank specially Radha Mishra, who is a faculty at the College of Home Science, in S.N.D.T. Women's University, took responsibility to search and screen relevant video films in her media room, on the campus and we got the 11<sup>th</sup> subtheme added.

It was Gayatri Chatterjee who felt an incessant need to expose the participants to the films by the women directors from the Third World by using the resources of the Film archives here in Pune. She chose the films by Cuban women directors.

The idea of the information desk came from Alochana who took initiative and designed a flyer making Pune city accessible to our participants. Also, set up an information board to facilitate interaction with each other.

Also our sincere thanks go to Samajwadi Mahila Sabha who provided these beautiful bags for our kit of the conference.

We acknowledge and appreciate support provided by the S.N.D.T. Women's University and their entire staff. The venue for the business sessions and the hostel accommodation to be found at one place, in one campus was very important particularly when the conference was to take place in Summer. The greenery on the campus is to be particularly appreciated which provided some cool glimpses in a scorching heat of summer outside. We must thank the management of the other two hostels, the Vidyarthi Sahayak Samiti and the Indian Institute of Education both of which were very conveniently located and hence did not cause any logistical problem.

I must say that Pune proved to be the right choice, although the timing may not be. Being summer usually there is less response to the conferences. People do not prefer travelling in the scorching heat. Also, it is the season for weddings and also, children's vacations and hence family duties, which allows women to be dispersed.

The choice of Pune seems to be justified by the way women's organisations took interest and their synergetic way of organising and relating to the conference has made the conference a grand success.

Where this EC did not make much dent is on the distribution front of the IAWS publications. The last EC had brought out quite a few publications, but did not do much sale. We too discussed what could be done for increasing sale, such as contacting the alternative distribution networks etc. But nobody showed much enthusiasm. I would like to urge the next EC to look into the matter urgently, otherwise such good books will go the mothway.

Another area which remains unattended is the publication of papers. The subtheme co-ordinators are persuaded to aim at bringing out collection.

Usually there is always some money available for follow up activity. I must thank the IAWS for giving me small grant with which I could bring out the collection of papers presented in my subtheme at Jaipur. But very few show the determination to follow up with the paper presenters, edit the papers and then look for the publisher. I would appeal to the subtheme co-ordinators here, to take advantage of the funds.

### **The Future**

As outgoing general secretary, I can only identify areas, which fall under the purview of the IAWS. I think, to strengthen the UGC assisted women's studies centres in the country should be the first priority of the IAWS. One of the ways it can be done is to bring together UGC assisted centres with non-UGC women's studies centres and the feminist scholars who do not work within the UGC assisted university systems. The IAWS can work very closely with the standing committee for the development of women's studies, within UGC, where the IAWS president is invited to become a member. This institutional arrangement helps the IAWS to give proper orientation to the women's studies centres in the country many of which are still groping and are unable to establish themselves on a firm footing within the academic milieu.

Another possibility for the IAWS is to bring together women activists and the women's studies centres together. One of the activities could be to encourage the activists to document their experiences with the financial and editorial assistance of the women's studies centres. To generate the reading material for the students who themselves are encouraged to take up extension activity is important. The IAWS can arrange the workshops along with the women's studies centres who have got funds from the UGC, where documentation of this kind can be discussed. Many women are also working in the developmental field and have contributed a lot to make the development field gender sensitive. Their experiences of bringing gender sensitivity to their own colleagues, to the bureaucracy with whom they are in touch, will also contribute to generate this kind of literature.

Finally, I would like to share my concern about the growing divide between the activists and the academicians. Number of factors are responsible for the same. I do feel that the IAWS can definitely work towards bridging this gap, providing forums for both to come together and provide inspiration and inputs of various kinds so that both get strengthened. Ultimately, we cannot afford to allow our mainstream institutions like the university system to be weakened. The movement too does not remain high and vibrant all

the time. Hence, it is important that something gets percolated and preserved through literature which is a part of the curriculum and the teaching system. The LAWS can provide to the women's studies centres those impulses for exploring what is currently ongoing, and act as a forum for both women's studies centres, the scholars located in various other institutes than the UGC supported centres, and the activists in the movement and within NGOs..

## **REGIONAL WORKSHOPS DURING 1996-97**

### **Western Region:**

**Food Security and Women's Access to Natural Resources :** Chhaya Datar in collaboration with the Unit for Women's Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai.

**Creating and Compiling Material in Gujarati on Women's Studies :** Usha Thakkar, Usha Kanhere, Bhavana Mehta and Neera Desai in collaboration with SNDT Women's University, Mumbai

**Creating and Compiling material in Marathi on Women's Studies :** Rohini Gawankar in collaboration with Maharashtra Stree Abhyas Vyaspeth, Pune

### **Southern Region:**

**Feminist School for Research Students :** Kalpana Kannabiran in collaboration with ASMITA Resource Centre for Women, Hyderabad

**Survival and Sovereignty : New Economic Policy and Control over Resources:** Gabriele Dietrich in collaboration with the Manomanian Sunderanar University at Tirunelveli.

**All Kerala Consultation Workshop on Identifying local Issues :** Manu Bhaska, Thiruvanthpuram

### **Northern Region :**

**The Imaging of Women in Myth and History :** Gargi College, New Delhi, partially supported.

**Women in Literature in North India :** Suniti Pathania and Manjit Bhatia in collaboration with Pam Rajput, Centre for Women's Studies and Development, Punjab University

### **Eastern And North-Eastern Region:**

**Women's perspective for the IXth plan :** Nirmala Banerjee in collaboration with UNIFEM, at Calcutta

**Reservation for Women in the Parliament and Other Elected Government Bodies :** Nirmala Banerjee, in collaboration with School for Women's Studies, Jadhavpur University at Calcutta

**New Initiatives for the North-East : Implications for Women :** Devki Jain in collaboration with Omeo Kumar Das Institute of Social Change and Development and North East Network



## **DECLARATION OF RESULTS OF THE ELECTIONS HELD IN APRIL, 1998**

The elections were announced on January 1, 1998. Usha Thakkar was selected as the Returning Officer. The members list was prepared as of December 31, 1998 and after due procedure the postal ballot was conducted and the following members are declared as elected by her. The joint meeting of the old EC and the newly elected EC is planned on June 3, 1998. The new EC would start functioning from June 8<sup>th</sup>, 1998.

### **Institutional Member Category :**

Veena Mazumadar : Centre for Women'd Development Studies

### **Life Member Category:**

1. Maitreyi Krishnaraj
2. Divya Pande
3. Kamla Bhasin
4. Seema Sakhare
5. Rohini Gawankar
6. Pam Rajput
7. Bina Agarwal
8. Kalpana Kannabiran

### **Ordinary Member Category:**

1. Rama Melkote
2. Beena Shrinivaran
3. Jayashree Vencatesan
4. Geetanjali Gangoli
5. Nalini Upreti

### **Student Category:**

1. Vatika Sibal

## **Treasurer's Note for the General body, June 1, 1998**

**Rohini Gawankar**

The present EC took over charge on June 7, 1996 and found itself lucky to have a good saving left behind by the earlier EC, especially the amount earmarked for the office expenses, staff salaries and the EC meetings was sufficient to begin the work. Also, there were other funds which have been accumulated over the years. The main sources have been the interest on some fixed deposits and the saving account of the bank. The fund is also generated from the registration fees accumulated over last few conferences, since every time we could obtain new funds which cover the conference expenses completely. Similarly, the funds received for the publication have been accumulated, since not many proposals have come forward for editing and later publishing the papers received at the conference. Thus I must say that our tenure started comfortably

The membership fee too is accumulated and is maintained as a corpus without touching it for the day today expenses. Between last two years 101 persons subscribed to Life membership category, 106 persons subscribed to ordinary category, 28 students became members and 10 institutions subscribed under institutional category i.e. only for two years. However there were two corporate members, Maharashtra Stree Abhyas Vyaspeeth and Prakriti from Nagpur, i.e. they paid Rs.5000 as one time amount and became life member in an institutional category. Five foreigners have subscribed for the category of Friends of Association. Thus totally we acquired 272 new members, and this figure is only upto March 31, 1998. It means many more who have become members at the time of registration have not been counted in this total. I cannot say exactly what is our total membership today, because as we acquire many new members many old members have not renewed their membership and hence many of those who were counted for the voting rights might have been unqualified as members at present because of expiring of their membership status. I can give figure for the Life category which has touched 700 and which I find promising. Our membership funds corpus stands today as Rs. 2,72,924/-

We had some grant lying unutilised from earlier donations received and hence we could take up many activities at once. The last instalment of the Ford Foundation grant was worth Rs. 3,50,000 and along with some balance Rs.48,000 left from earlier instalment we decided to fund the regional workshops, for which the list is provided earlier.

In the beginning of 1997, we thought of the seminar on "The Early Years

of Indian Independence : Women's perspectives" and for that too we had some balance amount from EZE funds offered for the Jaipur conference, approximately Rs.2,50,000 plus we decided to raise funds from other sources such as HIVOS, the Government of India celebration committee and then Centre for Women's Development Studies came to our help and suggested that we celebrate it together. Because of these generous donations we were able to circulate the booklet on the report of the seminar as a small memento of the 50<sup>th</sup> year of independence to you all.

With SIDA funds over we had no specific earmarked funds for the office expenses and we mainly provided for these expenses from the interest earned on the deposits and also from other amounts which have been accumulated over the years. The newsletter was brought out six times for which Rs. 10,000 grant is procured from ICSSR as per the usual practice. Over and above this amount, expenses required for the newsletter are provided from the publication grants.

For the conference, the general secretary has already mentioned that we got the grant from the Royal Netherlands Embassy around Rs. 13,00,000 through which we will be able to give subsidy to all of us for our food and accommodation apart from the travel reimbursement to all the speakers and some paper writers. We had also requested special grant to support our sisters from the neighbouring countries and thus we got ten South Asian participants for the conference.

We require funds for mainly three broad categories. To maintain an office and pay salaries to pay a co-ordinator and a part time accountant. Communication expenses, stationary and the expenses to conduct elections account for major amount, more than three lakh rupees every year. Second category for funding is our activities which relate to the aims and objectives of our trust. The third category is publications and sponsoring of some research. This time we had requested the Ford Foundation to provide us support for office maintenance for next five years i.e. from 1998 to 2003. And before closing their women's studies grant account in India, this is the last time the funds have come under the head of support for women's studies. The next EC is lucky to have these funds waiting for them to start functioning their office. Out of the two instalments the first one is already deposited in our bank account. The funds under several other heads mentioned above are also there. The attached balance sheet and the income and expenditure statement will provide you more details of the transaction during 1997-98. I submit it for your consideration.

## Indian Association of Women's Studies

Balance Sheet as on 31st March 1998: Subject to Audit

LIABILITIES	Amount	PROPERTY & ASSETS	Amount
<b>TRUST FUND OR CORPUS</b>		<b>FURNITURE &amp; FIXTURE</b>	
Bal. as per Last yr. 68585.00		Per Last Balance Sheet: 21549.52	
Add. during the yr. ---- 68585.00	68585.00	Less : Depreciation: 2154.52	19395.00
<b>LIFE MEMBERSHIP:</b>		<b>COMPUTER</b>	
Bal. as per Last yr. 192874.00		Per Last Balance Sheet: 49552.00	
Add. during the yr. 37550.00	230424.00	Less : Depreciation: 7433.00	42119.00
<b>CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP:</b>		<b>INVESTMENTS:</b>	
Bal. as per Last yr. 32500.00		UT I '64 37240.00	
Add. during the yr. 10000.00	42500.00	<b>ADVANCES</b>	
<b>OTHER EARMARKED FUNDS:</b>		To Committee Members 68287.09	
Bal. as per Last yr. 34569.21		To Pune Conference 501724.45	
Add. during the yr. 7467.00	42036.21	<b>INCOME RECEIVABLE :</b>	
Ford Found.(Grant received in a 1593000.00		Divident on UT I US'64 15215.20	
<b>LIABILITIES:</b>		<b>CASH &amp; BANK BALANCE:</b>	
For expenses payable 9499.10	9499.10	Cosmos Coop Bank Ltd. 69078.30	
<b>INCOME &amp; EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT:</b>		SBI - Dadar 289829.90	
Per Last Bal. Sheet: 1276604.72		SBI - New Delhi 10418.86	
Add. Income &		Cash in Hand 1457.16	
Expenditure Account:- 280268.61	996336.11	Bharat over. Bk. N.Delhi 1549310.13	
		CBI - 14523: 300.84	
		CBI - 14524: 1050.49	1921445.68
		<b>DEPOSITS:</b>	
		Fixed Deposit in	
		Schedule Baanks. 340000.00	
		Add: Accrued Interest 36954.00	376954.00
	<b>2982380.42</b>		<b>2982380.42</b>

Dated

Dated

Place: Mumbai

Place: Mumbai

For Indian Association For Women's Studies

CHHAYA DATAR  
(General Secretary)

ROHINI GAWANKAR  
(Treasurer)

## Indian Association of Women's Studies

Income & Expenditure Account for the year ended on 31st March 1998: Subject to Audit

EXPENDITURE	Amount	INCOME	Amount
To Salaries	72249.00	By Interest:	
To Depreciation	9587.52	On Bank Accounts / Deposits:	53453.05
	81836.52		
To Establishment Expenses: (Refer Statement attached)	184759.79	By Grants Received from:	
To Professional Expenses	8500.00	C. W. D. S.	50000.00
To Amount Paid to Auditors:		ICSSR	10000.00
For Audit	6000.00	E Z E	182744.10
For Taxation:	2500.00	HIVOS	142860.00
	8500.00		385604.10
To Miscellaneous Expenses:		By Membership fees:	
Other Misc. Expenses	948.20	Friends of Association	----
		Ordinary Membership	8600.00
To Expenditure on the objects of the Society:		Institutional Membership	5600.00
a) ICSSR- Publication News:	----	Student Membership	1350.00
b) Ford Found.-Workshop	100000.00		15550.00
c) Publication exps.	7395.00	By Royalties Received	---- --
d) E Z E Expenses-	1038.00		
e) Global Working Group Books	30000.00	By Devident from U T I US'64:	7607.60
f) Baroda Seminar:	365065.85		
	503498.85	By Net Prior period Items:	---
	788043.36	By Misc Income / Donation:	45560.00
To Surplus carried over to Balance	-280268.61		
	507774.75		507774.75

Dated

Dated

Place: Mumbai

Place: Mumbai  
For Indian Association For Women's Studies

CHHAYA DATAR      ROHINI GAWANKAR  
(General Secretary)      (Treasurer)

INDIAN ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN'S STUDIES

ESTABLISHMENT EXPENSES : SIDA	Rs.	Rs.
Conveyance Expenses	5331.00	
Printing & Stationery	32377.10	
Postage	17042.50	
Typing & Xeroxing	2480.40	
Bank Charges	4688.50	
E.C. meeting	118683.00	
Communication	4157.29	184759.79

BARODA SEMINAR

Venue Arrangement - Baroda	31241.00	
Travel - Baroda	265311.14	
Lodging & Boarding - Baroda	37265.00	
Communication - Baroda	8580.19	
Printing & Stationery	14201.00	
Contingency - Baroda	8467.52	549825.64

AMOUNT INCURRED ON PUNE - MAY 98 CON

Pune conf. sub.	10000.00	
Pune - Communication	12978.20	
Pune - Postage	15537.50	
Pune - Stationery	26153.75	
Pune - Misc. food	965.00	
Pune - Conveyance	4364.00	
Pune - TA / DA	25176.00	
Pune - Secretarial exps.	6050.00	101224.45

ADVANCES GIVEN TO COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Adv. to Kalpna Kannbiarian - Pune Conf.	2225.00	
Adv. to Neera Desai - Baroda Conf.	1500.00	
Adv. to Kavita Punjabi - Newsletter	40694.09	
Adv. to N. Banerjee - For Baroda Conf.	15000.00	
Adv. to Usha Thakkar - For Election exp.	8868.00	68287.09



## **SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS OF INDIAN ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN'S STUDIES**

**PREAMBLE** The constitution of IAWS was formulated in 1982 when the organization came into existence. Some amendments have been made particularly with regard to membership but not any major changes have been made to the best of my knowledge. In response to the transformation which have occurred in the last decade and half it is necessary to make changes in some of the clauses. I am suggesting following changes for your consideration:

1. At present the terms of the executive is for two years.

(ref. clause no.6 c) through practice it has been found that by the time executive starts working it gets busy planning the next conference. After the conference gets over the elections are held and the existing executive hardly is able to carry out some of the programmes it has launched or hope to start. I therefore move a resolution that the term of the executive be extended to three years. The biennial IAWS conference will be continued to be held and the third year may be spent in completing some of the tasks undertaken.

2. The election procedure has been found very cumbersome both in terms of time involved and expenditure wise. We may continue to have postal ballot because it is not possible for each and every member to attend the General Body meeting. The supplying of the list of members is really a problem. I therefore suggest that the list of members in respective categories be available on request and at price. It need not be sent along with the election notice as it is done currently. Further it has been noticed that on an average election procedure takes about four months. I recommend that the time required at each stage be shortened so that the entire procedure could be over within three months.

3. Though experience it has been noticed that the different categories of members create some confusion. We have large number of members for the Life Member category.

Though we have a provision of student category that is the one hand fluid and it becomes difficult to keep track on whether a member continues to be a student; secondly, as far as response in the contesting of election is concerned there is very poor response. In the category of ordinary members though the number is sizable in practice it may happen that the number of

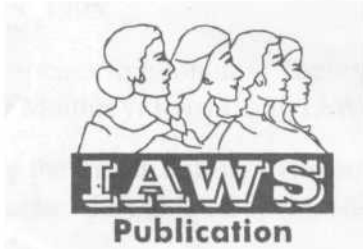
ordinary members swell at the time of the conference but they may not be eligible for voting as there is a cutting date after which the member is not allowed to stand for election or vote. It was because of this difficulty that at one stage we had ordinary membership for five years. But since we do not have permanent office it becomes difficult to keep up to date list of members. In short I move that we should have less number of constituencies. Can we propose only one common constituency?

4. There is an urgent need to involve members in formulating the programme of IAWS and in deciding the theme and sub themes of the conference. Bina Agarwal had made some suggestions, they were circulated in the News letter but unfortunately there was hardly any response. I suggest that this body should involve a procedure by which greater participation of the members be attained.

## IAWS Publications

- 1) Struggles of Women at work, Sujata Ghothoskar (Ed.), Vikas, 1992.
- 2) Participation of Women in Politics, Susheela Kaushik (Ed.), Vikas, 1992.
- 3) The New Economic Policy and Women, IAWS/TISS, 1993.
- 4) Women and Law, Lotika Sarkar / B. Sivaramayya (Ed.), Vikas, 1994.
- 5) Conference Papers of the VI National Conference of Women's Studies ( 9 Volumes), IAWS, 1993.
- 6) Remaking Society for Women: Vision Past and Present, Maithreyi Krishnaraj (Ed.), IAWS, 1995.
- 7) The State and the Women's Movement - Report of a workshop by Kavita Shrivastava / Nandita Gandhi / Abha Bhaiya / Ritu Menon, IAWS, 1995.
- 8) Feminist Approches to Economic Theory - Report of a workshop, by Maithreyi Krishnaraj, IAWS, 1995.
- 9) Re-examining the Indian Family - Report of a workshop by Nirmla Banerjee / Jasodhara Bagchi, IAWS, 1995.
- 10) Women, Ecology, and Economic Globalization, Keynote presentation by Vandana Shiva, IAWS, 1995.
- 11) In Search of Feminist Visions, Alternative Paradigms and Practices: A Source Book, compiled by Lakshmi Menon, IAWS, and Akshara - A Women's Resource Centre, Bombay, 1995.
- 12) Women and Violence, Radhika Coomaraswami, IAWS, 1995.
- 13) The Eighty-First Amendment Bill, 1996.
- 14) Perspective on Independence-Through Women's Eyes, IAWS, 1998.

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## VIIIth National Conference, 1999: Pune

### *President's Speech*

Nirmala Banerjee

It is my pleasant duty to welcome all of you, friends and fellow-members of the Indian Association for woman's studies, to this General Body Meeting of the Association. Though we had last met in December 1995, this EC did not begin functioning till June 1996. I am rather proud of the several things that we managed to do during this short period of two years and would like to briefly mention these for your information.

Right from the beginning, this EC had felt the need to expand the network of this body. We felt sure that there were many more who were interested in gender issues in different parts of this vast country, but found it difficult to build channels of communications with a centralised organisation. Because this EC had representation from almost all regions, we could begin the process. We encouraged each member of the EC to locally initiate, on behalf of the IAWS, some activity of immediate interest in her region. As a result, in 1997, as many nine such regional initiatives, quite often held in the local language, took place. They were spread all over the country from Trivandrum to Shillong to Chandigarh. This report includes at the end a list giving details about these activities, all of which apparently had got an excellent grassroots response. I am very grateful to the Ford Foundation, whose funds mainly saw us through these modestly organised activities and to my colleagues in the EC who carried out the task with great enthusiasm. They have certainly helped the Association to reach out to many more people than ever before.

We had another purpose in mind in sponsoring these regional activities. In a rapidly changing economy and society, many times we find that the official data system is neither fast enough nor gender-sensitive enough to keep us abreast of the diverse, region-specific changes in women's positions. The regional workshops, which had involved many local workers, filled in some of the gaps in our information. Unfortunately, in the period since, we have not had the time to publish the excellent reports that the co-ordinators had prepared from the proceedings. Only the report on the reservations workshop at Calcutta was published and is available here for sale.

Our other big activity was organising the national seminar on the "Early Years of the Independence", at Baroda in August 1997. Since we have managed to give all of you a booklet commemorating that seminar, I will not talk about it except to hope that the Association will have the resources to organise many more such in future.

Kavita Panjabi, one of the very enthusiastic members of the EC, was entrusted with the task of editing and producing the newsletters of the IAWS. She promptly put together a very impressive editorial team in Calcutta which brought out four newsletters in these two years. In spite of Calcutta's reputation for poor communications, Kavita managed to get together information from many quarters of the country to make the newsletters truly readable.

Kalpana Kannabiran, our young Joint Secretary, has performed wonders co-ordinating at the apex level the work of the organiser of the large number of sub-themes for this conference. She too found that it was not always easy to establish communications across the country - but nonetheless, she did a very efficient job of putting together whatever material she got. Most of the sub-theme co-ordinators too, readily took to their work and, as you saw in the last three days, did a wonderful job of organising the papers. I feel sure that with so much young enthusiasm coming forth, the Association has a very bright future ahead of it.

Apart from these academic activities, our very efficient General Secretary, Chhaya Datar, has managed to sort out a lot of the administrative muddles, given that the Association has no permanent office or staff. These problems are not easy to avoid. I do know however, that in cases, Chhaya has now created simple but adequate programmes to deal on a routine basis with difficulties such as renewal of memberships. I earnestly request all of you to check carefully whether or not your own membership details have been correctly entered.

In spite of Chhaya's best efforts at mobilizing friends to help us to get income tax exemption for the Association, the file is still languishing in Delhi. I hope the next EC will follow up the matter and get the clearance soon.

We are very happy to report that the elections for the next EC went off smoothly and the new EC will be able to take the reins of the Association immediately after this conference is over. I am grateful to Dr. Usha Thakkar for the very efficient and smooth "Operation Elections" that she carried out. The list of the elected members of the new EC is given.

Reports of the Secretary and the Treasurer will give you the details of the generous grants that we have received from several donors during these two years and which made our many plans for the Association's activities and for this well-provided conference a reality. I am personally very grateful to Kamla Bhasin for her role in achieving this. Without her constant help and advice, I at least would not have known how to go about this. Chhaya, with the help of the Maharashtra Stree Abhyas Vyaspeeth has managed all the details of the conference. Sitting in Calcutta, I was not of much help with any of these.

Throughout these two years, Neera Desai has been a great support for me personally. We both go back a long way in the history of Women's Studies and movement in this country. I remember the first occasion when I met her in 1978 at the IDS conference on the Subordination of Women at the Sussex University. That our ideas constantly jelled well together was perhaps due to the similarity in our ages; but it was also because we share a very live interest in the issues related to gender in India. Although Neera was not an office bearer in the EC, she has continued to put in seminal work in the cause of the Association as witnessed by the draft she has prepared for amendments to the IAWS constitution. Rohini Gawankar, another old friend, came to this EC with considerable experience of its work. On a number of occasions, her cool common sense put the breaks on our runaway ideas. I am grateful for her continued support and friendship.

Members of the Association, I invite you to the proceedings of this general body meeting of the IAWS.