



The Right Livelihood Award

for outstanding vision and work on behalf of our planet and its people

Vandana Shiva (India)

(1993)



...for placing women and ecology at the heart of modern development discourse.

Vandana Shiva

Dr. Vandana Shiva is trained as a Physicist and did her Ph.D. on the subject Hidden Variables and Non-locality in Quantum Theory at the University of Western Ontario in Canada. She later shifted to inter-disciplinary research in science, technology and environmental policy, which she carried out at the Indian Institute of Science and the Indian Institute of Management in Bangalore, India. In 1982, she left to set up her Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Natural Resource Policy in her home town of Dehra Dun in the foothills of the Himalaya.

Shiva's record has been that of the totally committed, very productive and effective activist-advocate-intellectual. As an activist she has co-ordinated, supported and learned from grassroots networks on a wide range of issues across India. As an advocate, especially in international fora, she has proved one of the most articulate spokespersons of counter-development in favour of people-centered, participatory processes. As an intellectual she has produced a stream of important books and articles, which have done much both to form and address the agenda of development debate and action.

Her foundation is an informal network of researchers, working in support of people's environmental struggles, part of the objective of which is the articulation and justification of people's knowledge. The foundation has done important work in a number of areas, including:

- Agriculture and genetic resources. Shiva's critical analysis of the effects of the Green Revolution, and looking beyond it to the impacts of the 'second' Green Revolution powered by genetic engineering, is of pioneering importance. For more than 15 years, she has been a campaigner on the ethical and ecological impacts of genetic engineering. She has led campaigns on bio-safety and built citizens' responses to the introduction of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in agriculture.
- Biodiversity. She started her work on biodiversity with the Chipko Movement in the 1970s. As with forestry and water, her contribution has gone beyond critique with the launch of a

'people's programme on biodiversity'. She has pioneered the organic movement in India and has built a new movement called Navdanya, the country's biggest network of seed keepers and organic producers, for the conservation of indigenous seeds. Shiva sees biodiversity as intimately linked to cultural diversity and knowledge diversity. She has campaigned nationally and internationally against 'biopiracy' - the patenting of indigenous knowledge. Her book on the subject, *Biopiracy*, deals with the emerging corporate monopolies on the living resources of the poor.

- World Bank and WTO Campaigns. Shiva has been an important figure in putting pressure on the World Bank, which the Bank has been forced to take increasingly seriously. She represented 'Nature' at the People's Tribunal on the World Bank and IMF in Berlin in 1988 and was on the steering group of the People's Forum, which coincided with World Bank meetings in 1991. Shiva has also initiated major movements in India on World Trade Organisation (WTO) issues, especially on intellectual property and agriculture. She is a founding Board member of the International Forum on Globalisation, the citizens' group dedicated to monitoring and intervening on the impact of globalisation. She is currently leading an International Campaign on Food Rights, for people's right to knowledge and food security.
- Ecology and gender. Her book *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology and Survival* (Zed, 1989) has had an international impact. She was a co-chair of the 1991 World Congress on Women and Environment, and she directed a dialogue on 'Women, ecology and health' with the Dag Hammarskjold Foundation, leading to a volume of Development Dialogue edited by her. Shiva has launched a global movement called Diverse Women for Diversity, for the defence of biological and cultural diversity.

Time Magazine identified Dr. Shiva as an environmental hero in 2003, and Asia Week has called her one of the five most powerful communicators of Asia.

Among her many awards are the Order of the Golden Ark, Global 500 Award of the UN, Earth Day International Award, and the Lennon Ono Grant for Peace.

Shiva also serves on the boards of many organizations, including the World Future Council, the International Forum on Globalization and Slow Food International.

Quotation

"The primary threat to nature and people today comes from centralising and monopolising power and control. Not until diversity is made the logic of production will there be a chance for sustainability, justice and peace. Cultivating and conserving diversity is no luxury in our times: it is a survival imperative."

Vandana Shiva