

## NANCY SPENCE



Nancy Spence has spent over 20 years in gender, working at regional and international levels. From 1990-99 she managed a series of initiatives for the Canadian International Development Agency, based in Singapore, to recognize and acknowledge the contribution of women to the fast-growth economies of Southeast Asia. The impact of the Asian Financial crisis of 1997-99 upon Asian women--as producers, employees and consumers, was but one of the projects she supported as Director of the South-East Asian Gender Equity Programme (SEAGEP).

Ensuring women are better equipped *players* in economic growth has been a particular interest of Ms. Spence. While Deputy Director of the Canada-ASEAN Centre, based in Singapore, she helped developed the first ever Can-Asian Business Women's Network to assist women to play more active roles in regional and international business and trade. Recognizing the differential impacts of global trade agreements on women as producers, employees and consumers, she increased efforts for women in the informal sector through support to such networks as Homenet and Streetnet.

Appointed to the Commonwealth Secretariat, London UK (1999-2005) as Director of the Gender Affairs, she continued her support of women's issues through a new publications series that highlighted gender within broader development issues, such as the multi-lateral trade system, finance, and poverty-reduction -- areas seen typically as "gender neutral". She led the Commonwealth's pioneering Gender Budget initiative into global partnerships with UNIFEM; persuaded 53 Commonwealth Finance Ministers to adopt gender budgets and began a Commonwealth Businesswomen's Network: "*Trade matters*".

Today she works from Toronto, Canada, as Director of Economic and Social Development Affiliates (ESDA), a consulting firm.