Gender mainstreaming in trade agreements: "A potemkin facade"?

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Dr. Amrita Bahri Co-Chair Professor, WTO Chair Program (Mexico); Associate Professor of Law, ITAM University; Trade and Gender Consultant, International Trade Centre @bahri_amrita







Problem? Existing Barriers, and how COVID-19 is Magnifying the Impact of Barriers

Solution? Trade Agreements can Help

How? A Look at Good Practice Examples

But can they really help? Why? Why not?



COVID-19 Magnifying the Impact of Barriers

Key Barriers

Access to education (STEM and digital learning)

Access to markets, technology, finance and other productive resources

Time poverty, domestic violence and culturally-prescribed stereotypes

Business and employment restrictions; bans and prohibitions

Unfair working conditions and employment discrimination

Disproportionate tariff and non tariff barriers for trade in goods and services

For more details, see <u>Bahri, Women at the frontline of COVID-19</u>

COVID-19 exacerbating these barriers

COVID-19-Inflicted Challenges

Loss of jobs for 30% of women in service industries (proximity-demanding, low paid and temporary jobs)

740 million women in informal economy, either exposed to contagion risk or face imminent loss of jobs

- Women own close to 10 million of the world's SMEs; SMEs scaling down or facing closures
- Spiralling household responsibilities and domestic violence
- Reduced access to education, owing to lack of digital affordability and know-how
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Restricted access to health facilities, including maternity care and abortive services

Two Approaches: Bottom up or Top down





Why negotiating instruments work?





Ease of negotiating with certain countries (i.e., Canada)



The inclusion of gender provisions is a precondition to negotiate with others (i.e., EU)



\$2.7T

SUB-SH SAHARAN AFRICA

\$2.6T

TO CHAIRS

\$2.9T

\$3.3T

The Business Case: Gender Equality benefits the economy



Trade Agreements can Help: Good Practice Examples The Solution





Focus Areas

Canada, Israel

Labor, Anti-discrimination, Market and resource access, business, Education, Voluntary standards, Research and awareness

USA, Mexico

Labour concerns, anti-discrimination, protection of indigenous women, market access and resource access

Peru, Chile, Ecuador, Argentina, Colombia

Childcare, Labor concerns, Antidiscrimination, market access, development, Women in business, STEM education, Access to finance

European Union

Equality, non-discrimination, education, skill development, health, safety, maternal care, protection from violence, political dialogues, privacy, data protection

East and South Africa

Representation, anti-discrimination, market access, education, awareness, business, development, gender mainstreaming, cultural stereotypes, business training

United Kingdom

Employment of pregnant women, Genderfriendly facilities in transportation, maternity & equivalent paternity benefits and insurance, social security, equality

Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan

Maternity and Health concerns including mandatory insurance for female pregnant migrant workers

South Korea, Singapore, Vietnam, New Zealand

Safety and protection, childcare, maternity, labor concerns, digital inclusion, child nutrition

North Africa and Middle East

Role in economic and social development, Education, Mother and child protection, Family Planning, Childcare, Equality

Australia

Education, Skill development, Market access, Resource access, Women in business, access to digital trade, digital infrastructure and know how

6 Roles of Women

Representatives & decision-makers

foster women's representation in decision-making & positions of authority in public & private sectors;
gender balance in appointment of staff and composition of government divisions and organs;
participation in business at policy formulation & implementation levels

Mothers & consumers

•reservations relating to social services for childcare, maternity, services by midwives;

•better workplace practices for childcare, pregnant workers & recent mothers;

•family planning & mother & child protection programs;

 no workplace re pregnancy & care-giving in respect of employment;

•strengthen development of labor-saving devices to enhance productive capacity



- •eliminate gender-based discrimination and gender-based violence;
- •provide equal wages for women and men in the same establishment;

•build the productive capacity and stability of women workers, for workplace challenges, collective bargaining, evolving technologies, sustainability standards

•skills & education enhancement to improve women's technical employment levels



•promote female entrepreneurship & participation of women-owned SMEs in industries;

encourage education, training & business capacity-building;
develop business networks & improve women's access to resources (finance, information, science, technology & innovation);

•eliminate potentially discriminatory tariff & non-tariff barriers



•strength dialogue and awareness in communities in political, economic, social and cultural spheres, and to change negative attitudes and stereotypes;

- •construct policies to combat violence against women and enhance safety;
- •concessions for indigenous social to promote and preserve language, culture, knowledge, tradition and identity

Contributors to economic development

recognizing women's role in socio-economic transformation
& sustainable growth, and in reduced poverty, prosperity, competitiveness & well-being of society;

•incorporating gender perspective in inclusive and sustainable economic growth;

•promote role of women in economic and social development process through education and the media



Different approaches, but 3 commonalities...

1 Promises and More Promises







3 Lack of Definition



There are Good Reasons! The Hesitations and Impediments



1. Fears of Protectionism and cultural imperialism



4. Cost of compliance, and probability of compliance

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2. Underrepresentation of women in policy-making roles



5. Absence of expertise and paucity of gender disaggregated data



3. Lack of political will



6. Lack of understanding and awareness

Thank you



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