



Challenges of Mainstreaming Gender in Trade Agreements: Role of Development Agencies

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Outline

- A Conceptual Framework for a gender aware approach to international trade
 - The growing significance of international trade
 - Key transmission channels to understanding gender-trade linkages
 - Sector and region specific linkages
- Select Illustrations
- Challenges of mainstreaming gender in trade agreements
- Role of role of development agencies

The growing importance of trade



- On average, world trade has been expanding relatively faster than global output
- World economy is fast becoming more and more integrated driven by a plethora of trade agreements at the bilateral, regional and multilateral levels with binding rules governing trade



Gender-Trade linkages: Key Transmission channels

- Wage and employment effects
- Consumption effects
- Budgetary effects
- Trade rules and autonomous policy space to address existing gender inequities



Select illustrations

- Agreement on Textile and Clothing
- “WTO Plus” TRIPs conditionalities
- Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures
- General Agreement on Trade in Services

Challenges of Gender Mainstreaming



- Widespread assumption that trade is gender neutral and affects both sexes equally
- Relatively new area with a need for intensive sectoral research and in-depth analysis of gender-trade linkages/impacts
- Debate on whether linking of trade with non-trade concerns such as gender may eventually serve to disadvantage developing countries

Suggested role of development agencies



- A broad based holistic approach focused on building awareness and enhancing capacity on gender-gender linkages of at different levels with all key stakeholders going beyond trade issues
- Promoting gender analysis and gender impact assessments, experience sharing across countries/sectors and establishing a dialogue with policy makers
- Support institutionalizing of a process of gender mainstreaming in national trade policy formulation processes both *ex ante* and *ex poste*
- Sustained monitoring of trade agreements and engaging in advocacy for a gender aware approach at national, regional and international fora