

**Committee on Trade and Development
Aid for Trade**

**EXPERT ROUND TABLE MEETING ON THE GENDER
DIMENSION OF AID FOR TRADE**

Background Note

I. OVERVIEW

1. Aid for Trade aims to increase the effective participation of developing countries in the multilateral trading system, with the aim of supporting economic growth and poverty reduction. Various studies have highlighted that trade impacts are not gender-neutral.¹ Mainstreaming a gender dimension in interventions can improve the impact and effectiveness of Aid for Trade.²

2. Mainstreaming a gender dimension into Aid-for-Trade interventions requires aligning national priorities to take account of gender realities and relationships. This implies that national development plans consider the interests of women and mainstream them into national and regional action plans, export strategies and trade-related poverty reduction strategies. Specific monitoring and evaluation indicators may also be needed to evaluate the gender impacts of Aid-for-Trade interventions.

3. To further work on the role of gender in Aid for Trade, the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the International Trade Centre (ITC) plan to organize an expert round table on the "Gender Dimension of Aid for Trade", with support from the Governments of the Republic of Rwanda and the United Kingdom. It is hoped that the meeting will showcase strategic actions for gender mainstreaming that can be used by stakeholders in Aid for Trade. By so doing, it is hoped that the expert meeting will further the consideration of the gender perspective in the Aid-for-Trade initiative.

4. The expert roundtable will be organized around the presentation of a series of case stories sharing national experiences of gender impacts in different areas of Aid-for-Trade support. One particular focus of the round table is to take stock of the work done on mainstreaming gender into the Enhanced Integrated Framework. The use of a case story approach should also provide useful input which can be considered as part of the call for case stories issued by the OECD and WTO in July 2010 in document WT/COMTD/AFT/W/22.

II. APPROACH

5. Experts will be invited to submit case stories detailing measures taken and impact achieved as a result of projects and programmes targeting women and/or gender mainstreaming. The focus will be on examining how women in trade are successfully integrated into and benefit from Aid for Trade. The suggested format to be used for the "case stories" is the one provided in WT/COMTD/AFT/W/22. Examples will be requested across all areas of Aid-for-Trade assistance:

¹ See for example: "*ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme and Cross Border Trade: Experiences of Women's Traders and Entrepreneurs*", 2007 study by ECOWAS Gender Development Centre (EGDC).

² For more information, see for example: "*Gender Equality, Export Performance and Competitiveness. The Gender Dimension of Export Strategy*", International Trade Centre.

- (a) trade-related technical assistance (i.e. trade policy and regulation);
- (b) trade development;
- (c) trade-related infrastructure (i.e. transport and storage, communications, energy supply and generation);
- (d) building trade capacity (i.e. business, banking, agriculture, forestry, fishing, industry, mining, and tourism);
- (e) trade-related adjustment; and
- (f) other trade-related programmes.

III. OUTPUTS

6. It is envisaged that the expert meeting will produce a series of case stories which could be used as part of the call for case stories made by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the WTO. Depending on the relevance and volume of outputs received, either the individual case stories or a summary document could be submitted by 31 January 2011 as part of the evidence-based assessment in preparation for the Third Global Review of Aid for Trade in July 2011.

7. Further outputs from the meeting may also include:

- (a) Agreement to a process for the preliminary development of a methodology, including possible indicators, to better integrate and evaluate the role of women in trade in Aid-for-Trade processes and activities to ensure that they will benefit from the initiative; and
- (b) The establishment of a network of gender and trade experts that governments, core agencies and others could engage to provide advice/implement activities/work on monitoring and evaluation to secure benefits to women under Aid for Trade.

8. Conclusions arising from the expert roundtable on the "Gender Dimension of Aid for Trade" will be shared with the Committee on Trade and Development. A specific session on gender mainstreaming is being organized as part of the Workshop on "Mainstreaming of Aid for Trade", to be held on 26 October 2010.

IV. LOGISTICS

9. The expert roundtable, jointly organized by the WTO and ITC, with the support of the Governments of the Republic of Rwanda and the United Kingdom, will bring together approximately 20 experts in a one-day meeting. The experts will be drawn from the public and private sectors of least-developed and developing countries together with selected non-governmental organizations (NGOs) specializing in gender and trade. The meeting is open to Members and Observers.

10. The meeting will be held at the WTO on Monday, 25 October 2010 from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. An agenda will be faxed to delegations in due course.
