



Trade and Gender Briefing for CEDAW members

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Briefing Outline

The trade & gender agenda

State of play in 2022

What place for CEDAW

CEDAW, macro-economics and trade

CEDAW past practice

Issues to raise in dialogues with States parties

General

Country-specific

Future work





The trade & gender agenda.

- Gender equality/women's economic empowerment in bilateral and regional trade agreements.
- 2017 Buenos Aires Declaration on Trade and Women's Economic Empowerment
- "Trade and gender / sustainable development" chapters in bilateral and regional trade agreements
- WTO Informal Working Group
- "Inclusive trade" momentum
- Narrow gender lens
- Unclear terminology and objectives
- Focus on some women's roles only
- "Inclusive trade" has different meanings
- Scant reference to CEDAW
- Little participation of women's rights advocates



"We must take a 360° approach to understanding the role international trade and trade rules can play in enhancing—or undermining—gender equality, women's rights, and economic empowerment."

[IISD, Five Key Elements for a Gender Lens in Trade](#)

Women's rights concerns about the trade and gender agenda.

Focus on women as traders

Not enough attention to women in their multiple economic roles:

- Workers
- Consumers
- Users of public services
- Tax payers
- Rights-holders

Unclear terminology and objectives

Gender equality

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Women's economic empowerment

≠

Women's rights

≠

Women's access to international markets

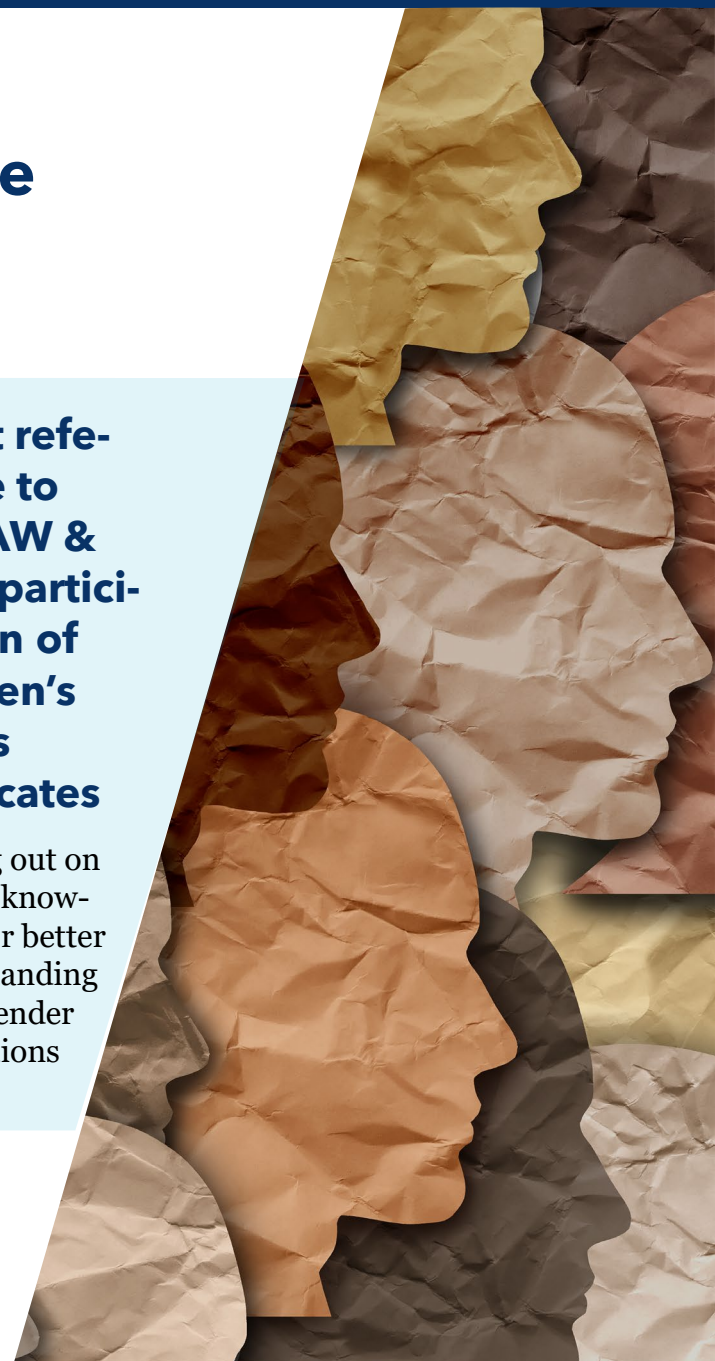
"Inclusive trade" has different meanings

... and inclusion can be harmful

Necessary to look at the terms of inclusion.

Scant reference to CEDAW & little participation of women's rights advocates

Missing out on needed knowledge for better understanding trade-gender interactions






CEDAW, macroeconomics and trade.

- Equality in domains such as education, access to resources, time availability will affect women's ability to benefit from new trade opportunities.
- CEDAW regularly raises macro-economic related issues with States parties (see e.g. Denmark 2021, Ecuador 2021, Egypt 2022).
- Trade and trade-related rules will impact different women differently. Impacts will differ depending on the country, the sector and other factors.
- CEDAW has raised questions relating to international trade with States parties (impact assessments, data availability and trade-related intellectual property (TRIPs)).

CEDAW's engagement with States parties is a welcome opportunity to get beyond the headlines of "trade is good for women" or "trade is bad for women"



There is a gap in knowledge within the trade community of the full range of ways that trade and trade-related rules affect women. And few people in the women's rights community engage with trade policy.



CEDAW can play a role in filling these gaps. In doing so, it can contribute to developing better knowledge about how trade and trade rules impact women, improve trade officials' understanding of the women's rights framework, and ensure that economic policy-makers take a 360° view of their impacts on women.



Issues to raise with States parties.

What we want to get at

- Trade changes the structure of the economy: who will win, who will lose? What steps are taken to protect those most vulnerable to, or adversely affected by, the shocks?
- Deregulatory aspects of new trade rules (liberalization of services trade, e-commerce, government procurement): will the new regulations affect women more than men? Will the new regulations reduce governments' ability to take temporary special measures?
- Tariff reductions and reduced corporate taxes affect a government's income and such steps may be inconsistent with governments' obligation to devote maximum available resources to the realization of human rights.

Those most vulnerable to trade reforms and trade shocks are often not visible to trade policy-makers

Issues that CEDAW could raise with States parties.

All countries

When applying a gender lens to your trade policies, do you take a 360° approach, considering women in their multiple roles (including as carers, rights-holders and users of public services) and considering how proposed trade rules in different areas affect efforts to achieve equality between men and women?

Have you (or do you plan to) negotiate tariff reductions for imports? Do you offer foreign investors tax reductions? If so, what is the impact of these measures on government revenue? If they are likely to result in a loss of revenue, how will you compensate for this?

Do you (your trading partner) rely on women's cheaper labour as a source of competitive advantage for labour-intensive export-oriented production?

How do you monitor the impacts of planned trade and trade agreements on women and on men?

Please ensure that CEDAW's recommendations relating to trade policy are conveyed to your ministry with responsibility for trade, and report to CEDAW on these matters in your next report.

OECD countries

Within the WTO, what steps are you taking to apply a broad gender lens to all areas of the WTO's work?

Do you assist your partner countries in trade agreements to conduct gender impact assessments of planned or existing trade agreements?

Issues that CEDAW could raise with States parties.

Countries currently engaged in negotiating trade agreements

What steps have you taken to ensure that any commitments you enter into in terms of investment protection, government procurement or services trade liberalization will continue to enable you to take temporary special measures to facilitate women's access to education, jobs, training and markets, and protect them from competition from imports?

What is the proportion of women on your trade delegation?

What consultations have you held with women's groups, beyond chambers of commerce, about how they experience impacts of trade liberalization, and what risks to them might be of the areas that the planned trade agreement will cover?

How is the ministry responsible for gender equality / social affairs / women's affairs involved in formulating your country's trade policy?

How does the planned trade agreement respond to structural gender inequalities and are you taking steps to dismantle these inequalities? Please describe steps you are taking to ensure that new trade agreements will not reinforce existing inequalities.

African countries

Please describe how your country's National Implementation Strategy for AfCFTA promotes equality between men and women. Please do not limit your response to measures to enable women traders to access international markets, but ways in which trade reforms may affect particularly vulnerable women, such as subsistence farmers,

Future work.

**Country-
by-
country.**

**Meetings
with
feminist
economists.**

**Exploration
of
pathways
of impact.**

Other ideas....



Thank You!

For more information

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