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A Bird Cannot Fly With Just One Wing: Towards a Gender-Balanced Trading System

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Abstract

Although we know that women are the majority of the poor and low skilled workers, there is very little known on the impact of trade liberalization on them, partly because of lack of gender-disaggregated data in trade statistics, and partly because of lack of gender awareness in economic analysis. This paper discusses the issue of trade liberalization and gender gap in general, then the issue of trade liberalization and women employment specifically since employment is a very important issue especially in developing countries for poverty reduction. Agriculture is extremely important for developing countries' economy that is why the paper discusses the impact of trade liberalization on women farmers. Finally the paper discusses the policy recommendations whether national- level policy recommendations or international ones to be able to move towards a gender- balanced trading system.

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“If the playing field is level and all the rules are clearly defined, we will all excel” Reverend Jessie Jackson

I. Introduction

The institutional framework of the Multilateral Trading System (MTS) is based on the assumption that trade policies and agreements are gender neutral. Because trade is an aggregate like all macroeconomic components, economists assume that trade policies and agreements do not have any differential impact on men and women. This underlying assumption has led to the neglect of gender as a variable in trade policy making. Such an assumption is false because the structure of the social power relationships between men and women shape their access to and command over resources such as land, financial resources, education, ... etc, all of which are essential for men and women to benefit from trade. Trade has very different impacts on men and women due to gender roles and relationships of unequal power. An understanding of the relationship between gender and trade is critical in the current global environment. Although gender issues are not explicitly mentioned in the Doha Development Agenda (DDA), the commitments have important implications for gender equity. While the DDA is a long way from addressing all the critical issues raised by the trade liberalization agenda and the MTS, the inclusion of development issues in the agenda holds great potential for the integration of gender as a cross-cutting theme.

Trade policies affect women's employment, access to markets, production, consumption patterns and social relations. The globalization of markets is placing local sustainability under siege, a critical issue for women, particularly women engaged in subsistence agriculture, local marketing, micro-enterprise and other processes of the informal economy.

Trade liberalization can be both positive and negative for women. For example, women who previously had no paid employment may have greater opportunities for employment in new businesses such as information and communication technology (ICT) firms or small export enterprises. Trade liberalization has also ushered in agricultural policies that promote the farming of cash crops for export over food staples. As cash crops tend to be farmed by men, they are in a better position than women to benefit from such policy shifts.

Although we know that women are the majority of the poor and low-skilled workers, there is very little known on the impact of trade liberalization on them, partly because of lack of gender-disaggregated data in trade statistics, and partly because of lack of gender awareness in economic analysis.

Some donor agencies, for example, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), have developed trade- related capacity- building (TRCB) initiatives that include a gender component because the relationship between gender and trade is a new issue for governments, trade policy makers, the World Trade Organization (WTO), and for academic researchers. CIDA is initiating, for example, the Gender Equality and African Institutions project (GEARI) to assist it's key Pan- African partner organizations to integrate gender equality results into their analysis, planning, implementation and monitoring of their policies and programmes.

This paper is organized as follows. Section II discusses the issue of trade liberalization and gender gap in general. Since employment is a very important issue especially in developing countries for poverty reduction, section III is devoted to trade liberalization and women employment issues. Agriculture is extremely important for developing countries' economy that is why section IV discusses the impact of trade liberalization on women farmers. Finally section V discusses the policy recommendations whether national- level policy recommendations or international ones to be able to move towards a gender-balanced trading system.

II. Trade Liberalization and Gender Gap in General:

The different roles given to men and women constitute what is called the 'gender division of labour', in which certain forms of work (physical labour, cash- crop farming, managerial role) are seen as 'men's work'. On the other hand, care work and home working, for example, are highly feminized activities that are directly related to women's responsibilities within the home and the extension of their domestic tasks. Such work is characteristically underpaid and non- regulated. Many societies believe that men are stronger, more intelligent and work better than women. These societies also give men the chance to develop other characteristics by giving them access to education, training and experience. Men are seen as being able to focus more completely on their work because they do not have maternity and childcare responsibilities, which are seen as women's responsibilities. All of this means that men are more highly valued, given more responsibility and paid more.

In most developing countries, women continue to exist in roles and relationships that make them subordinate to men. These inequalities severely limit their capacity to engage in and benefit from trade. As underlying gender systems in most of these countries are grounded in biases and discrimination against women, shifts in trade policy in accordance with global trade rules will inevitably impact on the underlying system of gender relations. Women entrepreneurs for example face many obstacles, they often have limited access to the training and information they need to market and sell their products internationally, they must also contend with trade policies that do not adequately take into account the needs of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), which are often run by women. At present, many women entrepreneurs are isolated in micro- businesses. As such they do not belong to the larger networks, such as chambers of commerce, and are not invited to export workshops. Nor do they have the same access as men to export support services and export training. In their isolation, they sometimes lose confidence in their ability to go global and succeed. Barriers to women entrepreneurs' participation in international trade range from lack of business skills, to lack of knowledge of the rules governing international trade transactions and of technical regulations and standards to be respected in order to gain access to specific export markets. Evidence from East Africa, for example, suggests that trade policy discussions tend to be restricted to a small group of insiders, where the interests of women entrepreneurs are often not taken into account, and important information on new trade rules and their likely implications do not enter the public domain (Evans, 2002).

Market access and enterprise development have been touted as fundamental policies through which developing countries will be enabled to engage in international trade. However, in general, liberalization policies have not significantly increased women's access to credit for entrepreneurial activities. This is because structural gender inequalities in property rights and ownership mean that women have fewer assets that can serve as collateral. Women have limited assets than men, including for example land and

capital. Disparities in the ownership of these assets may result from law or practice, or both, and are often exacerbated by gender disparities in access to education and training. Rather than introducing policies to support women's access to credit, profit- driven liberalization policies have perpetuated the discrimination against poor women in the mainstream financial market by focusing on urban areas and the more profitable economic sectors. This excludes poor women who are concentrated in the informal sector and operate mostly in SMEs (Randriamaro 2006). As a result, poor women and other disadvantaged groups have to rely on the informal financial sector for both their survival and economic activities. These constraints faced by women may also limit the effectiveness of trade policy changes.

The ability of women producers to engage in trade, to expand non- traditional agricultural exports and generate sufficient surplus to reinvest in non- traditional export crops, as well as to meet subsistence and household needs, is constrained by a number of factors, including scale of operations, time constraints because of multiple roles, unequal access to credit and gender roles which act as barriers to business development.

Gender is excluded from the WTO frame of reference. The talks in Hong Kong confirmed that the WTO is explicitly concerned with barriers to, and rules for, trade liberalization. At the very few side events in Hong Kong's Convention Centre which referred to the gender- trade nexus, advocates of trade liberalization contended that market opening and WTO agreements create the optimal preconditions and mechanisms to generate gender equality and growth, making the assumption that growth will open opportunities for better education, more jobs and income, more credit and entrepreneurship for women. While feminists analyze the adverse impacts of trade liberalization on women's livelihood, proponents of liberalization focus on success stories of career women. Once again at Hong Kong, no space was provided in the texts for gender justice arguments. WTO Director General Pascal Lamy, stated that in the end only one imbalance was left at the negotiation table that is the gender gap since only three of thirty ministers in the decisive Green Room were female, his flagging up of the gender gap in this context was instrumental in showing power inequities in the negotiations.

Although concerns have been raised about the negative impacts of trade liberalization, there is little attention to, and research on, the differentiated impact of trade agreements on men and women; and even less on the two- way relationship between gender and trade. Nevertheless, the pattern of gender relations is importantly related to trade, while at the same time gender relations do influence trade outcomes. A growing body of research confirms that trade policies and agreements are gender blind. Trade is discussed in economic and political terms, but the differential social and economic impact of changing trade patterns on men and women has not been considered relevant (Catagay, 2001).

Most governments, in developed countries as well as in developing countries, have adopted policies on gender equality over the past decade. Since the United Nations (UN) Women's conference that was held in Beijing in 1995, a gender perspective is being integrated in a wide variety of policy areas. Gender

equality and women's empowerment are no longer regarded as a separate policy area, this mainstreaming of gender into a variety of policy areas reflects the acknowledgment that gender equality cannot be achieved without changes in a wide variety of policies, including trade policies. The Beijing Platform for Action explicitly refers to trade policies as an area of concern for gender mainstreaming. One paragraph urges governments to ensure that trade agreements will not have negative impacts on women, while another paragraph advises governments to closely monitor trade and other policies, in order to prevent that negative impacts might arise (UN, 1995). In these two paragraphs, governments are advised to:

Para 165 K: "Seek to ensure that national policies related to international and regional trade agreements do not have an adverse impact on women's new and traditional economic activities."

Para 165 P: "Use gender- impact analysis in the development of macro and micro- economic and social policies in order to monitor such impact and restructure policies in cases where harmful impact occurs."

But UN recommendations need to be turned into concrete policy measures in order to have an impact. Non- Governmental Organizations (NGOs) have been lobbying the WTO, UN organizations, the European Commission (EC), and individual governments, to take gender issues into account in the design, implementation, and monitoring of trade agreements. However, the response has been limited. The EC, for example, adopted a regulation on gender equality in development cooperation in 1998, which was followed up by a more elaborate regulation in 2004, emphasizing gender mainstreaming in all European Union (EU) policies and activities. In practice, however, only a few policy areas are mentioned; trade is not mentioned in the 2004 regulation, and mentioned only as a potential area for mainstreaming in a report on equal opportunities in the EU. At the same time the EC Directorate General of Trade has developed an initiative for "sustainability impact analysis" of trade, which provides a clear opportunity for the EU to mainstream gender concerns in its trade reviews, along with social and environmental concerns.

There is occupational segregation in the global labor market. In agriculture, men tend to control the production of export crops in small- scale operations and be bosses in large agribusiness. Women and children provide the labor for family farming activities. In some countries, women are recruited as laborers for non- traditional export crops like flowers in Latin America and East Africa. In the manufacturing sector, women often are the majority of assembly workers, particularly in industries such as textiles, clothing, electronics and small consumer items.

The selling of the image of beautiful, friendly, hospitable local women as part of tourism promotion, the sexual harassment of female traders by customs agents and border guards, as well as the forced pregnancy testing and mandatory "beauty contests" of female factory workers in Export- Processing Zones (EPZs), reveal how men use their gender position to keep women in their economic place to the possible personal benefit of some men.

No country undertaking trade liberalization does so from a starting point of equality between men and women. If women are disproportionately excluded from the benefits of trade liberalization, or bear a heavier burden of the costs of adjustment, the result will be an increase in gender inequality. This is not only costly for women, but it further complicates the challenge of poverty reduction. Gender inequality itself limits growth, which may be a further constraint in achieving pro- poor impacts from trade liberalization.

Women largely perform necessary but unpaid family labour. Women continue to be responsible for a larger share than men of the work necessary to maintain families and the labour force (e.g. food preparation, household maintenance and care of the children and the sick). These tasks are a major part of women's workloads. Where trade liberalization results in falling incomes, and greater pressures on women to increase income- earning activities, the result can be even greater pressures on women's time and health and, thus, an intensification of other forms of deprivation. Other coping mechanisms could include the withdrawal of girls from school to assist with household work, with a different set of long- term costs.

As for trade liberalization and gender gap in education we can say that Elson (1999) points out the increased participation of women in the low- skilled labor market is often accompanied by reduced male participation and increased enrollment of men in secondary and tertiary education. In low- skilled developing countries where a gender gap in education exists, trade- related employment trends have the potential to establish an employment structure that lowers women's incentives to invest in higher education while allowing more opportunities for skills up- gradation for men. Therefore existing gender gaps in education are reinforced and widened.

Vijaya (2003) argues that young women who must respond to the demands of family are particularly likely to leave school for the immediate rewards of an apparel factory job, so in low- skilled developing countries where a gender gap in education exists, trade- related employment trends have the potential to establish an employment structure that lowers women's incentives to invest in higher education. Thus apparel export jobs, for example, are not a ladder up but it's a poverty trap for women. Why poverty trap? Because short-term income rises, but long-term poverty persists due to education gap, since it reduce school attendance. Young workers trapped in dead-end apparel jobs (Gruben, Mcleod and Davalos, 2006).

III. Trade Liberalization and Women's Employment issues:

Since employment is a very important issue especially in developing countries for poverty reduction, this section discusses the impact of trade liberalization on women's employment, the gender wage gap and women's paid and unpaid work.

As for women's employment we can say that trade liberalization typically results in an increase in labor-intensive exports from developing countries. Production of many of these exports requires manual dexterity and stamina but not great physical strength. The growth of exports such as garments, shoes, jewelry, and electronics has almost always been accompanied by a significant increase in female employment in the formal sector. Women workers have reported an enhancement of their self-esteem and they appreciated the expanded social opportunities and life choices that wage employment brings (Tiano and Fiala, 1991; Amin et al., 1998). This also sets in train a greater change in gender relations, by shifting parents' perceptions of girls as a liability towards viewing them as potential income earners and contributors to the household. Attitudes and incentives for educating girls are improved as a result (Kabeer, 1995).

Women's lack of skills relative to men increases the likelihood that they are employed as temporary workers, with little ability to negotiate wages or work conditions. In fact, many employers often prefer to hire women because they can be paid lower wages and seem easy to control and less likely to join unions, making it very easy to abuse and exploit them without consequences. A large influx of unskilled women workers into the labor force, caused by the expansion of export industries, may exert downward pressure on their wages. Because of their weaker bargaining power, women are often the victims of international cost competition. For example, as a result of North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA), many women in Mexico have found jobs in the Mexican EPZs' factories (maquiladoras) and the number of women employed in the export sector is growing fast, and these women are among the lowest paid, doing the most exploitive jobs, with no job security or social protection (Spielloch, 2004). If one walks through a Mexican EPZ, one can see maquiladoras displaying big banners advertising assembly jobs for women. Human rights groups have begun to challenge the practice of maquiladoras that require mandatory pregnancy testing. These companies rejected pregnant women as new hires so they would not have to pay for maternity leave. In fact, in Latin America, women account for 70 to 90 percent of workers in the EPZs. In Mexico, for example, many foreign companies show a preference for women workers, in part because women accept lower wages than men, moreover, they tend to be willing to work under worse conditions than men (for lack of other alternatives). Many women workers in Mexico earn as little as 56- 77 cents an hour and often work 50- 80 hours per week (Karadenizli, 2002). Another example is Taiwan when they wanted to push manufactured exports, the government created specialized programs, "Living Rooms As Factories" and "Mothers' Workshops", to encourage married women to be part of a sub- contracting boom fueling exports while juggling family responsibilities. At the same time, these

programs reinforced men's authority over women by enabling these men to be the owners of these small-scale factories.

Although women are the heartbeat of trading in Africa- since they carry on their heads more goods per kilo than transported by lorries, trains, or planes (Economist, 2006)- but they are over represented in low- paid export- oriented sectors such as horticultural, floricultural sectors and in fisheries. In the manufacturing sector, they are the majority of assembly workers (textiles and clothing). Women were also found to be in the minority at supervisory and managerial levels, locking them into jobs whose pay levels were reported as insufficient in meeting their basic family needs. In Madagascar, for example, there is evidence of continued inequality in the types of jobs created for women compared with men. Close to 80 percent of male workers have permanent salaried positions while the corresponding figure for women is about 57 percent. In addition, 17 percent of women have temporary jobs, as compared with only 3 percent of men. The median wage for men is higher than that of women (about \$47 compared with \$28 respectively) (Clones, 2003).

Armah (1994) studied trade effects on women's employment in the services sector in the USA. He found that women are more often employed in trade- sensitive services sectors than men; moreover, women appeared to be more vulnerable to employment losses due to international trade than men, with minority women being most vulnerable. In a follow- up article, Armah (1995) found that male workers in the USA benefited more from trade- related employment gains in the services sector than female workers, even though men in this sector were less educated and less skilled compared to female employees. He argued that over time, employment gains from trade in the services sector are decreasing, and women's gains; particularly minority women's gains are decreasing at the fastest rate. In fact, gender discrimination remains one of the key features of labour markets, not only in developing countries, but also in developed countries as well. In many societies, men tend to dominate most of the occupations associated with high responsibility, job security, rapid career advancement, dignity, social status and high earning, while women are relegated to the low- paid jobs. It has been argued that women's relegation into low- paid jobs in the formal economy is about more than simply educational qualifications. It is also about the way that power is acquired, maintained and used (Kottis, 1993). Kottis explains further that career managers need to acquire 'informal power' in addition to their educational qualifications. The implication is that even women with high educational qualifications may be excluded from the informal social networks and events where such informal power is acquired. The result is their low representation in high positions and high- paid occupations in the formal economy.

Trade liberalization may be accompanied by a rise in female unemployment rates, as Ghosh (1996) shows for Asia over the 1980s and early 1990s. Joeques (1995) notes that the percentage of (unskilled) females in the labour force might peak at a certain level and then fall again over time, as the export structure of the economy moves up to skilled products where (skilled) males outweigh females. Reviewing evidence from a variety of sources, Joeques concludes that in the contemporary era no strong export performance

in manufactures by any developing country has ever been secured without reliance on female- intensive labour including textiles, apparel, electronics, leather products and food processing. In the case of manufacturing industry, women are crowded into a narrow range of sectors that produce standardized commodities that compete on the basis of price alone. In fact, many countries have used low wages for women as a basis to build their export capacity and compete internationally.

Women experience frequent hiring, firing, and relocation from one job to another. A study of Chile covering a period of rapid adjustment, including trade liberalization, shows that firms tend to lay off a slightly higher proportion of female workers when business declines and to hire more women when business recovers (Levinsohn, 1999). Female employees also had significantly higher job relocation rates, a result also found in a study of Turkey (Ozler, 2001). These studies illustrate the precarious nature of women's jobs in the manufacturing sector, with frequent spells of unemployment and a reduced ability to negotiate wages and working conditions.

In many African countries trade liberalization has led to increased unemployment [The Gender and Economic Reforms in Africa (GERA) Programme, 2000], as it leads to the contraction of some sub-sectors and the expansion of others which may require different skills and/or fewer workers. Women tend to work in industries such as the footwear industry, in which capital is more mobile. These industries are more sensitive to foreign competition and are most likely to contract at periods of economic downturn. Women are more affected by retrenchment than men, who are perceived as the breadwinners in society.

The GERA research also found that female workers in the shoe factories in South Africa and those in Madagascar's garment industry, for example, were denied sufficient rest periods when they get pregnant. They were routinely told, 'pregnancy is not a disease', anytime they complain of fatigue and discomfort. In both Madagascar and South Africa, female workers spoke of several incidences of involuntary abortions, which they attributed to work pressures. In case of illness, they have to deal with health officers who invariably offer them painkillers and cheap antibiotics and almost no time off.

The main argument of the proponents of free market policies is that increased trade liberalization can improve economic growth, which in turn can increase women's participation in the labour market. There have been increased employment opportunities in non- traditional agriculture such as cut flowers, and clothing and textiles, and also in the electronics- oriented EPZs and the services sector. Paid employment can improve women's autonomy as well as their economic and social status. It can also shift power relations between men and women, including at the household level, and can improve women's well-being, negotiating power and overall status (Fontana, Joeke and Masika, 1998; Tzannatos, 1999). In fact, the opportunities that market participation provides to women depend on women's capabilities to convert the means available to them into the ends that they want to achieve.

However, the picture is not as clear- cut as this might suggest. The structure of domestic labour markets and global production chains is highly gendered. Despite the advantages- in many contexts- trade

liberalization is coupled with persistent occupational segregation by sex, both vertical which refers to the distribution of men and women in the job hierarchy in terms of status and occupation, and horizontal which refers to the distribution of men and women across occupations. All the examples mentioned above are of industries that require large numbers of low- cost workers, mostly women that not only supply a cheaper workforce, but also are supposedly more docile. In fact, the internal culture of different organizations generally reflects and perpetuates norms and customs that prevail in broader society. Within such organizations invisible barriers to promotion create a 'glass ceiling' that bars women from top management positions. Even women who break through the glass walls and ceilings often encounter glass barriers of traditions, preconceptions, and biases that keep them out of senior managers' club and away from decision making, thus they get stuck in lower leadership positions where their work is not acknowledged.

As for trade liberalization and gender wage gap we can say that in a study on effects of import competition on the gender wage gap in Taiwan and Korea, Berik, Gunseli, Van der Meulen and Zveglic Jr. (2003) have challenged the hypothesis that more competition reduces gender discrimination in wages. They found that increased competition was positively correlated with wage discrimination against women, probably due to a reduction in women's bargaining power.

Some studies point out that gender inequality in wages stimulated growth in semi- industrialized economies such as Thailand. In these cases, the pressure for flexible prices leads to an increase in employment for women, who have lower wages than men since they have less bargaining power. This implies that export-led growth is achieved at the expense of women (Seguino, 2000).

Thus, for South Asia, for example, industrial export success depends largely on wage discrimination against women. 'Thanks' to the low wages paid to women (about 75 percent of men's wages), countries like Korea, Taiwan and Singapore were able to export products with low prices.

Seguino (2000) argues that the availability of low- wage female export labor and continuing gender wage gap can act as a stimulus to export investment. The earnings from this export sector are then used to purchase more capital- intensive technologies that accelerate overall economic growth. However the new capital- intensive production processes employ higher skilled men while women are stuck in the low- skilled export sector. Thus, we can see the de- feminization of employment in the later stages of export- led growth, when the mix of exports begins to use more skilled labour, as can be seen, for example, in Mexico and Singapore (Joekes, 1999). This suggests that the phenomenon of feminization of employment itself may be only a temporary one.

The World Bank (1995:107) reports that 'in Latin America adjustment episodes the hourly earnings of women declined even more dramatically than those of men, partly because women were concentrated in hard- hit low- paying sectors such as apparel'. Even in countries where wage inequalities are not increasing,

as in those Asian countries that relied heavily on female labour for export- led industrialization, the gender wage gap has not diminished and in some cases widened (Seguino, 1997). Although trade liberalization seems to advantage women in terms of employment, their ‘competitive advantage’ as workers lies in their lower pay and poorer working conditions.

Indeed, much of women’s trade- related gains in employment have taken place in EPZs, however, conditions in these EPZs are characterized by long hours, job insecurity and unhealthy working conditions as well as low pay, and in many cases, women also experience sexual harassment and other forms of gender- based discrimination such as pregnancy tests. This is not surprising, since many EPZs have been designed to exempt firms from local labour laws (Sen and Gown, 1987). While it has been argued that women’s wages and working conditions in export- oriented production, particularly in multinationals, are better than the alternatives, including joblessness, and thus preferred by women employed in such establishments (Kabeer, 2000), this merely indicates how harsh conditions are for women in general rather than showing a reduction in gender inequalities in employment and earnings (Sen and Gown, 1987).

There is some anecdotal evidence of international connections between gender inequality and trade. Rodrik (2000) reported that Mauritius, for example, set out on development strategy that depended on operating an EPZ. The segmentation of the labour force along gender lines, with female workers predominantly employed in the EPZ, was crucial, as it ensured a large additional pool of low- wage workers. Male workers, in contrast, have been able to preserve their status in the remaining sectors of the economy. In another example, Bhattacharya and Rahman (1999) observed that women in Bangladesh are likely to be pushed into low- skilled/ low- wage jobs in the ready- made garments industry, which might explain Bangladesh’s export success in this sector.

Busse and Spielman (2005) in a cross-country study (92 developed and developing countries) found out that the gender wage gap tends to be higher for countries with comparative advantage in labour- intensive products.

Despite the fact that more women may be earning a wage external to the household, the gap between their wages and those of men is far from being closed (UNCTAD 2004) although this is largely dependent on the type of employment. Industries that began by employing lots of low- cost women workers may begin to embrace new technologies, at which point women are laid off and more men are employed at higher wages due to the skills required. Women’s wages will continue to remain lower than those of men while they lag behind in education and training opportunities (Joekes, 1999). Even when the available data suggests a reduction in wage differences, this may be the result of a decline in men’s wages rather than an increase in women’s wages (Kabeer, 2003). The persistent gender wage gap undermines the long- term sustainability of women’s livelihoods.

Finally, for trade and women’s paid and unpaid work we can say that Floro (1995) analyzed a variety of case studies on combined effects of macroeconomic reform and export orientation on women’s unpaid

domestic work in developing countries. She concludes that women bear most the burden of adjustments, increasing both their paid and unpaid labour time and increasing the intensity of their work. Export expansion may provide more paid work to women while trade liberalization will likely have indirect effects on women's unpaid work via its effects on public finance. Tax revenue from trade taxes has fallen in many developing countries. This has led to reductions in public expenditure (measured as a share of GDP) on infrastructure, education and health. In turn, this is likely to increase women's unpaid work burden, as they will try to produce substitutes for public services. In addition to having to take on added caring responsibilities with the reduction in social spending, the pressure to produce for export drives people out of subsistence farming where caring responsibilities could often be incorporated into productive work or shared among family members. Moreover, although paid employment outside the home can be an advantage to women in many ways; the work needed to reproduce and care for the labour force often means a double work burden. Finally, during periods of economic downturn, women's unpaid work within the household further increases. When household incomes fall and there is less money available to pay for labour- saving devices or for assistance in caring roles for children or the elderly, women move in to make up the shortfall. These are also the times when women are more likely to take on informal work to boost domestic finances.

As well as trade having an impact on unpaid work, unpaid work may also impact on trade outcomes. Women's heavy burden of household responsibilities, as well as their weaker property rights to land and other resources, are likely to have contribute to the weak supply response of African agriculture to export opportunities in countries such as Burkina Faso, Tanzania, Togo and Zambia (Tibaijuka, 1994). In Togo, for example, virtually all customary systems of landholding bar women from owning land. Women are allowed to work on the land, only with her husband's permission or that of her original family if not married. Marriage is a mean of obtaining access to land, but a somewhat precarious one, since the breakup of the marriage may deny the access at any time. The system increases the risk of nutritional deficiency within the household, given the predominant role played by women in food crop production and has implications on the ability of women to make long term investments in land, such as through cash cropping (ECA, 2008).

In summary, given the centrality of women's work, not only in the international trade system but also for poverty reduction, an approach to poverty that sees trade as gender neutral is likely to have a negative impact on women's well- being and on their ability to claim entitlements and rights (Ravazi, 1997; Jackson and Palmer- Jones, 1998). In reality, trade policies continue to affect men and women differently due to gender inequalities in access to land, information, economic resources and decision- making (Fontana, Joeques and Masika, 1998).

IV. Trade Liberalization and Women Farmers:

The logic of competition and 'free trade' enshrined in the WTO's Agreement on Agriculture (AoA) has been applied to an uneven- playing field that pits smallholder agriculture, many of which are women against transnational agro- business. The inability of smallholder agriculture to compete has worsened the problem of landlessness and food insecurity in many poor developing countries.

Many women farmers in developing countries are increasingly losing domestic markets to cheap food imports from developed countries. This puts a downward pressure on farm gate prices and along with the removal of subsidies (for fertilizers and assistance with irrigation) creates extreme hardship for women farmers as well as for women in their roles as providers of family well being. In these cases, women must increase the time spent in home food processing since there is inadequate income to purchase foodstuff on the market.

Although women, in their role as consumers, may benefit from lower prices of imported goods, women who are small- scale producers may be negatively affected by these policies. For example, in Senegal, women had switched to growing tomatoes and they had taken out micro- credit loans to start producing tomato paste. However, when the government lowered tariffs on food imports due to trade liberalization, cheap foreign tomatoes flooded the market, so women could not pay back the loans, thus they ended up in worse economic shape than when they had started out (Sparr, 2002). Moreover, the reduction in government revenue due to less money coming in from tariffs may have an impact on the amount of money available for national spending on social services, money which tends to be more important to women in their roles as carers.

With regard to smallholder women's increasing participation in cash cropping, it has been suggested that these women status is not significantly improved. Katz (1995) found in Guatemala's smallholder export sector that although wives work in almost all agricultural tasks of vegetable cash cropping, the male household head is the manager, makes most of the decisions, markets the harvest, and controls the income from production. In addition, male- controlled income is allocated to male goods, not the household. Women who are able to control production and income are those few women who own land, particularly those in female- headed households. Several other studies in Guatemala concluded that peasant production for the export market increased women's workload, decreased their access to independent income, and resulted in women's lost bargaining power within the household (Deer, 2005).

In sub- Saharan Africa where men control the overwhelming majority of land, women's work in high- value cash crops does not seem guarantee their control over the income generated by these crops. Dolan and Sorby (2003) found that in Uganda in the late 1990s even though women put in as much labor

as men, more than 90 percent of income from vanilla production was controlled by men. In Tanzania women constitute 80 percent of unpaid family workers in agricultural production (FAO, 1994). In Kenya, 90 percent of French bean export contracts to smallholders were issued to male household members who received the payment and controlled family labor allocation, even though most of the production was done by women's usufruct parcels. Women supplied almost three-quarters of the needed labor but were given only 38 percent of the income (Dolan and Sorby, 2003). In Kenya also one-third of women were obliged to use their plots to grow vegetables for exports and their husbands controlled income from that production. With the introduction of contract farming, the cultural norms and practices were modified or reinterpreted. Since contracts are made with landowners, women do not obtain contracts in their name and the export companies pay men for the sale of vegetables.

Sometimes government officials or corporations do not take gender relations into account and then it backfires for them. For example, women are responsible for producing their family's food in much of rural Africa. This may include selling some in local markets. Men, on the other hand, often control the land and income generated by producing crops for export and do not necessarily share that income with women. Policy makers thought that if they used traditional market mechanisms to boost agricultural exports, production would automatically expand. They were puzzled when the policies did not have the expected outcome of increasing exports. Researchers have documented that many such export promotion programs faltered because women did not want to do that extra work on the men's land if they did not receive any financial remuneration.

Women in sub-Saharan Africa farm smaller plots of land, of poorer quality and at a greater distance from home. Female-run farms receive smaller allocation of fertilizers and equipment, for example 92 percent of women farmers in Kenya use only hand cultivation compared to 62 percent of men. In Burkina Faso ll fertilizers were found to be concentrated in male-controlled crops (Williams, 2003). Uttaro (2002) found that in Zomba district in Malawi 55 percent of female-headed households did not use any chemical fertilizer for their maize compared with 33 percent of male farmers, as they could not afford it.

In the case of agricultural extension services and training the World Bank found significant gender bias against women in Africa in general and in sub-Saharan Africa specifically. Findings from Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Tanzania and Zimbabwe show that there is greater likelihood that extension workers will provide services to male than female farmers. Also 93 percent of extension workers in Africa are men. Extension services are very important because they are the way that poor farmers acquire productivity-enhancing training and information. In Uganda, for example, women tend to rely on male counterparts as a way of engaging in organic farming because of its highly technical nature and the need for intensive training, as well as the high cost of formal certification of a farm as organic (Sengendo and Tumushabe, 2002).

In Tanzania, for example, while men tend to dominate in maize, wholesale and intermediate trade, women are to be found in retail, where there are small margins and the volume of trade is lower (Gammage et

al., 2002). Women also tend to produce fruits and vegetables while men produce grains, which have a higher value and are more durable.

In general, women in Africa do 80 percent of agriculture and food production work and yet receive less than 10 percent of credit granted to small farmers and less than 1 percent of all credit in the agricultural sector (Blackden and Bhanu, 1999). In Uganda, although women account for the largest share of agricultural production, they own only 5 percent of the land (World Bank, 2008). In Uganda also, where rural poverty levels have declined as a result of increased production of agricultural exports, especially coffee, female-headed households were among the categories of rural households that failed to benefit as they lacked the resources to get into coffee production (Morrisey et al, 2003). Most women farmers are less able to capitalize on the expansion of agricultural tradable goods in Africa as they tend to hold small-scale farms while men are more likely to own medium-sized or large-scale commercial farms (Joekes, 1999, Young and Hoppe, 2003). For example, trade liberalization in Ghana was found to benefit medium and large-scale farmers in the cocoa sector where few women are employed (UNCTAD, 2004).

In South Africa's fruit farms, women represent 65 percent of all temporary and seasonal employees and only 26 percent of all long-term employees (Barrientos et al, 1999). In cashew processing plants in Mozambique, women work longer hours but they receive the same wages as men (Carr, 2004). In Kenya's fresh vegetable industry, women's handling of chemicals during storage, mixing, and spraying has led to skin allergies, headaches, and fainting (Dolan and Sutherland 2002). Barrientos et al (1999) found that women in African horticulture farms perform tasks that require low skills and are consequently poorly remunerated. In Kenya, the proportion of women engaged in flexible work in the vegetable exports labour force was 63 percent compared to 38 percent of their male peers (Dolan and Sutherland, 2002).

In rural areas in Kenya, for example, with the shift to cash crops for exports, women were often worse off because of their double work burden. Women not only have ongoing responsibility for household food security, but their additional paid labor is often mediated through their husbands or other male family members- who also receive the remuneration (Baden 1998). The implications of this are not always addressed in either macro or sectoral interventions. For example, the World Bank Group IDA/MSME coffee value chain project was measuring positive development impact through increase in household incomes and additional jobs created for female workers (usually as pickers). But a gender analysis revealed that the women themselves could see little benefit because the money for their extra labor was paid directly to their husbands and the extra income did not always find its way back to the family. Cigarettes, alcohol, and the ability to have additional wives were cited. For female-headed households, the lack of direct access to resources such as land, credit or cooperative membership created additional hurdles to deriving benefits from trade liberalization.

A key aspect of women's domestic work is providing means for their families, either from food they have grown themselves, and/ or from food they have purchased. The literature suggests that trade liberalization

may affect food security in several ways. When the volume of food exports increase, domestic food prices may rise. When, however, the volume of food imports increases, food prices tend to fall. A rise in food prices will not be gender neutral. It will tend to increase the time spent on providing meals by women who purchase most of their families food, as they try to offset the price rises by spending more time in shopping for bargains, and in buying food which is less processed and takes more time to prepare. For women farmers who produce food for their families and sell surpluses on local markets, a rise in food prices will tend to increase their incomes. However, it may also lead to pressure from their husbands to divert their time from production of food for the family to produce cash crops for export, the proceeds from which are controlled by their husbands (Warner and Campbell, 2000)

Case studies suggest that trade liberalization in agricultural economies can disadvantage women or benefit them less than they do for men, even when traditional export crop production increases (Gladwin and Thompson, 1995; Fontana et al, 1998). In many African countries although women constitute the backbone of agricultural production and their work is critical for food security, they are usually small farmers or engage predominantly in the production of food crops. Trade liberalization tends to advantage large and medium producers, and disadvantage smaller ones, partly through intensified import competition. When opportunities emerge with new markets, women are slow to take advantage of them, as they lack access to credit, new technologies, and knowledge of marketing. The impact of these changes is likely to be more severe for female- headed households and for poor women (Fontana et al, 1998). Moreover, in those instances where the household income increases with increased cash crop production for export markets, the well being of women and children may not improve. If, for example, the increase in family income is accompanied by a decrease in food crop production as women's labour is mobilized in cash crop production, the family nutritional intake might suffer while the work burdens of women and girls increase. This is more likely to happen when men retain control over the increased household income and use it for their own consumption.

Thus, although research is sparse, there are reasons to expect that trade liberalization in predominantly agricultural economies may jeopardize women's livelihoods and well- being or that women will be the last to take advantage of the opportunities created owing to the gender division of labour and gender- based differences in ownership and control over land, credit and marketing knowledge.

After reviewing numerous case studies in Latin America and Africa, Katz (2003), Dolan and Sorby (2003) and Deere (2005) draw these conclusions regarding high- value export agriculture:

- Women are employed for the labor- intensive tasks.
- Women generally earn lower wages than men and are more likely to be paid at piece rate.
- Workers, including women workers, in packaging and processing plants earn more than field workers and have better working conditions; work is nonetheless hard, often involving long hours of standing, and long working hours especially during peak seasons.

- Women are the major supplier of temporary, seasonal, and casual labor and men occupy the majority of permanent jobs as well as administrative and supervisory positions.

In summary, although demand for labor in high- value agricultural export production has created new economic opportunities for women, their working conditions are characterized by insecurity, long working hours, environmental health hazards, low wages, and limited opportunities for training and skill development. The competition among agribusiness firms, particularly horticultural export firms, pressures them to reduce costs by hiring unskilled women as informal workers (i.e. temporary, seasonal, and casual) at low wages and without social benefits. Little or no advance notice is given when workers are laid off.

V. Policy Recommendations:

There is a growing body of research about the relationship between gender equality and the macro-economy, including trade policies. The research increasingly suggests that this is a two- way relationship. Macroeconomic policies can have different impacts on gender equality because of the differences in the way that women and men are integrated into the economy and the market. At the same time, gender biases in the functioning of markets may also have an impact on the effectiveness of macroeconomic policy by limiting the capacity of individuals and the economy to respond in the manner anticipated.

Where trade policy institutions have the capacity to undertake gender- based analysis of trade policy measures and impacts as a matter of routine, they will be able to support decision- makers with policy advice and options that are consistent with gender equality objectives. This could be through a combination of enhancing positive impacts and taking steps to mitigate negative impacts. National and international policy approaches can aim for more effective and equitable trading system as shown below:

National- Level Policy Recommendations:

- Implementing policies that enable women as well as men to benefit from opportunities associated with trade liberalization (i.e. policies that explicitly take account of the situation of women and the particular constraints they face). In fact, policies must be accompanied by ‘teeth’, they need to be backed by resources and commitment by senior staff, including incentives to put policies into effect. Policies are only as good as those charged with implementing them.
- Mitigating potentially- negative effects on specific sectors and on women that would exacerbate existing gender inequality, through attention to the timing and phasing- in of liberalization measures to allow for necessary adjustments and policy measures to support that adjustment process.
- It is critical that policy makers and trade negotiators concerned with poverty eradication, social equity and gender equality improve their understanding of the intertwine between trade policy, trade liberalization and their gender dimension so that they can take the necessary steps to create gender sensitive trade rules as well as develop complementary mechanisms to offset the negative effects and set in place policies, programmes and projects that will promote improvement in the lives of men and women in society.

If gender concerns are integrated into trade policies, the potential exists for improving women’s standard of living and quality of life, of enhancing local community sustainability, and for opening women’s access to resources and decision- making. Thus mainstream trade policies

need to change in order to acknowledge the gendered impacts of trade and to promote women's access to resources, employment rights and decision- making on trade issues. More collection of gender- disaggregated data is also needed, together with detailed research into the impact of trade liberalization on gender relations and women's lives.

- Women involved in trading activities must be enabled to participate in determining priorities for trade and employment policies. This requires capacity building, economic literacy training and dissemination of information. Women must be treated as full-fledged citizens and be given every opportunity to use their potential fully. It actually makes good development sense and good business sense to set up programmes that encourage women to build up their businesses, in particular by entering the global economy, but to do so successfully women exporters must become part of the mainstream economy, on a par with men. To make their case, women exporters need to engage in networking with government officials, national and international technical experts and others connected with the global market. Policy makers need to be sensitized to the specific needs of women entrepreneurs (as well as women as workers and consumers) both at the domestic level and when participating in the design of international trade rules. Technical assistance and capacity- building activities can play an important role in addressing these problems and barriers.
- Strategic alliances must be forced between gender equality advocates, trade justice activists and development actors working on policies and programmes. This will ensure that workers' rights initiatives, market access programmes, ethical trade schemes and human rights campaigns address gender equality and contribute to social and economic justice for all.
- Governments should have the right to use policy tools, including trade measures that preserve governments' policy space to develop fair and sustainable economies that contribute to women's empowerment. They should believe that "without engendering development, development itself is endangered".
- Greater coherence is needed between the macroeconomic environment and processes at the national, sectoral, and micro levels, as well as between trade agreements and other international conventions and commitments to human rights, development and gender equality.
- The existing mechanisms [under for example, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Trade Policy Review Mechanism (TPRM) processes] and tools [such as Sustainable Impact Assessments (SIAs), Gender Trade Impact Assessments (GTIAs) and Poverty and Social Impact Analysis (PSIAs)] should be used to monitor the gendered impacts of trade policies and agreements and to hold governments accountable for their commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment.

- The participation of women and gender experts in trade policy- making and negotiation processes should be promoted at all levels, and multi- stakeholder mechanisms should be established to reorient the trade agenda in support of a pro- poor and gender- aware development framework. The participation of women in different aspects of international trade- related activities and transactions and their outcomes is crucial for determining whether trade is indeed acting as an engine of development.
- Gender sensitive institutions, enabling legal systems and strong market- support systems are required to remove the structural barriers to improved women’s participation in markets and to ensure their rights are upheld as workers, producers and consumers. Gender mainstreaming needs to be implemented in organizations working on trade related issues in order to ensure that women’s gender- specific disadvantages are addressed. Support from trade unions and other employment institutions for labour rights that take into account different gender roles and relations of unequal power are critical.
- Trade ministries, trade negotiators and delegates should recognize the gender differentiated impacts of trade liberalization, and the central role of gender equality in ensuring the integration of systematic gender analysis in trade policy making and negotiations, support the creation of women’s cooperatives and enterprises in order to facilitate their access to information, communication technologies and trading networks, and ensure the alignment of trade policy with gender equality and poverty reduction objectives. The central bureaus of statistics, ministries of trade, and ministries of planning should also enhance their collection and reporting of gender- disaggregated data to facilitate more detailed research into the impact of trade liberalization on gender relations and the livelihood of women.
- Women’s NGOs and Women’s machineries should organize national multi- stakeholder consultations on key issues in gender and trade (e.g. impacts of trade policies on the informal sector, women’s rights in the areas of food security, access to essential services, employment), and ensure regular interaction with the ministry of trade and other key actors in trade policy processes. They should also publicize the success stories and innovations of women- owned companies, organize ‘meet and greet’ events between women entrepreneurs and representatives of foreign companies, facilitate online networking among women entrepreneurs in different markets, and set standards for the participation of women entrepreneurs (for example at least 40 percent of participants) in all trade- related activities such as outgoing missions for international trade conferences, trade- related workshops, meetings with incoming missions to increase women entrepreneurs’ visibility.
- Improved credit conditions and property rights for women so that they can qualify easily for credit to take advantage of the new investment opportunities in the export sector after trade

liberalization, and support micro and small enterprises owned by women to enable them to provide better working conditions for themselves and the workers they hire.

- Addressing the unfavorable working conditions for women in the EPZs by the application and enforcement of national labor laws, and modify labour laws and practices to ensure that women's gender- specific needs are adequately addressed.
- In line with the recommendations of the Beijing Platform of Action, there needs to be greater gender awareness in the design and formulation of trade policies. There needs to be gender mainstreaming and capacity building with regard to gender awareness in trade ministries. The gender implications of all issues under negotiation should be fully assessed and discussed within regional and multilateral trade negotiations. One possible mechanism to further the understanding between gender and trade is the inclusion of gender assessments in trade review mechanisms.

International- Level Policy Recommendations:

- The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) framework aims to assist in identifying opportunities to ensure that trade- related capacity building (TRCB) contributes to gender equality goals and better development results. By applying a gender- equality lens to TRCB activities in the different categories of trade policy initiatives this will lead to the effective participation of women in international trade agreements.
- Gender analysis and perspectives should be systematically integrated into trade- related capacity building programmes of international finance institutions, donors and intergovernmental organizations. Gender should be recognized as a cross- cutting issue. All regional and international trade agreements should incorporate a gender analysis in all policies.
- The WTO should establish a task force on gender and trade and engage in capacity building on gender and trade within its relevant divisions and training programmes for its staff as well as the governments of member countries, including the national gender and women machineries.
- Regional Economic Communities (RECs), for example East African Community (EAC), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and Southern African Development Community (SADC), should review and update existing gender policy frameworks to cover issues and commitments regarding gender and trade, establish a continuing dialogue on gender issues with trade policy makers and negotiators in the national and international arenas, and organize expert group meetings, ad- hoc working groups in specific areas, and broad- based consultations with civil society groups, trade justice activists, parliamentarians and women's organizations on gender and trade.

- United Nations organizations such as United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) should continue to provide cutting- edge research and analysis on gender and trade issues, assist in the development of tools for the formulation and implementation of gender aware trade policies, and provide support for the promotion of regional/ sub- regional networks of women entrepreneurs and exporters, with special attention to SMEs and the informal sector, they should also train government and NGOs’ representatives to monitor gender- differentiated impacts of trade policy in the context of development plans, and they should provide support in identifying markets and products of interest to women traders/ producers/ entrepreneurs.
- There should be a change in the international women organizations’ strategies and approaches. The current feeling of helplessness that they cannot have their say in developing countries especially should be replaced by a new mood that they can achieve their objectives if a number of them are united and well prepared; they must know where they are, where they want to be and how they might get there, so they can understand better the road to gender equality. These organizations are in large numbers in the world and even if one does not expect all of them to come together on all gender issues, one can at least expect a large number of them to have common perception and a common stand on a number of gender issues. The effectiveness of these organizations will be enhanced if there is better coordination among them. The exercise of coordination should start right from the stage of identification of interests and formulation of positions and stands. There may also be burden- sharing in preparations in specific areas and exchange of information, which will avoid duplication of efforts and ensure better utilization of their scarce resources. These organizations should really believe in the proverb:

“Until You Spread Your Wings, You Do Not Know How Far You Can Fly”

Thus, they should help women to break the glass ceiling and to explore and reach their potentials to improve their standard of living and the living conditions of their families. Women are usually seen but rarely heard, these organizations should help them to be seen as well as heard. Hence, women across the globe, from the north and the south as well as within these divides should join hands, build bridges, use their intellect, spirituality and advocacy to fight for a better and more just world.

Glossary of Key Gender Terms

Gender

Identifies the social relations between men and women. It refers to the socially determined differences between men and women such as roles, attitudes, behaviors and values. It can be seen as the set of socially constructed and assigned roles and responsibilities for men and women. Since these roles are socially constructed, the society can deconstruct them. This is where resistance to change comes in. The concept of gender is very important because it can reveal how men's domination and women's subordination is socially constructed, which means that subordination can be changed or ended since it is not biologically predetermined thus it can not be fixed forever.

Gender Analysis

Is the methodology for collecting and processing information about gender. It provides disaggregated data by sex, and an understanding of the social construction of gender roles. It is the process of analyzing information in order to ensure that development benefits and resources are effectively and equitably targeted to both men and women, and to successfully anticipate and avoid any negative impacts development may have on women or on gender relations. Thus, it involves critically examining power status of men and women, gender roles and gender division of labour, access and control that men and women have over resources (inputs) and benefits (outputs), differential impacts of development policies on men and women, gender practices that promote and reinforce gender power structures thereby perpetuating gender stereotypes and inequality.

Gender Awareness

Is an understanding that there are socially determined differences between men and women based on learned behavior, which affect their ability to access and control resources. This awareness needs to be applied through gender analysis into projects, programmes and policies.

Gender Blindness

Is the inability to perceive that there are differences in gender roles, responsibilities and capabilities among and between groups of men and women and as a consequence of these differences, policies, programmes and projects can have differential impact on men and women. Gender blind policies are based on information derived from men's activities and assume that women that are affected by any policy have the same male interests and needs.

Gender Bias

Occurs when culture and structural arrangements are used by societies and organizations to advantage men over women or vice versa.

Gender Division of Labour

Is the different work assigned by society to and performed by men and women due to their socialization, hence, talk of “men’s work” or “women’s work”.

Gender- Disaggregated Data

Is statistical data that shows the differences among and between men and women in all sectors in terms of access to and control over resources and benefits, this allows us to see the gender gaps and think about remedial actions.

Gender Discrimination

Is the different treatment that causes a gender gap. In a patriarchal society (which is a system of male monopoly or domination of men on decision- making positions at all levels to maintain male dominance, this system legitimizes this male dominance and relies on patriarchal interpretations of religious texts and beliefs in male biological superiority, this system always claim that the unequal gender division of rights and duties is either biological or God- given or too difficult to change because it’s embedded in culture), this is almost always the different treatment given to women that cuts them off from access to opportunities, facilities and resources. Such discriminatory treatment may be part of social customs, or may be entrenched in government administrative rules and regulations, and even in statutory laws. Even when residing in religious practice or custom, these discriminatory practices may well have the status of law in many countries.

Gender Equity

It is based on the universal principle of “doing unto others as you would have them do unto you”. It entails the provision of fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities between men and women. This concept recognizes that men and women have different needs and power and that these differences should be identified and addressed in manner that rectifies the imbalances between the sexes. Thus it is the process of being fair to both men and women and to do that, measures must be taken to compensate for historical and social disadvantages that limit men and women from operating on a level- playing field. This process may require a redistribution of power and resources. Gender equity therefore is a mean to an end, while gender equality is the result or the end.

Gender Equality

Is rooted in the legal provisions that prohibit an individual from having less equal opportunity and human rights than another. On this basis, men or women can sue against any policy that involves discrimination. In fact, gender equality is the condition of fairness in relations between men and women, leading to a situation in which each has the equal status, rights, levels of responsibility, and access to power and resources. Thus gender equality denotes men and women having equal access to social, economic, political and cultural opportunities. It does not mean that men and women are the same, but rather that their similarities and differences are recognized and equally valued.

Gender Gap

Is the differential access by men and women to resources and benefits. It is the observable and often measurable gap between men and women on important socio- economic indicators (for example: ownership of property, employment and school enrollment) that is seen to be unjust, and therefore presents the clear empirical evidence of the existence of gender discrimination. A gender gap is never accidental, but is caused by differential gender treatment.

Gender Mainstreaming

Is the process of assessing the implications of any policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels on men and women. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design and implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women can benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal of this process is to achieve gender equality which means ensuring that men and women have equal access and control over resources, development benefits and decision- making at all stages of the development process.

Gender Neutral Policies

Are assumed to affect both men and women equally, however, they may actually be gender blind.

Gender Sensitivity

It encompasses the ability to acknowledge and highlight existing gender differences, issues and inequalities and incorporates these into strategies and actions.

Gender Planning

Is the process of planning developmental programmes and projects that are gender sensitive and which take into account the impact of differing gender roles and gender needs of men and women in the target community or sector. It involves the selection of appropriate approaches to address not only men and women's practical needs, but which also identifies entry points for challenging unequal relations and to enhance the gender responsiveness of policy dialogue.

Gender Roles

Are learned behaviors in a given society, community or other special groups that condition which activities, tasks and responsibilities are perceived as male and female. These roles are affected by age, class, race, ethnicity, religion and by the geographical, economic and political environment. Changes in these roles often occur in response to changing economic, natural or political circumstances, including development efforts. The gender roles of women can be identified as reproductive (which are the activities needed to ensure the reproduction of society's labor force. This includes child bearing, rearing, and care for family members such as children, elderly and workers), productive (which are the activities carried out to produce goods and services either for sale, exchange, or to meet the subsistence needs of the family) and community- managing roles (which are the activities undertaken at the community level, as an extension of women's reproductive role to ensure the provision and maintenance of scarce resources of collective consumption such as water, health care and education), while men's are categorized as either productive or community politics. Men are able to focus on a particular productive role, and play their multiple roles sequentially. Women, in contrast to men, must play their roles simultaneously, and balance competing claims on time for each of them.

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