

Integrating Gender in Trade Policy in Peru and Colombia: A Study Tour

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by

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Introduction

In 2012, The North-South Institute (NSI) began a capacity-building project to leverage the opportunities provided by Canada's free trade agreements with Peru and Colombia with the goal of reducing gender inequality in those two countries. This project, "Gender Equity and Canadian Free Trade Agreements (FTAs): Achieving Gender Equality Results from the Implementation of Canadian FTAs with Colombia and Peru," was generously funded by the Canadian International Development Agency's Canada-Americas Trade Related Technical Assistance (CATRTA) Program and implemented by the Conference Board of Canada. After completing exploratory missions to make sure that all relevant stakeholders would be participating and their views would be included, NSI produced a series of research outputs that were later presented during two workshops in Peru and Colombia.

In order to address the multiplicity of policy variables available and to provide a gender perspective on trade policy, we then selected a small group of Peruvian and Colombian businesswomen and policy-makers to come to Canada in April to complete a week-long study tour to learn from public officials, academics, businesswomen, and development non-governmental organizations about how similar issues are treated in the country. We hoped that the tour would allow cross-learning among individuals from both Latin American countries and offer opportunities to reflect on their policy realities while learning from a different one.

The core message of the study tour for the participants and readers of this report is that there is not a single way to promote gender equity considerations within trade promotion policies and policies associated with economic growth. Different combinations can best fit distinct national realities, provided that they are always accompanied by complementary policies like the protection of labour rights, education promotion, infrastructure building and improvement, specific sectoral policies for productive sectors, entrepreneurship programs, and security/anti-violence programs. The challenge for decision makers is to link all these issues together through effective public policies and budgets.

This document summarizes the comprehensive discussions held during the week-long study tour by the selected 10 Peruvian and Colombian participants and numerous Canadian government officials, academics, trade promotion specialists, non-governmental organization gender officials, and businesswomen.

Roundtable on Gender and Trade Policy in CIDA's Experience

Speakers:

Soraya Hassanali, Senior Gender Equality Specialist, Policy and Strategic Planning Division, Multilateral and Global Partnerships Branch, CIDA

Lucie Bazinet, Team Leader, Gender Equality Thematic and Sector Specialists' Division, Geographic Programs Branch, CIDA

Caroline Côté, Gender Equality Specialist, Gender Equality Thematic and Sector Specialists' Division, Geographic Programs Branch, CIDA

Marc Banzet, Team Leader, Economic Growth, Governance and Economic Growth Division, Thematic and Sectorial Policy Directorate, Strategic Policy and Performance Branch, CIDA

Jeanne Richardson, Senior Analyst, Bretton Woods Unit, International Financial Institutions Division, Multilateral Development Institutions Directorate, Multilateral and Global Programs Branch, CIDA

Moderator: Paola Ortiz Loaiza, Project Coordinator, The North-South Institute

Summary of Presentations:

The aim of this round table was to set the stage for the week's discussions on how to include gender perspectives in Canadian trade dialogue. Delegates from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) opened the session by presenting an overview of CIDA's experience incorporating gender perspectives into its policies and development projects. Given the multifaceted nature of development and the paucity of gender analysis, CIDA adopted a framework approach to gender analysis guided by three binding principles: to address gender equality as a cross-cutting theme throughout all of its work, to identify women's empowerment as integral to all CIDA policies, and the recognition that policies and programs affect men and women differently, which therefore requires societal consideration and cooperation between men and women.

In developing a gender-focused approach to economic development, CIDA articulated a series of initiatives to seize on women's empowerment and increase women's productivity and earnings, with the long-term objective of influencing institutional and cultural change. Initiatives such as the Aid for Trade program offer opportunities to address gender equality issues by drawing attention to the gender dimensions of trade policies in the least developed countries.

The goal of CIDA's policy is to support the achievement of equality between women and men to ensure sustainable development.

Main Issues Discussed:

- When we discuss gender equality programs, they are often part of national strategies coming from the top down. But based on many experiences, these programs do not carry any weight at regional and local levels of government. What types of cooperation strategies have proved successful in other countries?
- Considerable emphasis has been placed on the importance of women's entrepreneurial training, but it should be noted that not all people have the same basic level of education. In cases like Peru and Colombia, we need policies and training programs to be developed at the grassroots level, taking into account regional factors and varying levels of education and skills.
- These issues point to the need for regional disaggregated statistics on women. National policies cannot be based solely on aggregated statistics, especially in countries where there are vast disparities between urban and rural populations.

Round Table on Making Women Visible and the Importance of Data and Gender Variables

Speakers:

Linda Henderson, Policy and External Relations Directorate, Status of Women Canada
Kate Higgins, Senior Researcher, The North-South Institute

Summary of Presentations:

Linda Henderson discussed the role of Status of Women Canada, a federal agency that supports the equality of women and girls throughout the government. The agency plays the role of knowledge broker, conducting policy analysis and building capacity across the federal government to conduct Gender-based Analysis Plus, a method for examining the intersection of sex and gender with other identity factors. By collecting disaggregated data, the agency can conduct analysis to assess the impacts of policies and programs on diverse groups of women, men, girls, and boys. The collection of qualitative and quantitative data helps policy-makers recognize and respond to the different needs of Canadians. In Canada this has led to more gender-neutral policies, such as the evolution of parental leave, and an added level of accountability. Translating these practices to domestic and international partners will not only ensure more equitable policies but paint a clearer picture of power relations.

Main Issues Discussed:

- There is no questioning the importance of gender-based analysis, but in places like Latin America there is a desperate need for transparency and accountability in these studies. The government departments conducting gender studies often do not publish their findings or make information accessible to the public. Both the private sector and civil society organizations need access to these studies so that they can use them as reference points to adapt their policies and strategies accordingly.
- What has been Canada's experience using targets for women's participation, targets for access to higher education, and employment equity standards? What are the pros and cons of employing the use of quotas?

- How can governments with limited resources and capacities effectively conduct proper data collection and analysis, especially regarding rural and marginalized populations?
- A pervasive problem throughout Latin America is that governments often do not collect data on issues that may reflect poorly on them (e.g., domestic abuse). What can be done to ensure that analysis is being properly conducted when many issues are being deliberately omitted from the gender equality discourse?

Round Table on Policies and Best Practices in Gender and Trade

Speakers:

Josie L. Mousseau, Deputy Director, Consultations, Missions and Special Projects Division, CIDA

Sylvain Fabi, Director, Latin American and Caribbean, Bilateral Relations Division, CIDA
Astrid Pregel, Special Advisor on Gender Issues, CIDA

Raquel Fragoso-Peters, Director, Policy and Liaison, Industry Canada

Nicole Ladouceur, Director General, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada

Waleska Rivera, Latin America and Caribbean, Bilateral Relations Division, CIDA

Moderator: Zoe Hawa, Trade Commissioner Office, Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada

Summary of Presentations:

This round table, hosted by Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, discussed Canada's free trade agreements (FTAs) with Peru (signed in 2009) and Colombia (signed in 2011), assessed their impacts, and discussed strategies to strengthen and increase ties with the governments, businesses, and people. Josie Mousseau opened the session by reviewing best practices and lessons learned from existing FTAs. The Canadian government is currently in the process of devising a proactive strategy to maximize women's abilities to take advantage of growth and investment opportunities in coordination with free trade partners.

Empowering women is a core imperative for society if the United States is to enjoy economic success and remain a global leader.

- Hillary Clinton, Women in the World Conference 2013

Echoing the words of Hillary Clinton, Astrid Pregel reiterated that women are an essential part of global competitiveness. Thanks in large part to organizations such as the World Bank, the conversation is shifting focus toward women's economic empowerment and human rights as the main pillars driving economic success. Governments worldwide are beginning to take a proactive approach through gender mainstreaming, creating opportunities and incentives to include women-owned businesses in national supply chains. Gender mainstreaming has proven successful in Canada's aboriginal communities, where programs designed to encourage female entrepreneurship have allowed women to participate in business.

Main Issues Discussed:

- What measures does Canada take when negotiating FTAs to ensure that tariff reductions are compatible with women-intensive sectors and industries?
- Globally, women are typically concentrated in only a few industries, the textile industry being the most prominent. How have Canada's aboriginal women managed to diversify into other industries? What are some proven methods of economic diversification and how have these contributed to the empowerment of aboriginal women?
- To what extent have incentives and subsidies contributed to women's economic empowerment?
- How can women in developing countries assert themselves in processes of negotiating trade agreements? Unless women can actively participate in the consultation processes of trade agreements, little consideration will be made regarding their interests. How does the consultation process in Canada differ from that in Latin America? What types of tools can we employ?

Round Table on Supporting the Economic Empowerment of Canadian Women

Speakers:

Clare Beckton, Executive Director, Centre for Women in Politics and Public Leadership, Carleton University

Barbara Orser, Deloitte Chair and Professor, Telfer School of Management, University of Ottawa

Ann Weston, Director, Special Initiatives Division, International Development Research Centre

Moderator: Pablo Heidrich, Senior Researcher, The North-South Institute

Summary of Presentations:

Presentations in this roundtable framed the conversation around women's economic empowerment from an academic perspective. Tracing the history of the women's empowerment movement in Canada, Clare Beckton highlighted the importance of advocacy groups who played pivotal roles fighting for necessary legislation and labour standards. Despite women's economic empowerment being formalized in the Constitution Act of 1982, women are still underrepresented in senior-level positions. Barbara Orser cited studies that suggest that there is a direct correlation between women's economic empowerment and a country's gross domestic product.

More equal societies are often more prosperous.

- Clare Beckton

Looking at the issue of gender and trade, Ann Weston from the International Development Research Centre discussed findings from a recent paper that looks at women's economic empowerment options in the face of broader economic events, such

as the recent global recession. Women often find themselves at a disadvantage due to the opportunity costs of familial obligations, which exposes them to economic vulnerabilities. Weston made the case for women's employment opportunities (e.g., small business set-ups) with adequate gender-specialized skills training. When negotiating trade agreements, governments must ensure that women-intensive sectors and industries are not jeopardized by wider trade frameworks.

Main Issues Discussed:

- Apart from programs offering women access to credit, what other opportunities or strategies exist to reverse the cultural norm of women's primary role as caregivers?
- Scandinavian countries would be a good model to follow, since they have achieved the greatest levels of success in closing gender gaps.

Round Table on Labour, Trade, and Women

Speakers:

Ricarda McFalls, Chief, Multinational Enterprises Programme, International Labour Organization

Debra Robinson, Director, International Labour Affairs, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada

Edgar Rodriguez, Senior Program Specialist, Supporting Inclusive Growth, International Development Research Centre

Moderator: Heather Gibb, Distinguished Research Associate, The North-South Institute

Summary of Presentations:

We are currently living in a shifting globalized economy, where the traditional North-South paradigm is being altered by new actors, most of which are coming from emerging economies. In her presentation on sustainable global value chains, Ricarda McFalls explained the difficulties of implementing labour rights and corporate social responsibility programs in emerging economies, where international investors, companies, banks, and non-governmental organizations have severely complicated the

process. McFalls proposed more policy coherence between governments and companies that should be reflected in bilateral trade agreements.

Discussing the issues of trade and labour in the Canadian context, Debra Robinson explained the process of how trade officials negotiate FTAs from a labour perspective. The Canadian government must ensure that Canadian companies abide by domestic laws and regulations when conducting business in other countries. It must also ensure cooperation between countries and stakeholders to build and strengthen the capacities of developing countries to effectively enforce labour laws consistent with International Labour Organization standards. Trade plays a specific role in promoting equitable growth and unfortunately labour is often omitted from this conversation. There is a need to support the convergence of these two issues and discuss new kinds of labour rights that transcend borders and apply to both formal and informal labour.

Main Issues Discussed:

- How stringent is Canada's legal framework pertaining to labour? Are quotas used for both public and private sector employment?
- The disparity between men's and women's wages continues to pose a significant challenge to women's empowerment. Is there a requirement for equal pay in the private sector or at the multinational level? If so, how is it being implemented?
- Informal labour has become a big issue in many Latin American countries. Are there models that these countries can emulate to make changes to their business cultures to account for the various types of informal labour?

Round Table on Trade Promotion, Experiences, and Good Practices

Speakers:

Brian Mitchell, Executive Director, Trade Facilitation Office Canada

Brian Staples, Director, and Raymond Heroux, Trade Facilitation Services

Moderator: Paola Ortiz Loaiza, Project Coordinator, The North-South Institute

Summary of Presentations:

The objective of this round table was to inform participants from Peru and Colombia of the various services available to support countries that have signed FTAs with Canada. Brian Mitchell described the role of Trade Facilitation Office Canada (TFO Canada) in providing support for small and medium-sized enterprises selling products to Canada. Through information, advisory, and contact services, TFO Canada serves to create linkages that benefit both Canadians and exporters from other countries. Over the past decade, TFO Canada has made a concerted effort to address some of the challenges facing businesswomen in exporting countries. By targeting women in selection and recruitment processes, TFO Canada can provide expert advice on how to best engage foreign markets.

Brian Staples expanded on the growing complexities of negotiating FTAs. The emergence of competitive new bilateral relationships and regional trade blocks has complicated life for exporters because each new agreement requires a different strategy of engagement. Staples announced the need for a mechanism to govern trade in an era of increasingly permeable borders. This inspired a new CIDA-funded project on rules of origin, which will provide further transparency and greater understanding of the origins of products sold and purchased.

Main Issues Discussed:

- To which sectors in Canada do women from emerging economies have the greatest opportunities to export?
- Small and medium-sized enterprises are essential for economic growth, but what types of international or national bodies exist to facilitate their integration into larger international trade agreements?
- Normally the contact point for exporters trying to access a new market is through a Chamber of Commerce. The bureaucratic nature of this process has deterred many women-owned businesses, as Chambers of Commerce often do not have coherent or well-articulated gender policies to ensure that women-owned businesses are given equal opportunities.

Business Network Meeting Co-hosted with the Organization of Women in International Trade-Ottawa

Speakers:

Alexandra Logvin, Co-President, Organization of Women in International Trade-Ottawa

Pilar Arjona and Heinrich Stubbe, Owners, Stubbe Chocolates

Ian Clark, Director of Coffee, Bridgehead

Moderator: Kate Higgins, Senior Researcher, The North-South Institute

Summary of the Event:

Business owners and managers from the Ottawa region briefly presented their experiences trading coffee and cocoa with Latin American growers, emphasizing the gender issues they encountered and possibilities they observed as foreign customers.

Presenters, members of the Organization of Women in International Trade-Ottawa, and participants from Peru and Colombia then discussed informally in a cocktail environment and exchanged networking information for future business or action on similar policy interests in gender-related subjects.

Round Table on Building a Guide on International Trade from a Gender Perspective

Speakers:

María Inés Vásquez, Consultant, International Trade and Integration Division, Inter-American Development Bank

Heather Gibb, Distinguished Research Associate, The North-South Institute
Soraya Hassanali, Senior Gender Equality Specialist, Policy and Strategic Planning Division, Multilateral and Global Partnerships Branch, Canadian International Development Agency

Moderator: Pablo Heidrich, Senior Researcher, The North-South Institute

Summary of Presentations:

This round table was designed to help participants think about new strategies for incorporating gender perspectives into public policies and practices. It is imperative that conversations on this issue take place because there is currently no coherent assessment of trade from a gender perspective in Canada or Latin American countries. María Inés Vásquez introduced the Inter-American Development Bank's implementation guide to assist workers and entrepreneurs in maximizing opportunities presented by trade agreements. The Inter-American Development Bank has targeted women-owned businesses and created a forum for them to expand their networks, gain better access to markets, and build capacities.

As demonstrated by Heather Gibb, the Inter-American Development Bank has also developed a handbook to provide guidance on gender mainstreaming in trade operations. The handbook analyzes the impacts of trade policies through gender diagnostics to identify barriers to women's participation and productivity. It also sets out guidelines for training trade officials tasked with managing the implementation of trade policies. By disseminating information gathered through data collection to relevant businesses, institutions and organizations can provide valuable information on the rules, standards, and details of trade agreements. Soraya Hassanali concluded the session by describing the symbiotic relationship between women's empowerment and global poverty reduction, with the most logical starting point for many women being trade.

Main Issues Discussed:

- How can we best conduct gender diagnostics in cases where there is high turnover in local or national governments (elections, coups, etc.)?
- There are no oversight bodies ensuring that the issues we discuss with trade officials during negotiation processes are implemented once the agreements are signed.
- Training women to become entrepreneurs is important for women's empowerment, but not every woman is cut out to be an entrepreneur, so how do we identify business leaders within communities and ensure that they are given the necessary training and opportunities?

Round Table with Canadian Non-governmental Organizations on Exchanging Policies and Experiences on Gender and Economic Empowerment

Speakers:

Nadia Faucher, Program Coordinator, Latin American Program, Inter Pares

Hélène Lagacé, Trainer and Theme Leader, Gender Equality Policy Program, Centre for International Studies and Cooperation

Margaret Capelazo, Gender Advisor, CARE Canada

Moderator: Julia Sanchez, President, Canadian Council for International Cooperation

Summary of Presentations:

This round table brought together Canadian international development organizations to discuss policies and practices of gender strengthening within the wider international development discourse. It focused specifically on issues of women playing leadership roles in development, while dissecting the individual components of FTAs. Nadia Faucher opened the discussion by describing her role at Inter Pares providing support at the grassroots level to build resilient communities and strong civil society organizations. Drawing upon her experiences in developing countries, Faucher

identified the main obstacles facing women in development to be gender discrimination, ethnic divides, cultural traditions, and isolation from urban centres. Inter Pares' rural development model has achieved widespread success through its three-pronged response to these obstacles: providing women with the necessary technical training to become entrepreneurs, encouraging political participation, and promoting education about and deliberation over public policies.

Hélène Lagacé summarized her work engaging women to strengthen their economic capacities in Haiti. Based on her experiences, Lagacé maintained that by understanding the specific production needs of women within a particular industry and then ensuring that they have the necessary resources, organizations can help women attain economic outcomes similar to those of men. Margaret Capelazo concluded the session by describing CARE Canada's success in targeting women through micro-credit programs, loans and savings initiatives, and community infrastructure projects. Giving women opportunities to participate in small and medium-sized enterprises has helped to combat the "businessman" mindset at household, cooperative, government, and private sector levels and empower women, giving them a sense of ownership.

Main Issues Discussed:

- How effective has the use of quotas been in politics and business?
- What types of requirements are used to assess women applying for micro-credit loans?
- Many of the obstacles discussed apply mainly to marginalized rural women. How can we translate some of the suggested strategies and apply them to women in urban contexts who are being similarly discriminated against?

Round Table on Experiences and Challenges Promoting Trade from a Gender Perspective*

Speakers:

Antonio Ramos, Representative, PromPerú

Alma Farías, Regional Representative for Ontario, Trade Facilitation Office Canada

Rachel Warden, Latin America Partnerships Program Coordinator, KAIROS Canada

Moderator: Pablo Heidrich, Senior Researcher, The North-South Institute

Summary of Presentations:

Antonio Ramos accounted for how export promotion by Peru is conducted in the Canadian market and beginning to reflect the changing reality of Peruvian entrepreneurs back home, where an increasing number of women are owners of exporting businesses and managers in other enterprises. He foresaw a clear path for including gender perspectives in PromPerú's future activities, once planning and implementation is formulated by the Peruvian government.

Alma Farías explained how TFO Canada increasingly has the capacity to improve the labour conditions of women in developing countries who export to developed markets such as Canada. Alma suggested different policy alternatives for participants from Peru and Colombia based on her extensive experience in Mexico and other Latin American countries also considering how to include gender perspectives in their export promotion activities.

Lunch and Round Table on Sharing Experiences of Women in the Canadian Business World

Speakers:

Mary Anderson, President, WEConnect Canada

Joy Nott, President, I.E.Canada

Maria Arbulu, Marketing Specialist, U.S. Foreign Agricultural Service

Moderator: Amesika Baeta, Director of Member Relations and Development, I.E.Canada

Summary of Presentations:

This session brought together successful businesswomen and women trade promoters from the Toronto region. Participants learned about the role of the Organization of Women in International Trade-Toronto in supporting women as a networking/capacity-building platform as well as the work that WEConnect Canada has been doing in Canada and worldwide to connect leading multinational companies with supplier firms led by women. Mary Anderson shared her experiences and advice promoting women entrepreneurs and presented several successful examples. Echoing advice provided by presenters in Ottawa, she underlined the importance of raising the issue of women's equity from an economic perspective to improve understanding in the private sector.

Most of the participants shared their own experiences, challenges, and questions. The discussion indicated that there is a surprising degree of similarities in the challenges and opportunities that women in business face in Latin America and Canada.

**The last two events were held in the Collaboration Boardroom of the Ontario Investment and Trade Centre in Toronto. Our most sincere thanks to the Ontario Investment and Trade Centre and Ministry of Economic Development and Innovation for their support and the Organization of Women in International Trade-Toronto for co-hosting the final event.*