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and Sustainable Development

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# **SPS Measures, Gender and Trade**

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# International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD) Programme of Work on Standards

## About ICTSD

- Geneva-based not-for-profit organisation that conducts policy-oriented research and holds dialogues to advance sustainable development through trade-related policy-making

Reporting on SPS and TBT standards since 1996 through *Bridges* periodicals

Programmatic work fostering inclusive economic transformation

Two recent projects on standards and sustainable development:

- Private Sustainability Standards, Trade and Sustainable Development (2017): 3 papers
- Gender, Standards and Trade (2018): 3 papers

# Private Sustainability Standards, Trade and Sustainable Development: Lessons Learnt

Compliance with standards can boost market access and SDGs, but some producers may be excluded

To address those concerns, there is a need to ensure:

- Transparency (information, participation)
- Economic feasibility (costs, benefits for small business)
- Improved design and implementation

Private sector and civil society governance may neglect policies for increasing the welfare of societies as a whole

This provides rationale for interventions by public international actors, including IGOs

# ICTSD's Ongoing Work on Gender, Standards and Trade

- Research part of ICTSD project “New Thinking on Trade and Gender”
- Funded by Australian Department of Foreign Affairs
- Current research on standards, gender and trade:
  - SPS, gender and trade
  - Voluntary sustainability standards, gender and trade
  - Standards, gender and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- Being consolidated into a background paper on gender, standards and trade for WTO/WB Global Report on Trade and Gender
- Complemented by regional engagement (dialogues, dissemination)

# SPS Measures, Gender and Trade

- Gender issues associated with trade well-recognised:
  - Macro literature
  - Global value chains literature
- Trade-related SPS measures generally considered to be gender-neutral...if not explicitly then implicitly
- Signs that gender issues starting to be considered in the SPS arena...but remains the exception rather than the rule
- Need to move towards gender mainstreaming of trade-related SPS measures

# Gendered Nature of SPS Measures

- Gender impacts of compliance with SPS measures
- Importance of gender to SPS capacity-building
- Role of gender in international administration of SPS measures



Recommendations for national and international policy action

# Gender Impacts of Compliance with SPS Measures

- Female-operated businesses may face greater costs of compliance and/or struggle to finance these costs
- Women may lack critical skills required for compliance
- Women may struggle to access the resources required for compliance
- Compliance can induce changes to the structure and/or *modus operandi* of global value chains that exclude and/or disadvantage women
- Trade-related SPS measures can create opportunities for livelihood enhancement amongst women
- Women women may struggle to exploit positive opportunities for the proactive upgrading of global value chains

# Impact of SPS Measures on South Asian Shrimp Sector



# Impact of SPS Measures on South Asian Shrimp Sector



# Impact of SPS Measures on Nigerian Sesame Exports



# Where are the Gender Issues Greatest? - Need for an Assessment Tool

- Scale of exports
- SPS sensitivity
- Prevailing levels of SPS capacity
- Role of women in global value chains
- Precariousness of women's position in global value chains
- Skill and resource constraints faced by women

# Role of Gender in SPS Capacity-Building

- Critical steps in global value chains often dominated by women
- Skill and resource constraints faced by women
- Gender issues in delivery of capacity-building projects and programmes
- Harmonisation of SPS measures

# Implementation of Good Agricultural Practices in Malian Mango Sector



# Role of Gender in Global Governance of SPS Measures

## **WTO:**

- SPS Agreement
- SPS Committee

## **ISSOs:**

- Codex Alimentarius Commission
- International Plant protection Convention
- World Organisation for Animal Health



Technical focus  
Little or no consideration of gender issues

# Policy Recommendations – SPS Capacity-Building

- Comprehensive review of SPS capacity-building projects and programmes
- Identify and promote ‘best practice’
- Integrate gender into prioritisation of SPS capacity-building
- Assess impact on women of harmonisation of SPS measures
- Design and test a rapid assessment tool for identifying gender issues associated with SPS measures

# Policy Recommendations – Global Governance of SPS Measures

- Include gender issues on agenda of the SPS Committee
- Review of the ways in which other standards-setting organisations have addressed gender issues
- Promote greater participation of gender specialists in national delegations

# Implications for the STDF

- Fund projects that mainstream gender and evaluate these projects
- Review technical assistance projects and programmes that have a gender focus
- Identify and promote 'best practice'
- Update P-IMA

## Moving Forward: Research and Policy Agendas

- Failure to incorporate gender considerations into SPS rules and capacity building undermines their inclusiveness and development dividend
- Regional and Multilateral trade governance can solve this problem, including through consideration of gender issues in the STDF and SPS committee
- More research needed on specific modalities for gender mainstreaming, and dialogues amongst stakeholders to build consensus
- ICTSD is uniquely positioned to leverage its track record of engagement on gender, trade and standards to help countries move from exhortatory statements, to best practice, to mainstreamed gender provisions in trade agreements
- Alongside ICTSD's research agenda on enhancing the governance of standards to promote sustainable and inclusive development

# Relevant Publications:

## **Upcoming ICTSD Publications on Standards, Gender and Trade:**

- Gender and Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures in the Context of Trade: A review of Issues and Policy Recommendations. November 2018, Spencer Henson.
- Voluntary Sustainability Standards and gender equality in global value chains. December 2018, Federica Busiello, Sally Smith, Georgia Taylor and Elaine Jones
- The Gender Dimension of the 2030 Agenda: The Role of Standards. December 2018, Lorenza Jachia.

## **Selected ICTSD Publications on Gender:**

- Women-led Firms on the Web: What Are Their Regulatory Challenges – and What Are Solutions? 2018, Kati Suominen
- The Gender Dimensions of Global Value Chains, 2016, Penny Bamber and Cornelia Staritz
- The Gender Dimensions of Services, 2016, Julia Lipowiecka and Tabitha Kiriti-Nganga

## **Selected ICTSD Publications on Standards:**

- How Regulation and Standards Can Support Social and Environmental Dynamics in Global Value Chains. 2017, Raphael Kaplinsky and Mike Morris.
- The Role of Aid for Trade in Building the Capacity of Developing Country Firms to Meet Sustainability Standards. 2017, Jim Redden.
- Private Standards, Trade, and Sustainable Development: Policy Options for Collective Action. 2017, Fabrizio Meliado.



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**Thank you**



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