

**Mainstreaming gender dimension in  
capacity-building and technical cooperation  
in the area of trade and development**

**DRAFT**

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**Division on International Trade in  
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[www.unctad.org/trade\\_env/genderDITC.htm](http://www.unctad.org/trade_env/genderDITC.htm)



## Introduction

In July 1997, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) defined the concept of gender mainstreaming as follows:

- *"Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in any area and at all levels. The ultimate goal of mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality."*

As eloquently expressed by Carolyn Hannan:

- *"A number of key inter-linked constraints to gender mainstreaming can be identified which must be addressed in a more holistic framework, with strong support from senior management. One of the most critical constraints is the fact that gender perspectives are not included as an integral part of initial analyses of issues and problems. If gender perspectives are not dealt with explicitly and adequately at this level, subsequent attempts to incorporate them can lead to resistance and to artificial 'add-ons'. A presumable cause of this constraint is a second problem – the failure to recognize the value-added for achievement of all other goals of attention to gender perspectives.[...]. Developing a separate gender equality policy is not enough.[...]. Gender perspectives and the promotion of gender equality are still too often perceived as purely 'social' or 'soft' issues, and the critical importance of gender perspectives for macro-economic development is overlooked." (Hannan, C. 2003)*

In 2002 UNCTAD-DITC nominated its first gender-focal point<sup>1</sup> in order to enlarge the process of mainstreaming gender within the UN system activities, while attaining the representation for each Division to be more effective, and to reinforce the involvement of Staff Members in taking action to better implement UN's resolution, according to which all parts of the UN system should actively mainstream gender in their activities. This is in line with the commitment towards the achievements of the goals set up by the Beijing Declaration in 1995 and reinforced by the Millennium Development Goals (MDG)<sup>2</sup>.

Mainstreaming gender dimension in capacity-building and technical cooperation (TC) activities will need to translate the message of mainstreaming gender into action, namely:

- To conceive capacity building and TC activities in such a way that the goal of reducing the gender gap is embedded and explicit when dealing with specific fields in which the role of women is particularly relevant

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<sup>1</sup> Internal memo, 22 May 2002.

<sup>2</sup> Information on gender mainstreaming can be found at:  
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/gendermainstreaming.htm>

- To develop internal sensitisation so that the habit of addressing the gender dimension is widely adopted in the Business as Usual activities (i.e. training of staff)<sup>3</sup>
- To collect evidence when successful targets achieved in order to create a cumulative internal learning process on how to address the goal of gender equality in our activities
- To keep track of good practices and share methodologies in order to produce a set of guidelines specific to the trade and gender strategy<sup>4</sup>.

This essay discusses the role of capacity-building and technical cooperation as a key element of the overall mandate of UNCTAD, as a knowledge-based organization to support the definition of pro-active trade strategies towards sustainable development that take into account the human dimension of development, beyond the mere profile provided by the macro-economic profile of countries. As such, an explicit inclusion of the gender dimension is required. Section I of this essay introduces the rationale for capacity-building and technical cooperation in the area of trade and development, section II describes the developing countries' perspective, section III describes the work of UNCTAD in key areas of International Trade. Finally, section IV discusses how to mainstream gender issues in technical cooperation and capacity-building activities.

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<sup>3</sup> DITC is organizing an internal training course in order to implement the sensitisation part of the strategy on mainstreaming gender, May 2004.

<sup>4</sup> Within the UN system several briefing notes have already been defined in order to assist the mainstreaming process in other key areas, such as gender-budget sensitisation, gender and disarmament, and a few others, available at:  
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/statementsandpapers.htm>

## **I. Rationale for capacity-building and technical cooperation in the area of trade and development**

UNCTAD is the focal point in the UN system for the integrated treatment of international trade and development. The Division on International Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities (DITC) implements UNCTAD's mandate on the delivery of technical assistance and capacity building on trade and trade-related policies and trade negotiations in developing countries, particularly LDCs, and countries in transition, with a view to facilitating their beneficial integration into the international trading system. In doing so, there is steady building of endogenous capacities to utilize trade as an engine of growth and development, and contribute to achieving the Millennium Development Goals and Objectives for poverty alleviation. This mandate also entails regular monitoring, analysis and intergovernmental consensus building on the quality, quantity and focus of operational activities.

UNCTAD's technical assistance and capacity building work is intertwined and integrated with its analytical work and intergovernmental deliberations. The lessons learnt and experiences from operational activities are used to enrich policy analysis and intergovernmental debate, and the conclusions of the latter are used to improve the former. The work of UNCTAD is carried out in three major ways:

- In the work of the intergovernmental bodies such as progress review by the Trade and Development Board, the Commission on Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities, and different inter-governmental and ad hoc expert group meeting, which analyse and develop consensus on different aspects of international trade and trade negotiations;
- Research and analysis, and development and dissemination of databases and software on trade and commodity statistics, and trade measures; and
- Capacity-building, including training, and technical assistance for trade negotiations including the Doha work programme.

The Plan of Action adopted by the Tenth UNCTAD Conference in Bangkok set the main objective of UNCTAD in terms of its engagement in the area of international trade, i.e. to assist developing countries to integrate themselves more fully into, and derive benefits from, the international trading system. The focus of UNCTAD's work aims at policy analysis and consensus building to identify more clearly the parameters of the development dimension of the multilateral trading system, and to support capacity-building in developing countries so as to enable them to become effective players in the multilateral trading system in terms of deriving full benefits from trade liberalization, enjoying their multilateral rights and complying with obligations.

Several references to women and to gender equality are found in the Bangkok Plan of Action text, as follows: "Policies and programmes need to integrate a gender perspective in order to contribute to the empowerment of women and to achieve equality between women and men in all sectors of the economy. Social policies,

especially education, including girls' education as well as health policy and social safety nets, yield a high return of growth. (Par. 8, TD/386)".<sup>1</sup>

Further references can be found in different parts of the text, expressing the need to include the goal of gender equality by means of empowerment of women as a means to alleviate poverty. Among other practical approaches it suggests to enhance the possibilities to run SMEs by women, and to help them benefiting from greater education opportunities, which can be interpreted in a broader sense to help them benefit at large from UNCTAD's training programmes on a priority basis. In paragraph 24 of the BPA there is a reference to the fact that so far there has been a long-standing inability to integrate adequately women as full agents and beneficiaries of development strategies. Also, paragraph 109 points out "there should be analytical work on ... a gender perspective contributing to the empowerment of women in order to achieve gender equality in all sectors of the economy" (last point par. 109, P. 33 TD/386).

The Doha Ministerial Declaration adopted at the 4<sup>th</sup> Ministerial conference in November 2001 confirmed the importance of technical cooperation and capacity building as a key aspect of the development dimension of the multilateral trading system, and called upon WTO and other international agencies, including UNCTAD, for increased and better support in assisting developing countries and low-income countries in transition to adjust to WTO rules and disciplines, to implement obligations and exercise the rights of membership, including drawing on the benefits of an open, rules-based multilateral trading system. Although the Doha Round has included the development goals as an issue to be addressed, there is no specific allusion or mention to gender issues or to women-specific initiatives in the text of the Declaration. In the implementation of the Doha work programme, some NGOs have raised gender issues in the development meetings that have been convened by the WTO as part of their initiatives towards the development issues that have involved representatives of the civil society.

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<sup>1</sup> Bangkok Plan of Action, TD/386, 18 February 2000, can be found at: [http://www.unctad.org/en/docs/ux\\_td386.en.pdf](http://www.unctad.org/en/docs/ux_td386.en.pdf)

## **II The perspective and needs of developing countries**

The potential benefits for developing countries and least developed countries (LDCs) from the WTO Agreements derive from (a) trade liberalization in areas of their export interests; (b) strengthened disciplines with respect to the application of non-tariff measures; (c) enhanced transparency and stability in their own trade regimes, (d) specific provisions on special and differential treatment; (e) clear rules on intellectual property rights; and (f) more efficient and equitable dispute settlement mechanism. Developing countries could expect to derive benefits from strengthened and expanded multilateral rules as they bring their trade policies into line with their new obligations

However, to derive maximum benefit from WTO membership, developing countries must fully integrate themselves into the international trading system. This depends on each country's ability to (a) identify and exploit trading opportunities, and take advantage of the provisions for development and from the special and differential treatment, (b) to effectively defend its trading rights, (c) to fully implement its trade obligations and execute its development policies within the framework of these obligations, and (d) to define and pursue its trade and development interests in trade negotiations.

Most developing countries are poorly equipped – both in terms of institutions, as well as in human and financial resources - to take full advantage of the rights and benefits such integration can bring. Developing countries and LDCs face disadvantages in the following areas:

- Formulating and updating legislations, establishing institutions, setting up regulatory and enforcement bodies, and using trade agreements to achieve compliance, and their development goals.
- Setting-up institutions to make use of their rights in the multilateral trading system (MTS)
- Dealing with the cost of adjustment. These could be short-term and long-term costs, and they arise from specific obligations.
- Dealing with the high costs of defending themselves, redressing imbalances and taking advantages of their rights under the MTS.

These challenges all necessitate the provision of expanded, sustained and quality trade related technical assistance. Three main needs were identified:

- The need for immediate support in negotiating capacity regarding the understanding of the new Doha mandates and the formulation of national or regional positions
- The need of an increased understanding of the issues at stake so that developing countries' interests would be consistently taken into consideration while negotiating the conditions under which trade liberalization trends take place

- Long-term needs related to the capacity required inserting various negotiating processes into overall trade and development policies.

Thus, the needs of developing countries as regards capacity building developed within the Division on International Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities are for:

- Technical assistance in trade negotiations and commercial diplomacy for countries acceding to the WTO
- Capacity building for diversification and community based development
- Competition law and policy, and consumer protection
- Trade, environment and development
- Trade analysis and information systems
- Increased representation in the Agricultural Market Access Database
- Increased market access, trade laws and preferences
- Support to regional integration.

In most of these areas<sup>2</sup>, the anticipation at project-design level of the gender dimension would contribute to the implementation of the overall UN mandate on gender mainstreaming and would probably have a major impact on the effective participation of the necessary stakeholders to root the projects at the national level so that the capacity would be effectively built-in as a successful outcome of the TC activity.

### **III – UNCTAD contribution to capacity-building**

#### **III.1 Trade negotiations and commercial diplomacy activities**

During the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations, developing countries felt at a disadvantage, in that they did not have an agenda of their own, but were merely reacting to the proposals of their trading partners. Having recognized this weakness, they approached UNCTAD to assist them in the preparatory work relevant to their formulating their negotiation objectives for future trade negotiations, based on their specific trade and development interests, and taking into account ongoing work in WTO including negotiations. In response, UNCTAD is assisting developing countries in assessing and identifying their strategic trade and development interests within trade negotiation issues at the multilateral fora, in particular in the context of the WTO, as well as at the sub-regional and interregional levels.

The work program adopted by the 4<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference in November 2001 increased the demands of developing countries, LDCs and economies in transition regarding training and capacity building on the Doha mandates as well as on the broader multilateral and regional trade agendas that are having deep impacts on their development strategies. The consultations and requests of developing countries in terms of assistance highlighted two main needs: first, the immediate support to the negotiating capacity regarding the understanding of the new Doha mandates and the formulation of national or regional positions; secondly, the long-term needs related to the capacity required to insert the various negotiating processes into to the overall trade and development policies.

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<sup>2</sup> The reader can find more details on these different areas at: [www.unctad.org](http://www.unctad.org)

As the negotiations evolved from the organizational stages (definition of the scope of the mandates, working agendas, timetables) to the formulation of modalities, these short and long-term needs evolved accordingly. The more the negotiating process becomes precise and technically sophisticated, the more the developing countries request ad hoc training agendas.

Another aspect of changing needs that appeared relates to differences in the training needs of the Geneva-based Missions from those conveyed by the capitals. While the latter usually requested training and capacity building for several topics of the Doha agenda simultaneously, or for the articulation of the WTO negotiations with regional and bilateral trade processes, the Geneva-based requests of training were increasingly matching the pace of the WTO meetings, with a very strong focus on specific agriculture, services and market access issues.

Finally, the recent years witnessed a significant increase in the demand for training and capacity building from the non-governmental entities of developing countries such as academic institutions, professional associations, chambers of commerce interested in the trade and development policies and in understanding the implications of the Doha mandates.

#### *Commercial diplomacy activities*

The modalities of the training activities organised under the trade negotiations and commercial diplomacy activities also evolved in order to be increasingly tailor-made and topic-specific so as to address the individual needs of the recipient countries. Two main features deserve to be highlighted in this regard: first, the need to customise at the national level the instruments used for each training activity, sometimes at the sectoral level when the training targets, for instance, the business community; secondly, as mentioned above, in view of the increasing interest of the academic community of the developing countries, the activities provided evolved towards the preparation of "model" training courses and other training materials or methodologies that are helpful to the local trainers of these countries. Similarly, the training of trainers in the area of trade negotiations was also increasingly used.

The support to sub regional integration processes among developing countries was also present in the training and capacity building activities. One of the most successful in terms of dissemination as well as in-depth analysis of the issues was the Regional ECOWAS Workshop on Agriculture and Food Security, held in Conakry, Guinea, with the participation of the WTO.

#### *Assistance to countries acceding to WTO*

UNCTAD secretariat pursuant its mandate agreed at UNCTAD IX and X is assisting countries in the process of accession to the WTO as part of their integration into the world economy and international trading system. UNCTAD's technical cooperation with the Governments of acceding countries has the following general objectives:

- (a) To assist national officials in elaborating optimal policy approaches in the WTO accession process, particularly in making an inventory of relevant problems to be solved both of an internal and of an external

nature, including those related to the adaptation of existing and new trade-related legislation to the WTO rules and disciplines;

- (b) Training of national officials to strengthen their knowledge of multilateral trade negotiation techniques and tactics in order to improve their negotiating capacity;
- (c) To provide advice in trade policy formulation, particularly relating to the WTO accession negotiations;
- (d) To strengthen the capacities of trade-supporting national institutional structures (including the private sector and the academic community) through training and joint analysis of the relevant problem areas.

Technical assistance is delivered by UNCTAD through advisory missions and working directly with the national negotiating team; assistance in preparing documentation required by the WTO accession negotiations; preparation of analytical papers and briefings for national policy-makers; training of national trade negotiators on specific issues under the accession process; organization of brainstorming meetings and seminars; and dissemination of trade policy information to sensitize civil society and the private sector in acceding countries about the challenges and benefits of WTO membership.

Activities in different beneficiary countries focused on: (a) supporting the preparations of national negotiating teams for the meetings of the WTO Working Parties on Accessions, including definition of negotiating strategy and tactics, preparation of the Memorandum on the Foreign Trade Regime and written questions from WTO members; (b) assisting Governments in the preparation of offers on market access in goods and services and commitments on agricultural support measures; (c) preparing reports and background papers on policies of acceding countries' trading partners members of the WTO with regard to accession and scenarios of accession negotiations; (d) providing expertise and advice on strengthening capacity building in the area of trade policy; and (e) training of trade officials in specific trade policy issues. The impact of the technical assistance provided resulted in more effective participation by these countries' negotiating teams in the WTO accession negotiations through improved understanding of the WTO rules and disciplines and their implications for national policy options.

#### *Development of trade capacities*

The Programme JITAP (Joint ITC/UNCTAD/WTO Integrated Technical Assistance Programme to Selected Least Developed and Other African Countries) is the integrated response of ITC, UNCTAD and WTO, in collaboration with interested international donors, to assist in the effective integration of beneficiary African countries into the international trading system. It aims at building human, institutional, policy and export strategy capacities in African countries to better understand and manage their integration into the multilateral trading system. The beneficiaries of JITAP phase I are Benin, Burkina Faso, United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda (LDCs); Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya and Tunisia.

UNCTAD (with support from WTO and ITC) carried the lead responsibility for institutional capacity building for trade negotiations and policy formulation, primarily through strengthening of Inter-Institutional Committees (IICs) on WTO and their affiliated bodies. The IICs are fully operational in all JITAP countries and have acquired credibility, as many of them are now acting as advisory bodies to the Governments on trade policy and negotiation issues. They have become established as a cornerstone of the national consultative process on multilateral trade issues and multilateral trade negotiations, among government ministries/ departments and stakeholders from the private sector, academia and civil society. The IICs received technical advice, financial support and documentation from UNCTAD, WTO and ITC and, in some countries, were supported by national consultants. They met regularly to develop national consensus on trade policy and negotiations issues.

JITAP has clearly made an impact on and a difference to the countries participating in it, enabling them to be more actively involved in the multilateral trading system. Important achievements included building improved human resource capacities; better trade infrastructure (reference centres, national enquiry points); raising awareness of export-sector strategy issues; a better appreciation of the value of the multilateral trading system at the country level; connections and linkages have been stimulated between Government, the private sector and civil society; the vision of a holistic approach to trade issues that could benefit the development process has emerged; and the new role of the Ministry of Trade is now better appreciated at the country level.

In December 2002, beneficiary and donor countries, together with the three executing agencies, reached an agreement to launch a Phase II of JITAP from 2003 to 2006. The programme will cover 16 countries including the current eight beneficiary countries, and eight new countries namely Botswana, Cameroon, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Senegal, and Zambia.

#### *Market access, trade laws and preferences*

Initiatives in the context of the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) and other trade laws programme to provide better market access to products from developing countries, in particular the LDCs, as well as in sub-Saharan African countries might not yield the desired results as experience has demonstrated. The mere granting of tariff preferences or duty-free market access to exports originating in developing countries does not automatically ensure that trade preferences are effectively utilized by beneficiary countries. To accompany and support these ongoing developments, there is a need to increase utilization of preferences by beneficiary countries granted either through multilateral (GSP) or bilateral/regional arrangements (i.e. Cotonou, SADC, COMESA). There is also a need to enable developing country exporters and officials to negotiate on a more equal footing with their developed country counterparts and among themselves through enhanced knowledge of the laws, administrative and customs procedures relating to products of export interest to them, and thereby to overcome insufficient familiarity with, or misunderstanding of, the operation of such laws and regulations.

UNCTAD's intervention aims at assisting developing countries to increase their utilization of the trading opportunities and preferences under existing preferential arrangements, increase the understanding in developing countries of the

trade laws and regulations governing market access conditions in the international trading system, develop training modules at national level on the operation of trade laws on anti-dumping, subsidies and countervailing duties, safeguards measures and other legal instruments related to trade dispute.

### *Support to regional integration*

The objective here is to increase efforts to regional integration and foster interregional trade by supporting and enabling government officials to conduct negotiations in the area of goods and services at sub regional, regional and multilateral levels, carefully assessing the impact of rules-of-origin and trade in services regulations on trade among the partner countries of the region.

### *III.2 Capacity building for diversification and commodity based development*

UNCTAD is assisting developing and least-developed countries in promoting the horizontal, vertical and geographical diversification of their production and trade structures, in improving government's capacities to formulate focused, effective and sequenced policies in this respect, in increasing the competence of enterprises in adapting their business strategies and supplies to the Post-Uruguay Round trading framework, and in strengthening positive linkages between the commodity sector and the rest of the economy. This is in response to the needs in commodity-dependent developing countries for capacity building in the following areas: (i) improving the capacity of enterprises to adapt export diversification strategies and business practices to modern market exigencies, (ii) improving effective partnerships between enterprises and finance providers, capacity building for Governments to design and implement focused and sequenced policies and measures that tackle the most important problems, (iii) increasing the effectiveness of local institutions and civil society in ensuring that the disadvantaged segments of the population are involved in the diversification process with a view to reducing poverty, increasing national and regional food security and food self-sufficiency, and regional trade.

Assistance has been provided through the organization of national workshops on various issues like the links between artisanal fisheries and world markets (Banjul, Gambia, April), horticulture for national development (Abuja, Nigeria, April); certification and marketing of organic products (Lima, Peru, April), Horticultural diversification (Mauritius, May), and diversification in agricultural sector, international trade and development (Tashkent, Uzbekistan, September). UNCTAD also assisted in the preparation of policy-oriented studies and training notes, with the involvement of consultants and resource persons from developing countries and countries in transition.

### *Commodity risk management, finance and energy*

Governments that liberalize their commodity sectors risk leaving a vacuum behind. In agriculture, if they no longer set prices, how will prices be determined? How will farmers, processors, traders and consumers cope with the price fluctuations to which they become exposed - and farmers, who tend to be highly risk averse, have to give up a large share of their income in order to reduce their risk exposure if they have no access to proper tools to manage these risks. How can banks lend into the commodity sector in a liberalized environment? All these issues are becoming even

more relevant in the face of the globalization of the commodity economy – in order to be competitive, developing countries need highly efficient commodity sectors in which the above issues have been resolved.

The work of UNCTAD in the area of commodity risk management, finance and energy aims to assist finding such solutions, using modern financial tools such as commodity exchanges and a warehouse receipt system to fill the vacuum left by liberalization, with the main objective to improve the use made of modern marketing, risk management and financing possibilities in commodity production and trade.

Another area of UNCTAD's work in the area of commodities is related to market information. The UNCTAD programme on market information in the commodities area was designed to increase developing countries' competitiveness and negotiating power. Additional objectives include the improvement of the capacities of developing country enterprises to access and use information, particularly in electronic form; The activities carried out resulted in a significant improvement in the basic market information available at no cost to developing countries, thus improving their possibilities to position themselves on world commodity markets.

### **III.3 Competition law and policy and consumer protection**

Strengthened competition enhances the overall economic efficiency and significantly improves prospects for sustained economic growth and development. The worldwide implementation of fundamental market-oriented economic reforms has unleashed considerable competitive forces, which play a key role in ensuring the success of the reforms and need to be supported by the appropriate rules of the game. However, despite a general widespread trend towards the adoption, reformulation or better implementation of competition laws and policies in developing countries and economies in transition, many of these countries still do not have up-to-date competition legislation and policies or do not apply them with full effectiveness and request technical assistance in this area. In this connection, the UN Set of Multilaterally Agreed Equitable Principles and Rules for the Control of Restrictive Business Practices calls for the provision of technical assistance, advisory and training programmes, particularly to developing countries. Furthermore, at UNCTAD X, UNCTAD was given a mandate to continue and expand its help to interested countries in developing their national regulatory and institutional framework in the area of competition law and policy.

The programme aims at assisting developing countries, including the LDCs as well as economies in transition in formulating or reviewing competition policies and legislations, at contributing to the building of national institutional capacity in this area, at providing government officials and private entrepreneurs with a better understanding of competition laws and policies and at assisting the above-mentioned countries to better evaluate the implications of closer multilateral cooperation. Assistance is provided through seminars, provision of information about anticompetitive practices, assistance to States which are in the process of drafting competition legislation in the form of provision of information on such legislation in other countries or advice on drafting, advisory services for the setting-up of a competition authority, which usually includes training of officials responsible for the actual control of anticompetitive practices and may involve training workshops and/or on-the-job training with competition authorities in countries having experience in the

field of competition. UNCTAD also organized seminars for States which have already adopted competition legislation, have experience in the control of anticompetitive practices and wish to consult each other on specific cases and exchange information, and provided assistance to States which wish to revise their competition legislation and seek expert advice from competition authorities in other States, so as to amend their laws in the most effective manner possible. Last, assistance has been provided to developing countries, including the LDCs as well as economies in transition, so that they may better evaluate the implications of closer multilateral cooperation in competition area for their development.

Technical assistance related to preparation, drafting or revision of national competition policies and legislation was provided at the country level as well as the regional and sub-regional levels.

### **III.4 Trade, environment and development**

UNCTAD has a fairly comprehensive capacity building programme in the area of trade, environment and development. It has a number of countries, regional and interregional projects addressing a range of issues. A few highlights include the following:

The project "Building Capacity for Improved Policy Making and Negotiation on Key Trade and Environment Issues" is assisting a dozen countries in two regions (Southeast Asia and Central America and the Caribbean) to examine the impact of environmental requirements on their market access. It is expected that the project will help the countries develop early warning systems for emerging environmental requirements in export sectors of key interest to them (horticulture in both regions; electronics and leather and footwear in Asia). In addition, the project assists beneficiary countries in informing and preparing themselves for the post-Doha negotiations on environmental issues. In Central America, the focus is particularly on the negotiations on environmental goods and services, for which a number of country papers have been prepared and discussed at regional workshops.

UNCTAD's BIOTRADE Initiative aims to enhance the capability of developing countries to produce value-added products and services derived from biodiversity, for both domestic and international markets. In close collaboration with national and regional partners, it has assisted countries in the Andean and Amazonian regions to implement Biotrade programmes and policies.

To take advantage of complementary competencies and generate synergies, UNCTAD and UNEP have joined forces to create the UNEP-UNCTAD Capacity Building Task Force on Trade, Environment and Development. A number of activities have been carried out in this framework, including a constructive policy dialogue in February 2002 on enhancing developing country exports of organic agricultural products, as well as a number of regional workshops held back-to-back with WTO Regional Seminars on Trade and Environment.

### **III.5 Trade analysis**

In addition to its policy-oriented and analytical work aimed at improving the understanding of current and emerging issues in international trade of concern to

developing countries, UNCTAD has engaged in the development of analytical tools and data bases.

#### *Trade analysis and information system (TRAINS)*

UNCTAD developed the Trade Analysis and Information System (TRAINS) and its corresponding dissemination tool, the TRAINS CD-ROM. TRAINS is an information system intended to increase transparency in international trading conditions. It is intended more specifically to provide a comprehensive information system for use by policy makers and economic operators engaged in exporting. It is also a powerful tool that can be used in trade negotiations (e.g. to monitor an integration process) and for general research on international trade. One component of the system relates to the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) in that it includes information on tariffs, preferential margins, rules of origin and other regulations affecting the export interests of developing countries vis-à-vis the preference-giving countries.

#### *Increasing Developing Countries Representation in the Agricultural Market Access Database (AMAD)*

AMAD has become an important tool for developing countries in the analysis of WTO market access issues in agriculture. In addition to providing direct and free access to any user around the world with Internet, the data from the AMAD are used in the Agricultural Trade Policy Simulation Model (ATPSM), a cooperative effort between UNCTAD and FAO. The ATPSM is an international trade policy model capable of detailing quantitative analysis of trade policy issues in agriculture.

#### *Agricultural Trade Policy Simulation Model (ATPSM)*

ATPSM is an international agricultural trade policy model capable of providing a quantitative analysis of trade policy issues in agriculture. It features detailed policy data for 161 countries, which means that negotiators and analysts can determine how agricultural trade reform may affect individual countries. ATPSM is a cooperative effort between UNCTAD and FAO. UNCTAD has received funding by DFID for model development and dissemination. ATPSM is available free of charge on CD. ATPSM is also used inside UNCTAD for analysing trade policies issues and institutions of developing countries, LDCs and economies in transition (the so-called "capacity building component" of the Programme), in order to enhance their own long-term capacity in the area of trade policies and negotiations.

#### **IV. Capacity building, technical assistance and gender: why and how to mainstream?**

Evidence has been given by studies from academics and from IGOs and NGOs that mainstreaming gender leads to improvement in terms of socio-economic goals. Therefore, mainstreaming gender issues in technical cooperation programmes can be seen as part of an overall strategy to increase the impact, in the long-term, on structural development factors. Indeed, by offering increased opportunities to women (and girls) in developing countries the technical assistance will have a multiplier effect by affecting key parameters of development:

- *Demographic factors:* it is generally accepted that increased economic opportunities for women in acceding to remunerated working opportunities leads to a reduction of the fertility rate which is very often one of the factors that cannot be successfully addressed without providing clear socio-economic incentives.
- *Economic factors:* targeting women when building capacities and strengthening institutional framework for sustainable development and pro-active trade policies will consolidate the establishment of a local empowerment and spreading all-over the society, therefore increasing the potential endogenous take-off that is aimed at when implementing technical cooperation .
- *Social factors:* while women are at the basis of the social organization of most societies, empowering them has an immediate impact in the dynamics of the system. It would probably accelerate the pace of spreading the effects of technical cooperation within the countries, not only at the entry points of government officials but at the implementation level and being transmitted by their role in education, family and local networks.

The Division on International Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities (DITC), at the core of UNCTAD, has a long experience in developing technical cooperation programmes and launching their implementation until the level of local ownership ensures its sustainability and the achievement of the goals. So far, gender dimension has not been consistently addressed as one of the overarching parameters, but it was included on ad hoc basis depending on the singularity of each case<sup>3</sup>. It is worth to mention that achievements on mainstreaming gender in the area of concern of DITC work is hardly measurable, due to the intrinsic nature of the work concerning capacity-building in the area of trade. Contrary what has been successfully achieved by other UN-organizations such as UNIDO, or specific UNCTAD programmes such as EMPRETEC, specifically oriented to entrepreneurs, capacity building in the area of trade policy and trade negotiations cannot be easily tracked by means of meaningful quantitative indicators.

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<sup>3</sup> Early work on gender and trade is collected in the report of the expert meeting held in 1999, with contributions from UNCTAD staff and international experts (UNCTAD/EDM/Misc.78). It can be found at [http://r0.unctad.org/trade\\_env/test1/topics/UNCTAD19999poedm\\_m78.en.pdf](http://r0.unctad.org/trade_env/test1/topics/UNCTAD19999poedm_m78.en.pdf).

As indicated earlier in this essay, objectives to be achieved through capacity building and technical assistance include an end to the marginalisation of developing countries and LDCs, and the development of their ability to take full advantage of the benefits of the multilateral trading system. Such a goal must necessarily take into account the role of women and the reduction of the gender gap to ensure the sustainability of any structural transformation of the socio-economic context in such a way that the endogenous trend of sustainable development will be based on the grassroots. Participation of women and men is required in order to build a balanced and equitable system of growth not based on disparities and uneven distribution of wealth, welfare and property rights.

UNCTAD has a role to play in dealing with the issue of distribution and social impact of trade liberalisation with a gender perspective. It is also the role of organizations such as UNCTAD, born with a mandate of fairness and development, to keep the international community aware of the need of a broader and more decided inclusion of women and reduction of gender disparities in the definition of the international framework to fairly distribute within developing countries societies the developmental gains issued from improved and increased trade flows.

In carrying its capacity building and technical cooperation activities, UNCTAD should pay special attention to mainstreaming gender, with the following goals:

- Sensitising policy-makers on gender dimension of trade liberalisation: Capacity building and technical cooperation in the areas of commercial diplomacy and JITAP, through the Inter-institutional Committees of JITAP, should address the positive impact in terms of development gains that might derive from an increased participation of women in trade activities.
- Strengthening the interface between trade liberalisation, poverty reduction and sustainable development by taking into account the gender dimension. This could be addressed through capacity-building in the area of commodities, agriculture, textiles, and trade and environment, being sectors in which women's participation from the economic and social point of view is an instrumental input to economic growth (see papers from Ralf Peters and Michiko Hayashi).
- Building long-term strategies generating endogenous mechanisms of involving women in the economy of their country – creating awareness on the relevance of equitable access to economic rights. Capacity-building aiming at diversification of economic activities facilitating access to foreign markets and building on comparative advantage could be used to explore opportunities for niche markets concerning products from sectors with high participation of women, such as labour-intensive service activities, tourism, health services, organic products;
- Promoting development opportunities for those sectors in which women are key actors and that represent dynamic sectors and good market opportunities for developing countries – i.e. textiles, horticulture, products from biodiversity, services mainly through the movement of natural persons as service providers or through outsourcing.

- Diffusing information on the positive impact of women's participation in the economy and of the asset they represent for developing countries.
- Involving more women in the implementation of the project in order to increase the integration of women in the economic activity and the acknowledgement from their national authorities of the economic role they can play.
- Defining benchmark indicators on the participation of women in order to evaluate the contribution on reducing the gender gap that would arise from the project's implementation.
- Defining quality indicators to estimate the relationship between gender and development.

### *Concluding remarks*

A common and recent characteristic for most of technical cooperation activities is related to the inclusion of a gender-specific dimension. The reason to do this has been discussed in many others best qualified arenas with sound social science foundations and arguments in terms of the impact for the development paths of the beneficiary countries. The purpose of this essay was not to repeat them but to propose concrete ways of addressing this responsibility that UNCTAD shares with all the other parts of the UN system in assisting developing countries. It is precisely in those countries where the mainstreaming of gender dimension in the business as usual programmes of technical cooperation will bring the more benefits for all, for women and for men and for children and for the economy and for the society as a whole. To do so, we need to overcome one main obstacle; it is the trend of not taking seriously the need of including gender dimension. It is often treated as a kind of “nice discourse to be addressed when nothing else is to be done”; while indeed there is a need for a profound rethinking of the whole issue. This is in reality what “mainstreaming” is all about.

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