Reference Guide

"Unless these constraints are adequately addressed, the EIF will leave women out, exacerbating their exclusion and poverty."
Ngoné Diop.

The Gender Dimension of the Enhanced Integrated Framework

Expert roundtable jointly organized by ITC, WTO, Government of Zambia and Government of Lao PDR

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Homogeneity cannot be assumed

One of the lessons learnt in observing the multilateral trading system (MTS) has been that market access alone does not facilitate trade: supply side constraints have to be understood and addressed to enable engagement. Therefore to help LDCs better integrate into and benefit from the MTS, the 'Integrated Framework' was set up to:

- develop the capacity of LDCs to trade, including through capacity building and addressing supply constraints.
- assist in the coordinated delivery of trade-related technical assistance in response to needs identified by LDCs;.
- mainstream trade into LDC's national development plans such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs);

Yet the EIF itself needs to be implemented with a clear understanding of the target beneficiaries: men and women. In much the same way as the EIF helps LDCs that face different constraints to benefit from the multilateral trading system, the EIF must reach out – to women and men - to build their capacity through an understanding of the different constraints faced by women and by men and by young women and men in those groups. Where the constraints are different, a different approach will be required. Homogeneity cannot be assumed.

A full understanding of the gender dimension to trade can change the definition and priority of interventions supported under the EIF. With careful attention to building the capacity of women and men and addressing the constraints they face to trade.

"What Constraints?"

Customs - Gender Neutral?

"An ECOWAS study on the trade border activities in West Africa suggests that the rights of women traders enshrined in the ECOWAS' charter are regularly violated, they are subject to corruption, sexual harassment and abuses."

- Ngoné Diop, UNECA, Expert Round-table on the Gender Dimension of the EIF.

"For women who have to cross the border frequently to buy and sell their goods, there are no evident and clear guidelines at border posts about taxes to guide both the customs official and trader. The lack of such clarifications compromises the position of the small scale trade and disposes them to risky situations. During all these negotiations (if) it has become too late for the women to find public transport, there may be a lorry driver who will be willing to take her to her destination. On the other hand, the customs officials may offer to accommodate the business woman who cannot continue with her journey as it is too late and some relationship may ensue predisposing the trader to risky situations.

When mapped, the contours of HIV/AIDS transmission are evident at border crossings where customs procedures are slow and /or lack transparency. I wonder whether the cost of improving customs might be less than the cost – in human and dollar terms – of dealing with the rising HIV/AIDS pandemic."

- Bernadette Olowo-Freers, UNAIDS, Expert Round-table on the Gender Dimension of the EIF.

Potential solutions to include in an Action Matrix:

- Computerised customs services: In Ghana this innovation has increased transparency and reduced corruption. Good for men, even better for women. It also increased customs revenues collected by the government 35% in the first year of operation.
- Training for customs officials in customs evaluation, sexual harassment and HIV/AIDS.
- Extension of customs hours at border points to facilitate a freer flow of traffic.
- Assist in the formation of associations of women who trade in like products to enhance their understanding of trade rules and to leverage economies of scale.

Transport – Gender neutral?

Transport is fundamental to getting goods and service providers to market. In addition to the trade dimension, access to transport can improve personal security in particular for women and help get young girls safely to school.

> "Car availability in Malawi is very low: 201,520 registered vehicles of which 10% are owned by women. For the majority of the rural population the only means of transport is walking, head-loading bicycles and animal-drawn carts. Women own 15% of bicycles. Animal drawn cart ownership is 56 carts per 1000 population in the rural areas and 25 carts per 1000 population in the urban areas. Women own less than 2 per cent of these carts in both the rural and urban areas.
>
> The existing transport sector policies are not engendered. This needs to be addressed."
>
> ***- Malawi DTIS***

Lacking access to transport, in many countries, rural women spend 30% of their income on transport, and much of their time, thus reducing their ability to perform more value-adding activities. Village transport surveys in Tanzania and Zambia show that women spend nearly three times as much time in transport activities compared with men, and they transport about four times as much in volume (Malmberg-Calvo 1994, Barwell 1996.)

Adequately responding to constraints women face to accessing transport could increase women's contribution to economic productivity and qualitatively improve household welfare.

Potential solutions under the EIF:

- Transport surveys that consult users for feedback on how to improve the transport systems, further marginalise women who do not yet enjoy the same access to transport as men. Consult women.
- Design road systems and networks in a way that facilitates trade and employment opportunities for women and for men.

Employment - Gender neutral?

"Women constituted 91% of employees in the foreign-owned sectors of garments and footwear in 2000. There is evidence indicating the significant transfer of wages earned by rural workers, to the poor in rural areas. These remittances are not negligible."

- Lesotho DTIS

"Women participate less in the formal sector where in each job category there are 4 men employed for each woman. In addition, men earn about 18% more than women for the same job after controlling for all other factors."

- Malawi DTIS

"Women own and operate over 60% of registered small businesses in the Lao PDR and the percentage may be higher in some urban areas. Our DTIS Action Matrix we have identified key activities and projects which aim to improve the export competitiveness for Laos small and medium sized enterprises and there is a strong focus on the poor. The SME sector is an excellent entry point for reaching out to women, who statistically tend to be mostly engaged in small business and tend to be amongst the poorest of the poor. The Lao DTIS Action Matrix also identifies key sectors for promotion such as traditional handicraft and the textile industry at village, which are mainly represented by women.

However, women face a number of constraints such as limited access to market information, technical training and financial services."

- Khemmani Pholsena, Vice Minister of Industry and Commerce, Lao PDR

Solution:

- Improving the business environment for women: The Laos DTIS focuses on 'Improving Business Environment in Laos' and on enhancing the competitiveness of light manufacturing in Laos, particularly in the garment sector, silk products, handicraft products and wood processing sectors. These are all areas in which women are highly represented and this presents a unique opportunity for improving women participation in trade.

- Cambodia's 2007 DTIS included the 'impact on employment of women' as part of the socio-economic impact index used to assess opportunities for export development.

Law - Gender neutral?

> "The gender and poverty issue is ultimately one of property rights. The ability to own and transfer and an asset is a key factor that will allow one to expand opportunities and generate wealth. Granting females asset ownership rights will reduce poverty."
>
> ***- Lesotho DTIS***

Solution:

- Conduct a review of legislative administrative and regulatory procedures that discriminate against women, particularly in trade-related areas.

The Need for Coherence Between Approaches

Currently in Zambia, there is an ad hoc approach to integrating women into trade. Implementation is isolated. This has resulted, not only in a minimal uplifting of women's lives, but in insignificant headway being made in terms of mainstreaming these programmes into the national planning and budgeting processes. Bringing these programmes under the EIF is desirable as a coordinated approach would enhance the delivery of programmes and achieve more sustainable results across a broader base. The Zambian Action Matrix is silent on gender so no efforts are underway under the EIF to address the situation.

However, the need to focus on unlocking the potential of micro, small and medium enterprises, including through reaching out to women and youth, is foreseen under that part of the development plan dealing with 'Economic Empowerment'. Limited resources for the implementation of the Economic Empowerment Policy can be drawn through funds earmarked for the national development plan. Clearly, a more significant impact could be achieved by drawing on EIF funds as well. The silence on 'gender' 'women' and 'youth' in the Action Matrix is unfortunately itself a constraint here. Funding proposals that target the economic empowerment of women and youth, through trade related capacity building programmes, have not been submitted under the EIF, as there is no 'hook' in the Action Matrix to link it to.

Recognising the double rewards of a gender sensitive Action Matrix, ***Maybin Nsupila***, Zambia, noted that "Recognising gender in the next iteration of the DTIS and Action Matrix is a priority as this could help direct more resources to gender integration activities thereby increasing the effectiveness of the interventions and accelerating the full integration of women into the mainstream economy. Futhermore, not only is this a priority for Zambia but it is also in line with Zambia's commitment to the SADC framework where gender as it relates to women's empowerment is also a priority in view of the contribution that this could make towards regional development and wealth creation."

Constraints Need to be Addressed Because Women Head Households are Numerous and Poor

"Gender issues are particularly important in Lesotho where one in six labour force participants is employed in South Africa, leaving the woman as de facto household head."

- Lesotho DTIS

Country	Women as house-hold heads (%)	Country	Women as house-hold heads (%)
Madagascar (1997)	21.6	Zambia (1990)	16.9
Malawi (1996)	25.7	Rwanda	32
Mozambique (1997)	26.8	Lesotho	45

Source: Khuena Mophethe, Lesotho, Expert Round-table on the Gender Dimension of the EIF and UN-INSTRAW Gender, Remittances and Development (2007)

"Without positive measures towards women's empowerment, women miss out, with the repercussions for the families they head and support; the Lesotho Government misses out on leveraging the economic opportunity locked up in unrealised potential and the very mechanism designed to help empower the Least Developed Countries to trade – the Enhanced Integrated Framework – fails to meet its objective."

- Kuena Mophethe, Lesotho, Expert Round-table on the Gender Dimension of the EIF

"A quarter of households in Malawi are female-headed and disproportionately poorer. These households are more vulnerable because:

- They have fewer potential adult workers than other households;
- Have more demands on the breadwinner with responsibility for childcare and household management; and
- Are both by custom and skill, less readily employable outside the household."

- Malawi DTIS

"Whilst partnerships must be built with all sectoral ministries and other government institutions such as the Department of Statistics, specific strategic partnership should also be fostered between the four ministries intervening directly in the trade process namely the Ministry of Gender/Women, the Ministry of Trade, Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Commerce/ Finance. In Rwanda, the Ministry of gender supported by the PRS Secretariat and the Department of Statistics that reports to the Ministry of Finance championed leadership on mainstreaming gender issues into the PRSP."

– Ngoné Diop

The Way Forward

The Enhanced Integrated Framework provides the ideal platform through which gender-based constraints to trade in LDCs may be effectively addressed. Project proposals flowing from Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies that have been prioritised in the Action Matrix, are formulated and appraised at the national level. If the project proposal is aligned to national development objectives, that typically include poverty reduction and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, (where MDG 3 is the empowerment of women) it maybe submitted to the EIF Board for its approval. Thus, the EIF Governance and Trust Fund are to be seen as a strong support to the implementation of gender related projects in LDCs.

Through the Expert Round table on the Gender Dimension of the EIF the organisers hope that key EIF stakeholders develop a better understanding of the constraints women face to trade. Trade is not gender neutral. Trade development solutions must therefore meet the needs of the people – women and men – to be effective.

To help move forward the Expert Round table provides EIF decision makers with:

- An operational network of experts, the Gender Experts Exchange on EIF (comprised of participants in the Expert Round-table) that connects regularly to support LDCs on gender;
- This reference guide that all those engaged in EIF can draw on to consider what obstacles to trade women face in the national context and what might be done to address these;
- Key recommendations to the EIF stakeholders, including the EIF Board and the National Implementation Arrangements to ensure that gender issues are properly mainstreamed into EIF; and
- The inspiration for you to start – now.

Objectives	Measures	Responsible Agencies	Timeline
Expand marketing and production of non-traditional sub-sectors: Shea nuts	(i) Formulate a sector development policy for shea nuts; (ii) Promote shea nut products, and facilitate the diversification of export markets; (iii) Strengthen the capabilities of women associations and NGOs to intensify information and awareness building programs for producers on the production of high quality shea butter;	Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry for the Promotion of Investment in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises, IER, CCIM, APCAM, APROFA, CNPI, MIC, DNCC, DGRC	(12 months)

Source: Mali Action Matrix

Conclusion

A gender-differentiated approach yields benefits beyond trade enhancement: the link between the economic empowerment of women and development is unambiguous. The attainment of MDG 3 – gender equality and the empowerment of women - is linked to all other development goals and critical to poverty reduction, given that 70% of the world's poor are women.

It is critical therefore that in preparing the DTIS, women's interests in trading and producing are taken into account so as to ensure the incorporation into the DTIS by the LDCs of any measures that facilitate trade for women. Gender sensitive monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to help ensure future success in the process are also important. To assist in identifying successful approaches, a sharing of best practice and country-based examples by LDCs are showcased at the Expert Round-table on the Gender Dimension of the Enhanced Integrated Framework.

out of Africa
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