



# AID-FOR-TRADE: CASE STORY

THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE CENTRE

**African Trade Policy Centre as Aid for Trade in Action on Gender Issues**

# CASE STORY ON GENDER DIMENSION OF AID FOR TRADE

**African Trade Policy Centre (ATPC) as Aid for Trade (AfT) in  
Action on Gender Issues**

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## THE ROLE OF AFRICAN TRADE POLICY CENTRE (ATPC/UNECA) IN DELIVERING AFT TO AFRICAN COUNTRIES

UNECA as a regional institution plays a crucial role in AfT operationalization since Africa is home to the largest concentration of the potential beneficiaries of the AfT initiative. Effectively, since the establishment of the ATPC in May 2003 with the support of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), ECA's support to building African trade capacities has increased significantly. The core ATPC objective is to strengthen the human, institutional and policy capacity of African governments to formulate and implement sound trade policies and participate more effectively in international trade negotiations. Since June 2008 the official start of ATPC II mainstreaming gender in all ATPC programmes and implementation is considered a very important pillar. ATPC II has even been called "Canada's AfT in action" where mainstreaming gender, at the behest of CIDA policy, plays an important role in this respect. ATPC believes that making the links between gender equality and AfT is a measure of aid effectiveness. ATPC also believes that a full understanding of the gender dimension can bring a value added to trade as it can change the definition and priority of interventions supported under the AfT. It is critical therefore that in preparing national development plans, women's interests in trading and producing are taken into account so as to ensure the incorporation into action plans, export strategies and other trade- related poverty reduction strategies.

An important component of regional integration is trade facilitation, an area where AfT is expected to pay particular emphasis and an area that has strong gender implications. For instance, immediate assistance is needed to harmonize customs procedures so as to minimize delays at African borders. Moreover, the removal of many roadblocks along major transport corridors, most of which connect landlocked countries to the sea, is also needed so as to improve trade flows. This matters to both men and women, as women have been traditionally the cross border traders of Africa, contributing hugely to national accounts. ATPC/UNECA has been a major voice for infrastructure development in Africa and could therefore play a key role in the AfT components that target trade facilitation.

### ISSUES ADDRESSED

ATPC has recognized the need to incorporate cross-cutting themes such as the promotion of gender equality in its activities, since gender inequality remains one of the main challenges facing African countries. These inequalities manifest themselves in various forms, ranging from women's limited access to, and control of, factors of production and social services, and socio-economic opportunities, to low representation in decision-making spheres.

Mainstreaming gender concerns into national trade strategies and tracking progress of gender impacts from and within trade agreements involve several strategies from:

- Ensuring -to the extent possible- an awareness of mitigating negative impacts on women from trade agreements;
- Paying more attention to the specific needs of women traders as producers for increased benefits for women of national, regional, and international trade;
- To increasing the viability of more women as potential traders.

The status, needs and interests of women differ from those of men in a number of ways. This fact influences the strategic orientation of development activities. Consequently, an institution's capacity to respond to these gender-based differences is an important indicator of its effectiveness. Important indicators of such a capacity include: a firm commitment; structures and mechanisms for putting such a commitment into practice; a capacity for analysis and planning based on a gender-sensitive data collection system; women's participation within the institution – including within decision-making bodies; and, finally linkages and partnerships with organizations and agencies that work to promote gender equality and equity.

## OBJECTIVE PURSUED

To establish the most appropriate participatory approaches and mechanisms for ensuring benefits to both men and women from ATPC activities are institutionalized and sustainable in UNECA.

## DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION LEADS TO A FUTURE MONITORING FRAMEWORK

ATPC adopts a hybrid model with three gender strategies:

**Strategy one:** Gender mainstreaming into all of ATPC current and planned activities, processes and policies.

ATPC systematically integrate gender into current and planned policies, programmes and activities so that it is more gender responsive at all levels. ATPC developed a Gender policy and implementation framework, which states its commitment to gender equality and makes all staff a part of its enactment. ATPC training workshops ensures the covering of gender issues and respect a gender balance in participation to ensure the voices of women are heard and their concerns are addressed. ATPC also developed a gender and trade roster of experts from within Africa and its diaspora along with international gender specialists in trade to help with gender issues.

**Strategy two: Mounting tangible gender- specific initiatives.**

ATPC is uniquely positioned to become an interlocutor between policymakers and women traders through championing gender and trade issues and findings at higher policy levels and in recommendations to member states and RECs, becoming a think tank for gender and trade issues in Africa, and recognizing and “messaging” the real value of women in trade in Africa.

**Strategy three: Work in coordination with broader UNECA initiatives- the African Centre for Gender and Social Development (ACGSD)**

The ACGSD developed indicators for gender and trade areas and ATPC is promoting them at policy and training workshops to better inform governments on how to apply such indicators.

## FACTORS FOR SUCCESS

ATPC has unique advantages since it is recognized and accepted as policy advisors to national governments. ATPC could assist in addressing the emerging issues in gender and trade policy and practices in Africa.

**Internal factor for success:** Strong collaboration between UNECA/ACGSD and ATPC

**External factor for success:** Strong support from CIDA through its Gender Equality in African Regional Institutions (the GEARI project), strong collaboration between ACCESS/PACT (ITC), UNIFEM and ATPC

## ATPC SUCCESS STORIES TO DATE:

**Creating the pan-African Alliance for Electronic Commerce (AACE)**

ATPC spearheaded the creation of the African Alliance on E-Commerce. Its objectives are to intensify cooperation and initiate common projects of interest to African countries in the area of Single Windows to make it easier for African men and women exporters.

**COMPLETION OF A MAJOR STUDY ON FEASIBILITY OF DRY PORTS FOR ETHIOPIA  
ATPC HAS COMPLETED A FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DRY PORTS IN ETHIOPIA. THE STUDY HAS IDENTIFIED IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED AT EXISTING DRY PORTS AND PROPOSED LOCATIONS FOR NEW ONES. THIS HAS POSITIVE IMPACTS FOR MEN AND WOMEN TRADERS**

**Creation of trade and gender network**

The gender inception workshop in April 2009 as well as the follow-up training in June 2009 resulted in creation of a group of trade and gender advocates.

### **Influencing the debate on Aid for Trade (AfT)**

Through its research and presentations at high-level meetings, ATPC has influenced the debate on AfT and played a leading role in shaping Africa's position. High-level meetings at which ATPC presented AfT patterns and challenges in Africa include for example the AU Conference of Ministers of Trade held in Addis Ababa on 19-20 March, 2009; the High-Level North-South Corridor AfT meeting held in Lusaka, Zambia on 6-7 April 2009 and attended by 4 Heads of State (Kenya, Zambia, Uganda, and South Africa); and the second Global AfT review held in Geneva on 6-7 July 2009, the expert group meeting and workshop on AfT and Africa's trading capacity: supply, demand and performance in UNECA, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 31 May- 2 June 2010. In all meetings, gender issues were noted.

ATPC Phase II after discussion with CIDA (the GEARI project), changed to embrace more effective and more equitable African participation for both men and women as described in its paper: "A Bird Cannot Fly With Just One Wing: Towards a Gender- Balanced Trading System".

### **Results achieved**

CIDA assists its key Pan-African partner organizations - amongst them, the ATPC - to integrate gender equality results into their analysis, planning, implementation and monitoring of their policies and programs. Developing the capacities of pan-African institutions to mainstream gender equality imperatives in their policies and programs is an integral component of the ATPC's Program's approach to institutional capacity development.

The main results and indicators to monitor them:

- A gender audit to identify gaps
- A performance monitoring chart with gender indicators to mark progress
- Gender equality action plan developed, implemented and monitored, while ensuring a focus on the achievement of measurable gender equality results. **(Indicators used: ATPC staff more informed of basic gender mainstreaming concepts, gender analysis and its usefulness in trade policy and programs)**
- Continuous learning and mainstreaming tools for achieving gender equality. **(Indicators used: more visibility of ATPC work on gender and trade at national, regional and global levels)**
- The regional gender inception workshop, in April 2009. This was attended by over forty-nine persons, made up of a combination of gender focal points, RECs representatives, relevant NGOs, and PACT/Access businesswomen's associations. The workshop allowed for successful networking between African trade and gender specialists and those from some multi donor agencies' (ITC; UNIFEM HQ, etc), many businesswomen's associations; and RECS gender experts and the African Centre for Gender and Development (ACGSD) within UNECA. **(Indicators used: enhanced materials and technical allocations to gender mainstreaming, gender activities are reflected in ATPC reporting and financial reporting, a more equitable representation of women and men in participation in workshops & meetings, gender issues are represented and defended, more gender and trade networks collaborating with ATPC)**
- In June 2009 GEARI delivered Gender and Trade Training. Twenty-nine people attended from regional RECS, relevant African gender and gender and trade NGO's. An agenda tried to identify potential gender entry points in the current RECs regional trade integration processes. Some tools were demonstrated, such as EPA impacts on women and Gender CGE models to determine impacts by gender of employment impacts. RECs representatives demonstrated potential entry points for gender and" lessons learned" from COMESA /SADC were instructive. **(Indicators used: gender issues reflected in ATPC website, newsletters, and reports.. etc for higher visibility of gender activities, engendered distribution and dissemination channels, training modules lead to enhanced support for gender mainstreaming)**
- ATPC and RECS more able to integrate gender responsive policies and practices resulting in enhanced gender responsive regional trade policy and practices. **(Indicators used: a gender policy and implementation framework enhancing gender mainstreaming throughout ATPC, enhanced partnerships developed with RECS)**

## CONCLUSION

ATPC strives to become a centre of excellence of gender & trade with the production, and distribution of specific regional & African research on gender & trade and targeted dissemination to gender networks as part of mainstream. ATPC continues its practice of being seen as a strategic interlocutor between gender advocates and trade policy makers by using its convening power to communicate directly with trade ministers and senior officials in Africa to be more enabled to include gender issues in trade preparations and negotiations; highlighting the valuable contribution women make to intra African trade dynamics and the issues and impacts they face in global and regional trade agreements through the dissemination of policy briefs; highlighting evidence-based gender research within its own research programme for uptake by trade policy makers; organizing colloquia promoting new studies or innovations in gender and trade approaches; and driving an electronic dissemination of these materials.