



# NEXT GENERATION TRADE

Building a Principled, People-Centred Global Economy



## FOSTERING INCLUSION

### Session Briefing

Next Generation Trade Event  
3<sup>rd</sup> December 2019, London

The World Bank defines “social inclusion” as “the process of improving the terms on which individuals and groups take part in society - improving the ability, opportunity, and dignity of those disadvantaged on the basis of their identity.”<sup>1</sup> Fostering inclusion requires us to unpack and create a deeper understanding of exclusion, and the complex and intersecting ways in which trade regimes impact on people based on their multiple identities and locations in the social, economic and political landscape, locally and globally.

A recent academic article suggests that international trade law to date has been “oblivious to social inclusion” and contends that, “to leave social and development policy solely to the domestic level while liberalizing trade and constraining states’ policy space through trade agreements... threatens to undermine domestic social solidarity and, as a result, the international trading system itself.”<sup>2</sup>

Steps to foster inclusion in the context of trade most often begin with recognition of the need to develop evidence-based interventions that address barriers currently limiting opportunities for specific groups within society. A number of recent examples involving international organisations with trade-related mandates are noteworthy, including:

- **Women:** In 2017, the World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial Conference in Buenos Aires adopted a Joint Declaration on Trade and Women’s Economic Empowerment.<sup>3</sup> The Declaration affirms the intention by member States to make trade and development policies more gender-responsive, including by sharing State experiences relating to policies and programs to encourage women’s participation in national and international economies; discussing good practice on conducting gender-based analysis of trade policies and; collecting experiences of using gender-disaggregated data, indicators, monitoring and evaluation methodologies, and the analysis of gender-focused statistics related to trade. A progress report on steps to implement the Declaration is due before the end of 2019.
- **Young people:** The International Trade Centre (ITC) has prioritised engagement with and capacity building for young entrepreneurs, many of whom face multiple barriers including unequal power dynamics based on age,

1 <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/social-inclusion>

2 <https://illinoislawreview.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Shaffer.pdf>

3 [https://www.wto.org/english/thewto\\_e/minist\\_e/mc11\\_e/genderdeclarationmc11\\_e.pdf](https://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/minist_e/mc11_e/genderdeclarationmc11_e.pdf)

gender and ethnicity; lack of access to assets and finance; low education and skill levels; and administrative and regulatory frameworks that do not support young people.<sup>4</sup> The ITC's "Trade Accelerator" initiative works with small and medium sized companies (SMEs) owned by young entrepreneurs through provision of trainers, advisors and mentors who offer services to help companies develop sustainable presences in international markets. The Youth and Trade Roadmap is another ITC programme based on national level public-private dialogue aimed at developing shared strategies to integrate young people into a country's trade development objectives.

- **Migrants and refugees:** The UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has worked in cooperation with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) to promote entrepreneurship and trading opportunities for migrant and refugee communities in both developing and developed countries. A 2018 Policy Guide on this issue includes examples from over 100 initiatives around the world and offers a series of policy options and recommendations for governments and other actors that can foster greater inclusion of migrant and refugee communities through economic opportunities.<sup>5</sup>
- **Small scale farmers:** An example linking trade, food security, climate change and economic development is the Joint Interagency Plan on achieving the trade related targets of UN SDG 14 concerning the world's oceans.<sup>6</sup> One of the targets involves providing greater access for small-scale fishers to marine resources and markets. Developing countries are working with the UN agencies involved to support small scale fisheries on issues such as sustainable seafood trading, promoting value addition and facilitating market entry and access. The 2019 Third Oceans Forum on trade related aspects of SDG 14 highlighted the multiple threats facing these communities and the need for policies to empower small-scale fishers and farmers to take a more active role in resource stewardship and management. Success will require increased governmental, private sector and civil society support, including in infrastructure upgrading, meeting international market requirements and organising farmers into larger groups to increase negotiation power.<sup>7</sup>

#### Questions for consideration:

1. What should be expected of governments in fostering social inclusion through trade policies, not just via their membership in inter-governmental organisations or through support for their own citizens' business plans, but as part of broader development strategies? For example, in June 2019, the UKAID Trade and Investment Fund launched a new grant pilot programme on Gender, Social Inclusion and Trade. The grant "aims to develop concrete tools for trade policymakers to integrate gender and social inclusion issues in their work on trade" with a particular focus on South-South and peer learning.<sup>8</sup> Should such efforts be welcomed and scaled up or are more ambitious strategies needed?
2. The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights make clear that companies "may undertake other commitments or activities to support and promote human rights, which may contribute to the enjoyment of rights. But this does not offset a failure to respect human rights throughout their operations."<sup>9</sup> What are the most serious examples of corporate policies or practices linked to trade that adversely impact on the rights of already marginalised or excluded groups in societies and where are the most promising trade related initiatives through which businesses can play a positive role in promoting social inclusion?

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4 <http://www.intracen.org/youth/why-youth-and-trade>

5 [https://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/diae2018d2\\_en.pdf](https://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/diae2018d2_en.pdf)

6 [https://unctad.org/en/pages/newsdetails.aspx?OriginalVersionID=2130&Sitemap\\_x0020\\_Taxonomy=UNCTAD%20Home;](https://unctad.org/en/pages/newsdetails.aspx?OriginalVersionID=2130&Sitemap_x0020_Taxonomy=UNCTAD%20Home;)

7 <https://unctad.org/meetings/en/SessionalDocuments/ditc-ted-03092019-forum-Background-Note.pdf>

8 <http://taf2plus.com/uk-taf2-launches-2-year-targeted-grant-on-gender-social-inclusion-and-trade/>

9 Commentary to UNGP 11

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3. How can the voices of those who are currently most excluded from the potential benefits of trade be heard more directly in various settings at national, regional and international levels where economic and trade policies are negotiated? How do we know that initiatives aimed at addressing the rights and needs of groups that are economically and socially marginalised are responding to the actual wishes of these communities and making a difference in their lives? Do we have the structures in place to involve them in decision making and the tools needed to evaluate current programmes and initiatives?
4. How can we build a more comprehensive concept of inclusion that goes beyond broad categories of the excluded to more nuanced, intersectional approaches that recognise the multiple barriers that may act together to exclude or marginalise a particular individual or group, particularly in the context of trade? For example, what are the different barriers that must be addressed to ensure the inclusion of someone who is simultaneously young, female, disabled, and a migrant or refugee from a stigmatised religious group or nationality?