



Dialogue on
Globalization

OCCASIONAL PAPERS

BERLIN

N° 7 / July 2003

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**The Doha Development Round,
Gender and Social Reproduction**

Dialogue on Globalization

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This Occasional Paper is published by the Berlin office of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.

July 2003

Table of Contents:

1. Introduction	4	4. The Agreement on Agriculture (AoA)	19
2. Some Comments on the Availability of Sources Materials	6	4.1 Rural Women and Small Women Farmers	20
3. The General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS)	8	4.2 Women in Export-Oriented Agricultural Production	21
3.1 How GATS Works	9	5. The Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS)	23
3.2 The Current State and Timetable of the GATS Negotiations	10	5.1 Public Health	23
3.3 Water and its Gender Dimensions	11	5.2 Gender and HIV/Aids	24
3.4 Financial Services, Public Services, and Social Reproduction	13	5.3 Food Security, Biodiversity, and Traditional/Indigenous Knowledge	25
3.5 Privatization of Public Services and Social Reproduction	15	6. The Agreement on Trade-Related Investment Measures (TRIMs)	27
3.6 Movement of Nature Persons (Mode 4)	16	7. Engender the WTO!	29
		8. References	30

Preface

As September, the date of the upcoming 5th WTO Ministerial Meeting in Cancún, draws nearer, the debate on the perspectives and policy goals of the Doha World Trade Round is growing in intensity. While GATS, the agricultural issue, the agreement on intellectual property rights (TRIPS), as well as other WTO issues do figure in the ongoing public discussion, the gender-specific aspects of these policy fields are often neglected both by the WTO and in scholarly and political assessments of them. The two authors of the present contribution – Brigitte Young and Hella Hoppe – argue that the WTO's policies are not at all “gender-neutral”: trade liberalization and privatization measures (above all in the service sector) impact differently on the living and working conditions of women and men; they can serve to exacerbate existing gender inequalities but also, at least in part, to promote gender equity as well.

Gender mainstreaming, that is, the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in any area and at all levels, is not yet being implemented at the WTO. Gender-sensitive policy recommendations for a new world trade regime can, however, be formulated only on the basis of a comprehensive evaluation and monitoring of WTO policies that take account of their effects on men and women. To “Engender the WTO!” is therefore one of the central demands raised by the two authors, who, in their study, cast light on a new field that has thus far been accorded little attention in the relevant research.

The present study may be seen as a continuation of the work of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, which, for several years now, has anchored gender mainstreaming as a cross-cutting task in its international project work. The study formulates a number of questions as well as some first concrete policy recommendations and at the same time constitutes an excellent basis for further research projects and political discussions.

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1 Introduction¹

“The majority of WTO members are developing countries. We seek to place their needs and interests at the heart of the Work Programme adopted in this Declaration. Recalling the Preamble to the Marrakesh Agreement, we shall continue to make positive efforts designed to ensure that developing countries, and especially the least-developed among them, secure a share in the growth of world trade commensurate with the needs of their economic development.”

(WTO Ministerial Declaration, Doha, 14 November 2001)

The Fourth Ministerial Meeting of the World Trade Organization (WTO) was launched as the “Doha Development Round” in Doha, Qatar, and ended on November 14, 2001. That a successful meeting was concluded in Doha was noteworthy in the light of the failure of the Third Ministerial Meeting in Seattle in late 1999. The protesters in Seattle expressed their concern about the increasing strength of corporate power and the way in which international trade and investment agreements have undermined important aspects of national sovereignty. At the same time, Seattle also pointed to the deep rift on trade issues between the United States and the European Union. The unexpectedly strong protests at the Third Ministerial Meeting in Seattle did put pressure upon political leaders throughout the world to reexamine some of the premises of neoliberal trade liberalization.

As a result of the failure in Seattle in 1999, special attention was devoted at the Fourth Round in Doha to issues that concerned developing countries. One of the main goals of the Doha Development Round was to integrate the developing countries in the global trade regime by granting them greater market access in industrial countries, providing them technical help, “capacity building” for “implementation-related issues,” and devoting special attention to the problems existing in least developed countries. Despite the “Development Round” rhetoric, Kamal Malhotra concludes that the Doha Ministerial Declaration does not adequately reflect the needs and aspirations of developing countries. “Overall, Doha should be viewed only as the first step in what remains a long struggle to create a genuine trade and development agenda.” (Malhotra 2002) While developing countries did achieve some successes on intellectual property rights and public health, they still face many battles with industrialized countries on market access in agriculture, transparency, anti-dumping measures, and implementation of the agreements reached in the Uruguay Round on Textiles.

The Doha agreement mandated that new negotiations be concluded in approximately three years, by January 2005, and meanwhile the Fifth Ministerial Meeting is

1 We thank Ruth Möller, Referentin, SPD-Fraktion, German Parliament, Working Group: World Economy and Globalisation, for her useful comments on an earlier draft, and Dörte Bernhardt, Germanwatch, for her knowledgeable input on GATS and water.

set to take place in Cancún, Mexico, from September 10 to 14, 2003. At the moment it is difficult to see how the deadline for 2005 can be met, given that the Fifth Ministerial meeting in 2003 has to reach an explicit consensus on such controversial issues as the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), the Agreement on Trade-Related Investment Measures (TRIMS), and the Agreement on Agriculture (AoA).

The WTO negotiations have made no mention of the different impact trade liberalization has on women and men in various regions of the world and its effects on the care and development of the poor. Despite the many women NGOs from developing countries that have been vocal in protesting against the current framework of the WTO, a general “silencing” can be noted concerning the issue that liberalization and privatization are taking place on gendered terrain. This is all the more surprising in that, in some areas such as agriculture, the gender perspective is obvious in the light of the fact that food security and sustainable rural development are highly gendered topics.

In fact, Abdel Hamid Mamdouh, a legal representative of the WTO, at the Meeting of the German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) on “The WTO General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS)” in Berlin on 17 February 2003, told one of the authors of the present study that “it was the purpose of the WTO to keep the language gender-neutral in order not to create any discrimination”.²

The present study will look into the various agreements reached at Doha, the conflicts that remain, the Mini-Ministerial meetings of select invited countries that have taken place since Doha, and their results; in a second step, the study will provide a gender perspective on the gender-neutral reports and studies that have appeared. Engendering the WTO negotiations is all the more necessary, and difficult, because there are no systematic gender studies on the various negotiating phases, continuing controversies, and the actors involved in redressing the gender imbalances and inequities inherent in the current agreements and negotiations. Such a comprehensive study is urgently needed to provide an input prior to the conclusion of the WTO negotiations by 2005.³

2 Brigitte Young was at the conference and spoke with the WTO representative; she also asked Aguiar Machado of the EU Commission and Lakshmi Puri of UNCTAD whether the WTO, UNCTAD, or the EU Commission have included a gender perspective in their negotiation stance at the WTO.

The answer was negative. UNDP has in the meantime published a comprehensive study on the WTO, also focusing on gender (UNDP 2003).

3 Since the negotiations on TRIPS, TRIMS, GATS, and AoA, will continue to at least 2005, some points raised in this study will have to be revised and/or completely changed in keeping with the results that emerge from the ongoing WTO negotiations.

2. Some Comments on the Availability of Source Materials

Very few empirical and analytical studies have been published on gender-related aspects of the WTO and the Doha Development Agenda and – more generally – on the relationship between trade liberalization and gender.

Very few empirical and analytical studies have been published on gender-related aspects of the WTO and the Doha Development Agenda and – more generally – on the relationship between trade liberalization and gender. The WTO itself has not issued any gender-sensitive documents.

The various departments of the UN have shown an increasing commitment to gender mainstreaming, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has published detailed studies on poverty and its gender dimensions (UNCTAD 1999, 1999a, 2001, 2001a), and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) has published a path-breaking study by Nilufer Cagatay, UNDP, on “Trade, Gender and Poverty” (Cagatay 2001). In addition, Diane Elson had already coordinated the UNIFEM Biennial Report on “Progress of the World’s Women,” which focuses on the economic dimensions of women’s progress in the context of globalization (UNIFEM 2000). However, these studies do not deal with the WTO specifically, focusing instead on trade and poverty within the context of globalization.

The most recent and detailed study on the Doha Development Agenda and Gender was published by Kamal Malhotra, UNDP; it is entitled “Making global trade work for people” (UNDP 2003). In empirical and analytical terms, it is the most reliable study available with an explicit gender and development perspective.

Mariama Williams is preparing a “Reference Manual on Gender Issues in the Multilateral Trading System” for the Gender Section of the Commonwealth Secretariat, but the manual is not yet publicly available.

In addition, some studies on trade liberalization and gender have been published by individual researchers and research institutes, but these studies do not have a WTO focus (e.g. Baden 1998; Joeques 1999; for an annotated bibliography, see Bell and Brambilla 2002).

Some groups are seeking to create a public space from the “bottom-up” with a view to mobilizing and lobbying WTO member states to integrate gender in WTO negotiations and policy recommendations.

Women’s NGOs from developing countries have contributed an impressive number of studies, critical assessments, and evaluations of the gender-related aspects of the WTO. Some of the most important NGOs focusing on gender and trade are: the International Gender and Trade Network (IGTN), the network Women in Development Europe (WIDE), Women Environment and Development Organization (WEDO), European Women’s Lobby (EWL), Gender and Economic Reform in Africa (GERA-TWN), Women’s Edge, and the Erklärung von Bern. These groups are seeking to create a public space from the “bottom-up” with a view to mobilizing and lobbying WTO member states to integrate gender in WTO negotiations and

policy recommendations. As informative as these studies are, they are, for the most part, short pamphlets and newsletters that provide information on specific aspects of a particular negotiating phase.

Recommendation 1: Comprehensive Gender Study of the overall WTO Process

⇒ 8 *There are no reliable studies available about gender dimensions in developing or industrial countries and the WTO. There is an urgent need for a comprehensive gender study of the legal documents of the WTO framework, the different impacts that liberalization and privatization have on women and men, and alternative approaches that take into account the issue of development and people's welfare.*

3. The General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS)

The GATS is the first legally enforceable trade agreement that covers trade and investment in services. The Agreement covers 160 service sectors and extends to virtually all services.

The GATS is the first legally enforceable trade agreement that covers trade and investment in services. The Agreement covers 160 service sectors and extends to virtually all services, including transport, investment, education, communications, financial services, energy and water services, and movement of persons (UNDP 2003: 25). Trade in services has been a very dynamic growth sector of the world economy. In 1999 the value of the trade in services reached US\$ 1.34 trillion, about 20 % of total world trade; but there is a wide disparity between the supply capacities of the North and the South. The EU and the USA are by far the largest service exporters (about two thirds of world trade), a development which has entailed few reciprocal benefits for the South (Deutscher Bundestag 2003). Developing countries point to the imbalance between and the differential treatment accorded to the movement of capital and the movement of labor. The GATS negotiations have focused on issues such as financial services, telecommunications, transport etc., with very clear, specific measures promoting the unrestricted movement of capital as it impacts services and service suppliers. But there has been no such treatment for the movement of labor (Movement of Natural Persons – Mode 4). For developing countries, the movement of labor is an important export area, one in which they are well positioned to earn considerable income and foreign exchange (Williams 2001; see discussion below).

Service liberalization is not a gender-neutral process. Studies on the impact of the Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) of the IMF and the World Bank have shown that women suffered most under the privatization and dismantling of public services which these programs required. When the state fails to provide services, and families lack the financial resources to buy these goods on the market, it is women who are obliged to provide health care, education, and safe food and water for their families. Critics of GATS are concerned that as basic rights are transformed into commodities, access to services will be available only to those who can pay the price set. The imposition of user fees for education under Structural Adjustment Programs resulted in girls leaving school first and more frequently, even when only minimal fees are imposed for education (Fosse 2001).

Service liberalization is not a gender-neutral process.

In order to show how privatization and liberalization of the trade governance framework impacts on gender relations in developing countries, we have selected the following key issues: 1) water and sanitation, 2) financial services and public services, and 3) the movement of natural persons (Mode 4). Before we enter into a discussion of these issue areas, we will present a short introduction to the GATS framework and briefly discuss the current state and the timetable of the GATS negotiations.

3.1 How GATS Works

The GATS negotiators opted for two strategies: “top-down” rules which apply for all 160 services listed in the agreement and “bottom-up” rules which allow governments to choose the services for which these rules apply. The “bottom-up” rules are unusual in WTO agreements in that here specific commitments apply only for those services that a government has chosen to include. The *National Treatment* (Article XVII) and *Market Access* (Article XVI) are the key “bottom-up” rules which apply only if a government has specifically committed the service. The principle of *National Treatment* means that GATS members must “grant foreign services and service suppliers treatment no less favourable” than domestic services and suppliers. This measure essentially prohibits any regulation which would give preference or a competitive advantage to a domestic service industry and means that certain foreign suppliers would also be entitled to the same subsidies that are given to a competing domestic supplier (WTO Article XVII). *Market Access* covers government attempts to place quantitative limits on the number of service suppliers or outlets, regardless of whether they are domestic or foreign. This would include, for example, attempts to limit the number of hotels in an ecologically fragile area (World Development Movement 2002).

The “top-down rules” apply to all service sectors with the *Most Favored Nation* (Article II) being the one basic obligation in GATS which applies to all services of a WTO member]. What this means, in effect, is that all trading partners must be treated equally. Countries are allowed to list exemptions to the application of this rule, but these may apply for ten years only. In addition, services that are “supplied in the exercise of governmental authority” are excluded from the scope of application of the GATS agreements. Except for areas such as government, parliament, courts, the military, and internal security, there is considerable disagreement over what the term “in the exercise of government authority” in fact means. The most important aspect for women is the extent to which services provided by governmental authorities are shielded from privatization and the extent to which governments are permitted to protect public services that serve to satisfy fundamental needs of society, including healthcare provision, education, and infrastructure provision under the liberalization commitments of GATS.

As Scherrer and Yalçın have pointed out, the issue of privatization of public services is hinges on the mode of supply⁴ as well as on prevalent competitive conditions. “All sectors that are partially privatized, that are growing towards privatization or in which quasi-State or private operators are administering public tasks (e.g., in respect to certain welfare commitments) potentially fall outside the protection of the sovereignty clause” (2002: 6).

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4 The supply of services encompasses four different modes and allows for a highly differentiated liberalization of services. Mode 1: Cross-Border Supply. A service supplied from one member state to the territory of another member state. Mode 2: Consumption Abroad. Supply from within the territory of one member state to the service consumer of another member state (i.e., tourism). Mode 3: Commercial Presence. Supply from within the territory of a member state through a commercial presence (through a subsidiary or a branch). Mode 4: Presence of Natural Persons. The presence of natural persons in the territory of any other member state through movement of persons.

The lack of democracy at the GATS negotiations is another major obstacle to developing countries and, in particular, to the participation of women.

Finally, the GATS agreement calls for *transparency* in state regulation of service sectors. Once a year the WTO must be informed of changes to laws, regulations, and administrative guidelines that are relevant in this regard.

The GATS creates a new multilateral global governance framework for trade. The ongoing negotiations will determine to what extent and in what manner GATS will restrict the space open to national political, social, and economic policies (Skarpelis-Sperk 2003). The present absence of transparency and general lack of relevant information, as well as the asymmetry in power bargaining and the option of irreversibility, are strong obstacles to the implementation of the Doha mandate. The lack of democracy at the GATS negotiations is another major obstacle to developing countries and, in particular, to the participation of women. Key decisions are taken in so-called “green room” negotiations, where the EU, the US, Canada, and Japan dominate the scene. Part of the problem is also *capacity* (UNDP 2003: 262; Wieczorek-Zeul 2003; World Development Movement 2002). It is very important for developing countries to be able to benefit from the policy space that is *theoretically* available (see GATS Article IV and Article XIX; UNDP 2003: 261; Wieczorek-Zeul 2003).

3.2 The Current State and Timetable of the GATS Negotiations

The WTO Ministerial Round in Doha in 2001 set a timetable for further GATS negotiations. In June 2002, WTO members began to submit so-called “requests.” These requests are aimed at individual, specified countries and seek liberalization commitments in targeted service sectors. The EU tabled its country-specific proposals on July 4, 2002, requesting from 109 individual countries binding liberalization in targeted service sectors. In turn, the EU has received 27 “requests” from members states of the WTO. NGOs have criticized the fact that they have had no access to the individual requests submitted by the EU and that it was only thanks to leaks that members of NGOs and the public learned of the content of the liberalization requests. All 109 requests are reported – unverifiably – to have been leaked to the Polaris Institute in Canada⁵ (World Development Movement 2003). As Mike Waghorne of PSI (Public Service International) reminded the audience at a GATS conference in Berlin, “democracy that works by leaks is not a democracy.”⁶

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March 31, 2003, was the deadline for member states to submit their “initial draft offers” to the WTO. The European Commission published its initial GATS offer on April 29, 2003. The EU offer has now brought the total number of offers to 16 (less than 1/8th of the WTO membership). At present we know that the EU Commission has excluded *education, training (Ausbildung), audio-visual communication, health services*, and water and sanitation services from further liberalization offers. The most significant change in comparison with the existing EU GATS commitments is to be found in the so-called horizontal section on the issue of temporary entry of foreign nationals (Mode 4). The European Services Forum

⁵ See www.polarisinstitute.org/gats/main.html.

⁶ Statement made at the conference on „GATS-Dienstleistungsliberalisierung: Demokratie, soziale Regeln und öffentliche Verantwortung,“ in Berlin, March 26, 2003.

hails this as a substantial step in response to the requests received from developing countries to liberalize the movement of natural persons, and a clear sign of the EU's commitment to a development round. Gatswatch is particularly concerned about the EU's request "to open drinking water services in 72 countries (which the EU itself is not offering to do)" (*www.gatswatch.org*). Since the negotiations over the "requests" and "offers" submitted will begin only at the Fifth Ministerial Round in Cancún, the present positions may be drastically changed, modified, or even reversed. Thus it is important from a gender perspective that the negotiations be monitored until the very end.⁷

3.3 Water and its Gender Dimensions

At present, 1.2 billion people lack access to improved water supply, the corresponding figure for improved sanitation being 2.4 billion (WEHAB Working Group 2002: 7; UNESCO 2003: 10). According to UNDP, three million people in developing countries die annually due to water-related diseases such as diarrhea and cholera (UNDP 2003: 321). Most of these are children aged under five. It is women and children who are often caught in the vicious cycle of poverty/ill health. The situation is aggravated by the burden of water-related disease, the need to live in degraded and often dangerous environments, the need to struggle for education and enough to eat, and the need to earn a living.

In its Millennium Declaration, the United Nations set the goal of halving, by 2015, the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water. The area of sanitation was later added as a further goal at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2003 (UNESCO 2003: 6f). Improvements would first of all benefit women and girls because in most cultures it is they who are responsible for collection of water, preparation of food, and maintenance of family health. For instance, in rural areas women and girls have to walk long distances, often spending 4 to 5 hours per day carrying water, and in urban areas they have wait in line at standpipes (WEDO 2003: 3). Access to safe drinking water and sanitation directly translates into more education, income generation, cultural and political involvement, and rest and recreation for women and girls.

Access to safe drinking water and sanitation directly translates into more education, income generation, cultural and political involvement, and rest and recreation for women and girls.

The European Commission has not included "water and sanitation services" in its "initial draft offer," which the Commission sent to its member states on February 7, 2003, and which details new offers for a wide-ranging liberalization of the

⁷ As a result of the lack of transparency and information at the ongoing GATS negotiations, the German parliament has taken a historic step. Since members of parliament felt that they had insufficient time to respond to the confidential "initial draft offers" that the European Commission sent to the member states on February 7, 2003, with a request to respond to these offers by March 18, 2003, the German parliament took the unprecedented step, on March 13, 2003, of invoking a parliamentary reservation (Parlamentensvorbehalt) against the EU Commission for international negotiations. The German Parliament requested that transparency and flexibility in the GATS negotiations be secured and that the rights of parliaments to information, consultation, and political deliberation be strictly observed. Second, the Bundestag has requested that education as a public good and cultural diversity be exempted from the GATS negotiations (Deutscher Bundestag 2002a). The German Parliament has, in addition, expressed some concern over the "initial draft offers" in regard to public services, the issue of public subsidies, environmental services, and the transportation sector. Further, the willingness of the EU Commission to offer liberalization for "the movement of natural persons" was also mentioned as an issue of concern (Mode 4).

service sector. However, as the Working Group on “World Economy and Globalization” of the Federal SPD Caucus warned, there is a strong possibility that the EU may further liberalize the water sector in the course of the ongoing negotiations (Skarpelis-Sperk 2003).

Opinions are mixed on whether GATS is helpful in reaching UN targets, since the risks associated with water sector liberalization in developing and transition countries are many and various. *World Development Movement*, an NGO, cautions that water liberalization will undermine water services in countries with recognized good public companies (World Development Movement 2003: 6). There is considerable concern that the benefits of increased competition in the sector may be limited due to the market dominance of a few important players, that private-sector participation may not be appropriate for the delivery of a public good such as water services, and that regulatory and institutional capacity in some developing countries may be too weak to oversee and regulate private water companies (GTZ 2003: 20).

It has to be recognized that involvement of private companies often follows upon a series of unsuccessful attempts to reform the public sector. Properly designed and implemented private-sector participation can result in important benefits to consumers in terms of access to and improvement of quality of services (GTZ 2003: 19).

One fact that speaks against the claim of beneficial aspects involved in opening up water markets is that the international water business is dominated by a relatively small number of European water corporations (Deutscher Bundestag 2002: 370). As a consequence, even if a government decides to fully liberalize its water market, there are not likely to be more than a few foreign companies competing for the contract. “The lack of competition may result in higher prices and lower quality of services at the cost of the consumers” (GTZ 2003: 20). To increase competition in the “monopolistically” structured water and sanitation industry, governments might consider restructuring and splitting up service areas with a view to reducing the dominance of a single service provider in a country or a major city, keeping contract duration as short as necessary with the perspective of retendering contracts more often, requesting local partner involvement and subcontracting, and strengthening domestic water industries against other dominant market players.

One way to increase access to water is through cross-subsidization, by increasing fees in rich regions and using the funds to finance lower water prices in poor regions.

A strong, effective regulatory and incentive framework is needed for private actors who provide water services in order to strengthen both equity and efficiency. Commercialization of water supply and sanitation services may present equity problems in ensuring universal access to clean water and may, in particular, restrict poor people’s access to water services (Butkeviciene, Benavides and Tortora 2002; UNDP 2003: 279). Poor women are the first to experience water cut-offs due to unpaid bills. Experience shows that the privatization of water supply has produced mixed results (UNDP 2003: 269, Deutscher Bundestag 2002: 373). One way to increase access to water is through cross-subsidization, by increasing fees in rich regions and using the funds to finance lower water prices in poor regions. “But unless a government had foreseen the use of cross-subsidies and included pertinent qualifications in its schedule, it would be unable to prevent foreign companies

that supply water in rich areas from benefiting from its GATS commitments, since any measures the government may wish to take would be inconsistent with ‘national treatment’” (UNDP 2003: 269).

Recommendation 2: Develop Efficient Water Supply and Sanitation Services

⇨ *Especially in developing countries, efficient provision of water supply and sanitation services needs to be developed for publicly or privately managed water services alike. Key elements include appropriate incentives for both operator staff and consumers to efficiently manage and use a scarce resource, clear and transparent rules about processes, responsibilities, price-setting mechanisms, and service standards, involvement of all stakeholders, especially women, and government capacity to monitor and willingness to enforce rules.*

Recommendation 3: Develop Appropriate Institutional Structures

⇨ *Governments of developing countries that have not established sufficient regulatory, institutional, and legal frameworks to monitor, supervise, and regulate activities of water service operators should consider delaying the involvement of private international investors until appropriate structures are put in place.*

Recommendation 4: Capacity Building through Education and Training

⇨ *The regulatory and institutional capacity of weaker member states of the WTO should be strengthened by the WTO community. Women, who play an important role in water management, should be the main target of capacity building through education and special training.*

3.4 Financial Services, Public Services, and Social Reproduction

It was only in 1999 that the 5th Protocol of GATS came into effect, with 102 WTO member states signaling their readiness to liberalize financial services. The negotiations started in 2000. The fact that only a short-term Interim Agreement on the liberalization of financial services was reached in 1995 was the result of the very different positions held by developing and developed countries on this issue. Indeed, many developing countries refused to agree to any binding liberalization measures. In contrast, the OECD pushed for liberalization, since member financial sectors were already largely liberalized. In particular, the United States feared that developing countries would “free-ride” and take advantage of the *National Treatment*, in this way gaining access to the American market while protecting their own domestic financial sectors (Fritz 2003).

We now know that the EU Commission has made very specific and extensive liberalization requests to Newly Industrialized Countries (NICs). At a general level, the EU is seeking to liberalize capital movements, deregulate foreign exchange markets, and promote the right to set up banks in foreign countries. For example, Malaysia was asked to shed all regulations constraining trade in the ringgit, its

domestic currency. This request is all the more problematic because the instability of the exchange-rate markets was played a pronounced role in the Asian financial crisis of 1997/98. In addition, Malaysia has been asked to remove its 51% cap on foreign equity participation, the cap of course having been designed to prevent foreign companies from dominating the Malaysian banking and insurance sector. Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, speaking in Kuala Lumpur during the 1997 negotiations, made it clear that the strength of foreign companies would overwhelm local firms and lead to mergers and acquisitions in the financial sector (World Development Movement 2003).

Commitments for liberalization under the GATS may be inconsistent with developing countries' capacity to regulate their financial sectors, and this may turn out to be a recipe for financial crisis.

These requests to developing countries indicate that developed countries are eager to rapidly liberalize the banking and insurance sectors in many of the NICs whose national financial markets are still protected. Oxfam (2002) warns that the rapid liberalization of financial services is likely to cause instability in already fragile economies. Commitments for liberalization under the GATS may be inconsistent with developing countries' capacity to regulate their financial sectors, and this may turn out to be a recipe for financial crisis.

The economic and social impacts of financial instability have a greater effect on women than on men.

Since many small and medium-sized enterprises are owned and operated by women, particularly in the informal sector, women could encounter greater difficulties in gaining access to credit.

At first glance, liberalization of financial services has little to do with gender. But as several authors have shown, there are gender impacts of economic crises which result from financial liberalization and increased volatility of short-term capital flows. The economic and social impacts of such financial instability have a greater effect on women than on men (Singh and Zammit 2000; Young 2003). Since many small and medium-sized enterprises are owned and operated by women, particularly in the informal sector, women could encounter greater difficulties in gaining access to credit. The UNDP study (2003) cites the results of a detailed review by BRIDGE, a gender and development network, examining the direct and indirect effects of financial system liberalization on women in developing countries. The study concludes that there is little evidence that financial liberalization has benefited women. Women in developing countries must often turn to informal sector providers for financial services, since they are largely excluded from the formal sector. They hold fewer assets for use as collateral, conduct smaller transactions, and often are unable to obtain bank loans without their husband's approval. The GATS commitments could limit national governments' ability to grant preferential credit to and cross-subsidize small and medium-sized firms, and as a result liberalization of financial markets may limit the access that women have to local credit markets and savings (UNDP 2003: 271).

Recommendation 5: Provide Special Access to Bank Loans for Small-Scale Women-Run Enterprises

⇒ *The authors recommend that GATS should not limit governments' ability to give preferential credit and cross-subsidization to small and medium-sized firms. Special provisions should be included for small-scale enterprises run by women with a view to facilitating their access to bank loans and credit.*

Recommendation 6: National Banking Sector Regulation

⇒ *Developing countries should continue to have the right to protect their banking industries and develop institutional capacity to regulate their banking sectors. Governments should also have the right to enforce controls on short-term capital movements as well as the right to regulate derivatives and offshore centers. Financial standards should be set by national governments and not by private actors, such as rating agencies.*

Recommendation 7: Moratorium on Financial Sector Liberalization in Developing Countries

⇒ *No further liberalization requests should be made of developing countries until more systematic studies have been conducted on the causes of global financial instabilities and crises.*

3.5 Privatization of Public Services and Social Reproduction

As mentioned above, public services such as education, training, health, and water and sanitation services are presently excluded from the "initial draft offers" the EU has submitted at the GATS negotiations.

The situation in regard to public services is quite different in developing countries. Privatization of public services has already progressed some way as a result of the Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) conducted in countries that have suffered from financial and economic crises. The IMF and World Bank SAPs in countries that are experiencing liquidity problems have invariably led to reductions in government expenditures, cuts in real wages, reductions in domestic demand, and emphasis on trade liberalization and increasing exports. In response to budgetary austerity, countries appear to impose disproportionate reductions in the provision of economic and social services. Financial instabilities have led to dislocations affecting social reproduction and provisioning of basic human needs in Latin America and South East Asia (Young 2003). Cuts in education, health services, food and transport subsidies, sanitation facilities, water access services, and other care provision hurts most those "who are members of a subordinate class, gender or ethnic group, tend not to be fully owners of their own labour, but are subject to the control of patrons, landlords, chiefs, community 'bosses', village 'headmen', husbands, fathers, to whom they have obligations which are enforced, in last instance, by overt violence" (Elson 1997: 55).

Privatization of social services is increasing the commodification and informalization of social reproduction around the globe and creating privatized global governance frameworks around the provision of health, welfare, education as well as food security, a circumstance which makes it more difficult for those living at the margins to survive and to maintain their economic and social position. There is some case study evidence that indicates that families pull their daughters out of school before their sons, and even before the economic turmoil girls in Indonesia were far more likely to drop out of school than boys. Once girls have left school

Privatization of social services is increasing the commodification and informalization of social reproduction around the globe and creating privatized global governance frameworks.

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they rarely return. Keeping girls out of school will have long-term negative consequences not only for young women but for the economy as a whole (Singh and Zammit 2000).

Privatization of social services within the GATS framework can affect women as customers of services and as workers. The GATS may have an adverse impact on women's ability to access social services, transforming basic human rights into "commodities" which require payment of user fees. The potential increase in the price of basic services, such as water, electricity, health care, education fees, may limit the access to and quality of services for poor households, the majority of which are female-headed. If poor households lack the resources they need to buy these services in the market, it will be mostly women who have to allocate more time to social reproduction activities (WIDE 2002). In addition, privatization of social services can also affect women as workers. The public service sector has been the key sector providing employment for women, and here privatization would mean a loss of job opportunities for women. Since the majority of women in both developing and developed countries are employed in the service sector, the growing privatization of social services can have very negative consequences. First, women may face the danger of losing their job and, second, public service has provided women with better working conditions and work security. If efficiency and profit become the sole criteria for judging social services, supplanting the criterion of human needs for such services, the result will most likely be that private social service providers will cut expenses by reducing labor-related costs. As WIDE argues, while transparency is a condition demanded of governments by the GATS framework, companies face no such requirement. GATS does not include any rules that guarantee citizens access to improved services, better labor conditions, or job creation (WIDE 2002).

Recommendation 8: Exclude Public Services from GATS

⇒ *Public Services should be excluded from liberalization. Privatization of social services (such as health, education, water distribution, energy, electricity) is unacceptable because a market-oriented system of social services is incompatible with women's fundamental social and economic rights (WIDE 2002).*

3.6 Movement of Natural Persons (Mode 4)

Liberalization of the Movement of Natural Persons (Mode 4) is a very controversial issue under negotiation within the GATS. It has a divisive potential for labor unions in developed countries on the one hand and some NGOs (from the North and South) and developing countries on the other. Developing countries have criticized the GATS for promoting the unrestricted movement of capital but not of natural persons. Significant barriers to the movement of labor into the North include "excessive regulation of immigration and labour mobility; discriminatory regulations in licensing, technical standards and qualification procedures on cross-border employment; quotas or economic necessity tests; and non-recognition of professional qualifications" (Williams 2001: 6). For developing countries the debate on Mode 4 is a discussion about employment, not migration. The movement of

labor, in particular the right of temporary workers to cross national borders with a minimum of restrictions, is seen as a source of export earnings for developing countries (Williams 2001: 6).

Liberalization of the movement of natural persons within GATS has until now been restricted to intra-firm movement of key personnel and specialists. No agreement was reached either in the Uruguay Round on labor mobility or in the Marrakesh negotiations. For the first time, the EU Commission has now, in its "initial draft offer," agreed to substantially liberalize the movement of natural persons, a move which could put tremendous pressure on labor markets in developed countries, particularly in times of high unemployment. Leaked information indicates that the EU Commission is considering the possibility of replacing existing and requested Economic Needs Tests (ENTs) for contractual service suppliers (CSS) with a numerical ceiling. In their defense, actors from developed countries (EU Commission, the United States) who are pushing for liberalization of Mode 4 can argue that they are finally complying with the agenda of the "Doha Development Round" by pushing to liberalize the Movement of Natural Persons. In the GATS 2000 debate, India has proposed a "GATS Visa" that would focus on specific categories of skilled labor (Williams 2001). Yet as the discussion at a GATS Conference in Berlin⁸ recently showed, there is real concern on the part of labor unions and members of the German Bundestag (SPD) that GATS could be a vehicle aimed at opening labor markets in developed countries. Sigrid Skarpelis-Sperk (MdB-SPD) stated at the Conference that "labor is not a commodity like any other commodity and thus not negotiable like other commodities." Labor has to be negotiated in the context of social rights and social protection.

Even without being, at present, able to judge the merit of the "initial draft offer" of the EU to liberalize the movement of natural persons, it must be said that there are definitely gender dimensions to this process. As a caveat: this section is speculative, since we are not yet familiar with the details of the "initial draft offers" submitted by the EU and other WTO member states. Nevertheless, liberalization of Mode 4 would affect women from developing countries differently depending on whether they belong to the professional class or are low-skilled workers. The same is true for countries themselves. Richer developing countries with a pool of high-skilled labor have different interests in sending labor abroad than crisis-ridden LDCs with a reserve of low-skill labor. Export of high-skilled professionals (women or men) to the knowledge-based industries of the industrial countries could lead to a knowledge transfer from North to South once these professionals return to their home countries. Both men and women would have access to high incomes in the receiver country, and the home countries would also benefit from foreign exchange earnings.

The situation would be quite different for women from developing countries with low or no skills who seek job opportunities in the care economies of the North as domestic servants, nurses, cleaning personal, or as workers in the tourist and entertainment sectors. We have here both a push and a pull effect that are related

⁸ GATS-Dienstleistungsliberalisierung: Demokratie, soziale Regeln und öffentliche Verantwortung, Berlin, March 26, 2003, organized by ver.di, Hans Böckler Foundation and the Gewerkschaft für Privatangestellte.

Liberalization of Mode 4 would affect women from developing countries differently depending on whether they belong to the professional class or are low-skilled workers.

Since child-related public services and other social services are being reduced or are in the process of being privatized in industrialized countries, professional women (and men) in the North rely increasingly on the services of migrant women working in the household-oriented service industry.

to the process of intensified globalization and the liberalization of the world economy. As a result of financial crises and the economic instabilities they entail, many women are forced to migrate to find low-skilled jobs in order to help maintain their family income. In the case of the Philippines for example, the Philippines Overseas Employment Administration has been active in exporting Philippine women as nurses and maids to the U.S., the Middle East, and Japan. High foreign debt and unemployment made this a lucrative strategy for the Philippine government, with Philippino workers sending on average nearly US\$1 billion a year home to their government. This human export strategy has coincided with demand from labor-importing countries. Demand for domestic workers increased in the Middle East oil-producing countries after OPEC price increases in the 1970s, and in the United States the demand for nurses was high due to domestic labor shortages, a result of low wages and low prestige in the nursing sector (Sassen 2000).

There is another reason for the export of women from crisis-ridden developing countries to the North, one that has received little attention. Since child-related public services and other social services are being reduced or are in the process of being privatized in industrialized countries, professional women (and men) in the North rely increasingly on the services of migrant women working in the household-oriented service industry. A cross-border circuit has thus emerged between economic crises in developing countries and the reduction of public service provision in developed countries on the one hand and, on the other hand, the increasing participation of professional women in the higher echelons of the formal labor market, coupled with their need for public services and the “forced readiness” of migrant women to perform household and child-rearing tasks in industrial countries. The rebirth of a transnational economy of domestic labor is directly linked to the neoliberal character of globalization, as reflected in a state policy aimed at privatizing and liberalizing ever more sectors of the public domain (Young 2001; 2003).

Recommendation 9: GATS is not a Labor Market Agreement

⇨ *Liberalization of the Movement of Natural Persons within the GATS framework cannot function as a strategy to “flexibilize” the labor markets of developed countries.*

Recommendation 10: Special Protection for Low-Skilled Women from LDCs

⇨ *It cannot be in the interest of either developing or developed countries to see low-skilled women assuming the role of a substitute for public services in the North and to witness the rebirth of a transnational economy of domestic labor with an ethnically defined female “underclass” from crisis-ridden developing countries.*

4. The Agreement on Agriculture (AoA)

Agriculture has been one of the most contentious issues at the WTO. Since its beginning in 1994, the Agreement on Agriculture (AoA) has been imbalanced in its provisions on market access, tariffs, domestic subsidies, and export competition (Riley 2003; UNDP 2003). Women small-scale farmers and rural women are affected in particular by imports of subsidized food, since the latter threaten women's livelihoods and endanger food security and women's incomes (Riley 2003; Glipo 2003; UNDP 2003: 123).

After the failure of the Third Ministerial Meeting in Seattle in 1999, the WTO agreed at the Doha meeting to rebalance the AoA by taking into account the special and differential treatment for developing countries as well as non-trade concerns such as food security and rural development (WTO 2001).

However, the subsequent negotiations at the Mini-Ministerial gathering in Tokyo on February 14-16, 2003, were disappointing to many developing countries because they did not reflect the goals agreed upon in the Doha Ministerial Declaration (Glipo 2003).⁹ At the Mini-Ministerial in Tokyo and the special session of the Committee on Agriculture (CoA) on February 24-28, the draft text distributed by Stuart Harbinson, Chair of the negotiating CoA, was highly controversial (ICTSD 2003). The most severe criticism in regard to the Harbinson draft came from NGOs and developing countries (Riley 2003).¹⁰

Arze Glipo (2003) cites in particular three elements in the Harbinson's text that are worrisome to rural women. First, it would further liberalize the agricultural sector in the south and align agricultural development to intensification of global trade, despite the call of women for a review of the impact of liberalization on social reproduction, particularly livelihoods and food security of peasants and small farmers. Second, it would ensure protection of trade-distorting agricultural support and subsidies in developed countries that work in the interest of the economies of the North but against the interest of income transfers to the poor in the economies of the South. Finally, the provisions for special and differential treatment for developing countries remain inconsequential, since these do little to redress the existing inequities in trade stemming from the agreement (Glipo 2003).

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⁹ Mini-Ministerial gatherings are meetings of select invited countries with the goal of seeking common ground on controversial issues. Mini-ministerials are sponsored not by the WTO but by the host country, in this case Japan (Riley 2003). In general, Mini-Ministerials are criticized for not respecting democratic principles.

Whereas invited members suggest that such meetings are necessary to achieve consensus in the WTO, numerous civil society groups criticize the criteria of the countries selected to the Mini-Ministerials, since no written records are kept of the discussions, decisions are made that affect the entire membership, and the agenda is set on their behalf and in their absence (World Development Movement 2002).

¹⁰ With a view to protecting themselves against imports of subsidized food on the basis of the Special Safeguard Measures, developing countries elaborated different proposals prior to the Tokyo meeting which are not reflected in the Harbinson draft: a) the use of tariffs and other measures to reduce unfair competition, b) market access only for non-subsidized products at prices that reflect the cost of production, c) special protection where development needs, food security, and rural employment make liberalization of food products too risky (Riley 2003).

The draft reduces the recourse of developing countries to special safeguard measures only to some 'strategic products'. Special safeguard actions are authorized in two cases: a surge in the volume of imports or a sharp fall in import prices (FAO 2001: 3). In particular, the question of how to secure food security under the framework of AoA is an important issue for rural women, since these women contribute substantially to food and agricultural production in most developing countries (Joeques 1999). In sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean for example, 80% of basic food is produced by women, and in South and Southeast Asia 60% of cultivation work and other food production is done by women (FAO 2003; Madonsela 2002; UNDP 2003: 109; Murphy 2001: 12).

The Tokyo Mini-Ministerial meeting and the last modalities negotiating session taking place from 25 to 31 March 2003 ended without any concrete results. In the event, the deadline for an agreement on the rules (so-called modalities) of March 31, 2003, was not met. At the same time, failure to make progress on the AoA could stall trade liberalization in other areas. There will be intense negotiations up to the Fifth Ministerial Meeting in Cancún on September 10-14, 2003, aimed at reaching some agreement.

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Besides the negotiating session at the end of March 2003, negotiators are focusing their attention on the next Mini-Ministerial set to take place in Egypt at the end of June. Time is running out for negotiations, since, according to the Doha work program, members are to submit their comprehensive draft Schedules based on these modalities no later than the date of the Ministerial Conference in Cancún, Mexico, in September 2003. The whole of the agriculture negotiations are to be concluded by 1 January 2005 (ICTSD 2003).

4.1 Rural Women and Small-Scale Women Farmers

The AoA's provisions on market access mainly address the aim of opening up of markets in developing countries by removing quantitative import restrictions and lowering tariffs on agricultural commodities while allowing industrialized countries to maintain very high tariffs (Glipe 2003).

Many small farmers are forced to abandon or sell their farms, a development which leads to land concentration and an expansion of TNC-controlled commercial crop production. Large tracts of fertile land are converted into industrial sites, commercial establishments, and real estate zones that benefit mostly medium- and large-scale commercial farmers, large-scale private traders, and transporters. The losers in this process are for the most part traditional small-scale farmers, processors, and petty trading or food crop producers, since they are not able to compete with commercial food production, which is able to produce more cost-effectively (Baden 1998: 34). There is a strong gender imbalance in this process of rural transformation, since women are overrepresented in small-scale and family farming in the lowest-income countries, while men are more likely to be owners of medium- and large-scale commercial farms, and are thus in a better position to take advantage of the commercialization of agricultural production (Joeques 1999: 38).

When small-scale farmers are displaced, women are forced to bear the major burden of looking for jobs and feeding the family. Lacking sufficient knowledge and skills, women in rural areas frequently work in low-paying jobs, usually in community and personal services, domestic work, and other activities in the in-

formal sector (Glijo 2003; Okeyo 2002). Other rural women migrate to cities or abroad (Glijo 2003). Their displacement to cities often has negative consequences, since women often find no other means to survive than to enter into prostitution, frequently becoming the target of violence, and are prone to contract HIV/AIDS, since they are unable to protect themselves against men who refuse to practice “safe sex” (Hochuli 2001).

In addition, social protection and care activities for the poor in many developing countries are also inadequate and remain underfinanced. Often tax incentives for agricultural export promotion result in budget cuts, invariably sacrificing social services needed to protect women and children. First, there are the direct impacts such cuts have on health and social services, and second, women are in this case forced to take on social responsibilities that were previously supported by government programs (Glijo 2003; see also UNDP 2003).

4.2 Women in Export-Oriented Agricultural Production

While expansion of TNC-controlled commercial crop production can have negative consequences on local domestic markets and small-scale farmers, export-oriented production can also increase employment and income chances for women - although women can profit from this situation only if they directly receive the higher prices of export crops (UNDP 2003: 133). An increase in women’s paid labor does not automatically imply that women and children’s health and education benefit from this development. Frequently an increase in paid labor is combined with a decline in leisure time or, alternatively, a reduction in care provision, as gender roles do not change accordingly (Cagatay 2001: 8; UNDP 1999; Grown, Elson and Cagatay 2000: 1152).

In many African countries growth in agricultural exports and the consequent “shift in the distribution of income against women” is a serious problem (Joeke 1999: 42). Studies show that in the family farm sector trade expansion has exacerbated the exploitation of women, since increasing demand for women workers in export crops is not associated with higher wages. Joeke argues that women’s “ability to claim a return for their labour was not strong enough for them to secure a rise in their labour returns. Thus their share of household income [has fallen].” (Joeke 1999: 39)

As a consequence, the nutritional status of women (and children) in export-oriented households may deteriorate. In sharp contrast to overall rises in family incomes as the family as a unit profits “from export sales of traditional cereals and sugar,” the situation of women may suffer. Beside greater exploitation in cash food production, the food security of the family may be negatively affected by a decrease in food crop production (Cagatay 2001: 7). Unable to continue on in traditional food crop production, women lose bargaining power in relation to men because the unpaid family work done by women makes them dependent on the incomes of husbands and other male family members (Hoppe and Dolfsma; UNIFEM 2000: 87).

In cases where women are involved in non-traditional exports such as horticulture, they profit from increasing employment and direct payment (Murphy 2001: 13), but are often exposed to increasing health and environmental hazards and unsustainable agricultural practices such as pesticide residues in tropical exports (Madonsela 2002; Joeke 1999: 42).

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Box 1: Women's Lack of Access to Resources in Agriculture

Although women are mainly responsible for food production and food security, their access to resources is limited:

- Women own less than 2 % of land, while the proportion of female heads of households is increasing constantly.
- Only 10% of credit allowances are given to women (taking into account the limited statistical data available).
- Women's have limited access to technological inputs such as improved seeds, fertilizers and pesticides.
- Worldwide, two-thirds of the one billion illiterate people are women and girls.
- Women's needs, interests, and constraints are traditionally not adequately integrated in policy-making processes and laws that are of high relevance for poverty reduction, food security, and environmental sustainability
- Women have very limited access to the outputs of research and innovation, especially in the area of food crops

(FAO 2003)

Recommendation 11: Reduction of Domestic Support, Export Subsidies, and Tariff Peaks and Tariff Escalation

⇒ *Negative impacts of asymmetrical trade liberalization in agriculture are the main obstacle for developing countries in general and affect women specifically. Efforts should be made to enable developing countries to gain better access to the markets of industrialized countries in the agricultural sector. It is also necessary to focus on a reduction of domestic support, export subsidies, and agricultural dumping practices in industrialized countries. In particular, an agreement should be reached on tariff peaks and tariff escalation (UNDP 2003: 136)*

Recommendation 12: Review the Impact of Agricultural Liberalization

⇒ *Agricultural trade liberalization appears to affect particularly the livelihoods and food security of peasants and small farmers. Women have demanded a review of the impact of these policies before any further negotiations on liberalization and privatization proceed.*

Recommendation 13: Creation of a Development Box

⇒ *The authors recommend creating a Development Box on a positive list basis at the Cancún meeting that emphasizes food security and applies only for developing countries. Such a development box would create flexibility and policy autonomy for developing country governments, enabling them to protect and support small farmers and to give adequate consideration to the differential constraints, needs, and interests of men and women as well as to the production of food security crops (Malhotra 2002: 3; UNDP 2003: 138; Murphy 2001: 36)*

Recommendation 14: Promote Legal Access of Women to Resources

⇒ *Legal and customary constraints to ownership of or access to land, natural resources, capital, and credit often hinder women in taking advantage of the economic opportunities that may be created by export orientation in the agricultural sector as well as in taking steps against the negative impacts of liberalization.*

5. The Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS)

The main objective of the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) is to provide minimum standards of protection for all intellectual property, applied to technologies in products and processes (UNDP 2003: 203; BMZ 2002: 17). The growing economic importance of knowledge has fuelled a controversy over the form that patent law should take on under TRIPS, as is illustrated by ongoing discussions about biological and gene patents, mandatory licensing of patents on pharmaceutical substances (e.g., AIDS medications), and patents for agricultural seed.

One central challenge from a gender perspective is to prevent corporate misappropriation of knowledge that is part of the global public domain. As women are mainly responsible for social reproductive work, TRIPS is a major concern, especially in the areas of Public Health, biodiversity, traditional knowledge, and food security (Murphy 2001: 32; UNDP 2003: 218).

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5.1 Public Health

TRIPS and its relation to public health was one of the most contentious issues going into Doha, and the outcome of the negotiations was a success favoring both developing countries and human development. The United States, Switzerland, Japan, Canada, and Australia favored a more restricted position on providing access to medicines for pandemics such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria. In contrast, developing countries such as Brazil, India, and members of the Africa Group emphasized the public health provisions of the TRIPS Agreement. The anthrax scare in the United States and the Canadian threat to violate the patent on the antibiotic Cipro weakened the US position and permitted Mexico to propose an alternative draft that took up many of the positions of the developing countries (Malhotra 2002).

In Doha agreement was reached on allowing developing countries to override drug patents and to import generic copies of pharmaceutical products in the interest of Public Health and nutrition (Fosse 2002). The International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD) notes by way of summary that, according to Paragraph 6 of the Doha Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health, the TRIPS Council must find an expeditious solution by the end of 2002 to the problems countries may face in making use of compulsory licensing if they have insufficient or no pharmaceutical manufacturing capacity (ICTSD 2003a; see also UNDP 2003: 211; Fosse 2002).

No agreement was reached on how countries were to obtain licenses to make generic copies of patented drugs and how to come up with trade rules associated with the licensing procedures. Thus far the implementation issue remains unresolved.

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Although most WTO Members had expressed their willingness to approve the most recent draft of the Chair of the TRIPS Council, Eduardo Perez Motta, released on December 16, 2002, no decision has yet been taken. Motta's draft retains the disease coverage of previous drafts, referring to Paragraph 1 of the TRIPS and Health Declaration, i.e. "public health problems afflicting many developing and least-developed countries, especially those resulting from HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and other epidemics". The draft also covers active ingredients used in the manufacture of medicines as well as diagnostic kits needed for their use, as proposed in particular by the Africa Group in the WTO (ICTSD 2002). Another proposal recently presented by Brazil suggested the involvement of the World Health Organization in verifying whether poor countries wishing to use the Paragraph 6 solution had insufficient manufacturing capacity to produce the drugs themselves under a compulsory license (ICTSD 2003a). However, the Brazilian proposal was defeated.

Neither at the Tokyo Mini-Ministerial nor at the TRIPS Council meeting on February 18-20, 2003, was a compromise in sight. Negotiations failed to narrow the gap on Paragraph 6 of the Doha Declaration on TRIPS and health, which that remains highly controversial among WTO member states (ICTSD 2003a). Amartya Sen has criticized the situation whereby developing countries are prohibited from exporting generic drugs to those countries which do not have the capacity to produce such drugs (Sen and Sulston 2002).

It has been criticized the situation whereby developing countries are prohibited from exporting generic drugs to those countries which do not have the capacity to produce such drugs.

The highly controversial discussions reveal that developing countries without domestic pharmaceutical production capacities rely crucially on the ability to import affordable drugs (Fosse 2002). According to UNDP (2003), three aspects need to be taken into account in generally discussing this issue. First, patented drugs cost much more than generic versions. Studies launched by developing countries estimate price differentials between 12% and 68% for the event that TRIPS is signed. In particular, patented anti-retroviral drugs for HIV/AIDS are much more expensive than generic versions (UNDP 2003: 209). Second, for countries that have production capacities, "TRIPS restricts reverse engineering and increases the waiting time for generic versions of patented drugs to the length of protection (20 years). For countries that rely on imports of patented drugs, the implications are as yet unclear" (UNDP 2003: 209). Third, there is a substantial lack of private health research on the diseases that most people suffer in the world. This deficiency can be explained by missing patents rents. According to the Global Health Forum, less than 10% of the US\$ 70 billion spent globally on health research is spent on diseases that account for 90% of the world's health burden (UNDP 2003: 210).

5.2 Gender and HIV/Aids

Restricted or unequal distribution of anti-retroviral drugs has more acute impacts on women due to their high vulnerability to infection with HIV/Aids.

From a gender perspective, the availability of affordable drugs and medicines for women's health in general and for HIV/AIDS in particular is a matter of primary concern. Restricted or unequal distribution of anti-retroviral drugs has more acute impacts on women due to their high vulnerability to infection with HIV/Aids. Both social norms that discriminate against women and the unequal legal situation of women in gaining access to medical care constrain women's in their ability to deal with the consequences of HIV infection and increase women's vulnerability.

First, in many countries women are more vulnerable to HIV/Aids because of social and economic gender inequalities that compromise women's ability to choose safer and healthier life strategies. According to UNAIDS (2001), the percentage of women infected with HIV/Aids has increased continuously in the past years. In 2000, 47% of HIV-positive adults were women, compared to 41% in 1997. In sub-Saharan Africa, 12.2 million women were infected in comparison to 10.1 million men. In Brazil only 1% of persons testing HIV-positive were women in 1984, whereas a decade later the corresponding figure was 25%. Women are also, on average, infected at an earlier age than men (UNAIDS 2001). Second, gender inequalities deny women sexual health knowledge and practices that permit them to control their bodies or decide the terms on which they have sex, and the outcome is increased vulnerability of women to infection with HIV/Aids (UNAIDS 2001). Third, in up to 80% of cases where women in long-term stable relationships are found to be HIV-positive, they have been infected by their partners, who have acquired the virus outside the relationship (UNAIDS 2001). Fourth, a large share of new cases of HIV infection is due to gender-based violence inside and outside homes. Also, civil disorder and war expose women and girls to rape and abuse, which also contribute to spreading HIV/Aids (UNAIDS 2001). Fifth, women carry most of the burden of caring for sick family members. With increasing numbers of infected people, girls leave school to care for their ill relatives, siblings, and parents (UNAIDS 2001). They often have to replace the male breadwinner and earn money in addition to the increasing burden of care activities, and, depending on region, women are very often faced with a situation of declining public support (Fosse 2002). Sixth, labor migration to cities and male long-distance truck drivers increase the danger of spreading HIV/AIDS by coming into contact with prostitution and infecting their partners when they return to their villages.

With increasing numbers of infected people, girls leave school to care for their ill relatives, siblings, and parents, and they often have to replace the male breadwinner.

5.3 Food Security, Biodiversity, and Traditional/Indigenous Knowledge

Privatization of biological resources under TRIPS would have negative impacts on rural and poor women (UNDP 2003: 217, 218). Women are mainly responsible for food security, including the gathering of food, fodder, fuel, and water. One important aspect of their responsibility for food and livelihood security is women's role in the selection of seed, the management of small livestock, and the conservation and sustainable use of plant and animal diversity (FAO 2003; UNDP 2003: 217). According to FAO (2003), the key role of rural women as food providers and food producers connects them closely to the management of genetic resources of food and agriculture. This direct link has given women unique knowledge of local species, ecosystems, and their use, acquired from centuries of practical experience. In particular, subsistence farmers in marginal environments are dependent on special knowledge for maintaining a wide diversity of crops, wild plants, animal breeds and strains that are adapted to the local environment. This local knowledge protects women and families against crop failure, human death, animal disease, or death (FAO 2003).

Many women NGOs have been active in calling for a halt to TRIPS or elaboration of alternatives to TRIPS that would safeguard indigenous knowledge and local resources.

Women's specialized knowledge not only provides protection against hunger and malnutrition, it also serves medical purposes and is a source of income. Both women's traditional and indigenous knowledge¹¹ have been used for generations by local communities and is thus important for the conservation of plant genetic resources (FAO 2003; see also UNDP 2003: 217; WEDO 1999).

Extensive discussions are to be held prior to the fourth meeting of the World Intellectual Property Organization's (WIPO) Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore on December 9-17, 2003 (ICTSD 2002a). Again, many women NGOs have been active in calling for a halt to TRIPS or elaboration of alternatives to TRIPS that would safeguard indigenous knowledge and local resources.

Recommendation 15: Elaborating Alternatives to TRIPS

⇒ According to UNDP (2003), TRIPS has the potential to restrict access to medicines, technology, and knowledge, with disturbing implications for indigenous knowledge and food security. An alternative to TRIPS, either within or outside the ambit of the WTO, ought to be debated at the highest level (UNDP 2003: 221).

Recommendation 16: Implementation of Articles 7 and 8 of TRIPS with Respect to Gender Concerns

⇒ The authors recommend interpreting and implementing TRIPS in a development-friendly way, especially with a view to ensuring the viability of Public Health. In particular, interpretations of Articles 7 and 8 should include the gender perspective as a means of protecting Public Health and nutrition (UNDP 2003: 211)

Recommendation 17: Protection of Traditional/Indigenous Knowledge

⇒ Governments should ensure that the protection of indigenous wisdom, traditional innovation, knowledge, and practices is consistent with the Convention on Biological Diversity (WEDO 1999; Murphy 2001: 37). All living organisms (including micro-organisms), genes, and plants should be excluded from being patented.

11 Whereas traditional knowledge refers mostly to knowledge held by a nation (ayurvedic medicine or China's herbal medicine), indigenous knowledge refers mostly to groups that are or have historically been marginalized and who try to pursue traditional lifestyles with this knowledge (UNDP 2003: 218).

6 The Agreement on Trade-Related Investment Measures (TRIMs)

The Agreement on Trade-Related Investment Measures (TRIMs) stands in the tradition of the regional North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the failed Multilateral Agreement on Investments (MAI). Initiated by OECD member states, MAI was criticized for its intention to expand the rights of investors without taking into account the issues of social welfare and environmental protection. Now that MAI has failed, industrialized countries are eager to reintroduce the idea of MAI as a multilateral investment agreement under WTO rules (BERN, Greenpeace and Solifonds 2002: 10; UNDP 2003: 242; Williams 2003).

The Agreement on TRIMs was negotiated during the Uruguay Round and applies for measures that affect trade in goods (WTO 2003). The aim of the Agreement on TRIMs is to eliminate trade-distorting effects of investment measures taken by WTO members (WTO 2003). Such Trade-Related Investment Measures concern investment incentives (such as loans and tax rebates) as well as performance requirements (such as local content, local manufacturing, export performance, and technology transfer requirements) (UNDP 2003: 235).

The Council for Trade in Goods is responsible for the operation of the Agreement on TRIMs (WTO 2003). At its meeting on March 14, 2003, the Council for Trade in Goods continued its review of the operation of the Agreement on TRIMs. In the Doha Ministerial Declaration there was agreement that negotiations would take place on the 'Singapore issues' (investment, competition policy, transparency in government procurement, trade facilitation) after the Fifth Session of the Ministerial Conference (WTO 2001). Prior to Cancún no agreement on modalities is expected, since the Singapore issues are perceived to be closely connected to negotiations of interest to developing countries on agriculture as well as to the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) (ICTSD 2003b). Once these issues are resolved, it is believed that negotiations on TRIMS will be finalized.

Williams (2002) argues that, from a gender perspective, some of the most important dimensions of the Agreement on TRIMs concern the quantity and quality of male and female employment, the impact of foreign investment on the nature, size, and growth potential of women-owned and -operated small and medium-sized firms in host countries, and more generally the overall development impacts of foreign investment-trade linkages (Williams 2002, 2003).

Under the conditions of a possible extended Agreement on TRIMs, individual governments would no longer be able to plan the sectors in which they chose to engage in foreign investment or to define the extent of foreign investment in particular areas of the economy (Williams 2002). Generally speaking, FDI are investments made directly in production enterprises in one country by firms based in others (Mallampally 1999: 135). As a consequence, such constraints in giving preferences or protection would impact on local producers and markets (Williams 2002). As

The aim of the Agreement on TRIMs is to eliminate trade-distorting effects of investment measures taken by WTO members, including investment incentives and performance requirements.

As women tend to dominate the micro and small business sectors in many developing countries, there may be negative effects if existing preferential programs are abandoned.

women tend to dominate the micro and small business sectors in many developing countries, there may be negative effects if existing preferential programs are abandoned or in cases in which governments had planned to initiate such programs as part of their gender mainstreaming initiatives (Williams 2002).

As far as the quantity and quality of the male and female employment in export-oriented industries dominated by FDI are concerned, considerable disparities – by sector, industry, and country – need to be taken into account in discussing the issue (UNCTAD 2001: 4). Mallampally (1999) argues that in some developing countries FDI has provided women with employment opportunities e.g. in manufacturing and services, which has augmented the economic and social position of women. The jobs women hold in the manufacturing sector in foreign affiliates and in enterprises linked to TNCs are mainly located in export-oriented industries, including in Export Processing Zones (EPZ) (Mallampally 1999: 139).

Besides increasing employment rates, export expansion can also contribute to raising women's wages. Many authors warn, though, that the impact of general trade expansion on women's relative wages is a highly complex issue and needs to be analyzed at individual country and sector levels (Mallampally 1999: 47, 38; Sen 1999). Positive effects may be jeopardized for the following reasons:

Although the labor participation rate of women has increased, household and care activities have not decreased accordingly.

- The jobs in export industries are often of substandard quality. The position of many female workers is quite vulnerable to many forms of abuse and discrimination in these substandard work environments (ILO 2001; UNCTAD 1999: 4; Cagatay 2001: 7; UNDP 2003: 32).
- Low-skill work, especially in EPZ, is not a sound long-term perspective for women (Hoppe and Dolfsma 2003; UNDP 2003: 33).
- Although the labor participation rate of women has increased, household and care activities have not decreased accordingly, since the labor market situation of women is socially embedded and frequently constrained by patriarchal gender norms and institutions (Hoppe and Dolfsma 2003; UNIFEM 2000: 101, 106ff.).
- Short-term job benefits for women workers may be lost in the long run (UNCTAD 1999: 2; Cagatay 2001: 7). The “intersectoral reallocation of work” (Cagatay 2001: 7) thesis questions whether job gains in export-oriented sectors are profiting from trade expansion and will be able to compensate for job losses resulting from trade liberalization. In particular, low-skilled women workers in the informal sector are expected to be the losers of such processes (Cagatay 2001: 7).

Recommendation 18: Develop and implement gender-sensitive and pro-development targets

⇒ Developing countries should be granted the right to develop and implement gender-sensitive and pro-development targets and requirements for FDI as well as the right to use gender equality and proactive- poverty-eradicating investment screens (Williams 2002)

7 Engender the WTO!

To make possible equal participation of women and men in deliberations, negotiations, and decision-making structures at all levels of the World Trade Organization, it is important to include women as political actors at the national, government and at the regional level as well as in international and transnational governance structures. It is also important to include gender dimensions in the issues discussed and deliberated at the WTO and to increase the knowledge of negotiating teams concerning gender issues in order to facilitate their understanding of how WTO commitments affect women and men in different regions of the world. Particular attention has to be paid to social reproduction and increasing human security at the individual, family, and community levels. The WTO is not just about cross-border trade issues but also about sovereign domestic regulatory and legislative matters not directly related to trade (Malhotra 2002). Under the new trade regime trade regulators are subject for the first time to a set of external commercial criteria on the basis of which their actions may be challenged. Such a regime may entail benefits, but it may also worsen the existing inequalities between the North and the South, between different regions, between women and men, between ethnic groups, and between social classes. It is thus necessary to include Gender Mainstreaming as a strategy in all areas of the WTO.

Following Caroline Moser (2002), Gender Mainstreaming has to be implemented on two levels. Operational procedures are needed to ensure that gender concerns are factored into policies, programs, and projects, and, in addition, institutional structures must be changed so that gender can be integrated at the center of development practice (Moser 2002: 4; see also Riley 2001).

Until now gender analyses and gender-related policy recommendations for the new trade regime have been ignored in the WTO negotiations. It is important to focus on a holistic concept of development

Until now gender analyses and gender-related policy recommendations for the new trade regime have been ignored in the WTO negotiations. To encourage the WTO to adopt Gender Mainstreaming both as a system-wide concept and as a contribution to human security and gender equity, it is important to focus on a holistic concept of development.

Recommendation 19: Increase Women's Representation in the WTO

↪ *Women should be equally represented in WTO decision-making bodies, and governments should work for gender balance in their WTO delegations. The WTO should conduct general gender assessments of the effects of trade liberalization on women, highlighting harmful policies and building on areas where women have benefited from increased trade (WEDO 1999)*

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