

“GENDER AND TRADE: HOW TO ENGENDER INDIA’S NATIONAL FOREIGN TRADE POLICY?”

Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh

A gender perspective is needed in order to fully understand the hindrances that unequal gender relations place on enhanced development through trade-stimulated economic growth. In this spirit NEED and CUTS International held a **daylong workshop** with **objectives** to:

- Provide space to develop ideas on how to mainstream gender concerns into NFTP so that trade implications can be used for the marginalised sections of our society.
- Gain better understanding of the ways in which liberalised trade has influenced gender inequalities and relations in specific sectors.
- Provide feedback on the launch of a forthcoming CUTS initiative on Gender and Trade, which will further delve into the issues raised in the workshops.

There is an urgent need for enhanced understanding of the gendered effects of trade reform in the Indian context with specific reference to gender gaps in earnings, working conditions, ownership and control of assets, consumption and technology use and empowerment.

Inaugural Session: Gender and trade from Government perspective



Sri. R. S. Ratna, CSO representatives collectively lighting the lamp

The Workshop started off preserving the warm Indian culture with the lighting of lamp by Dr. R. S. Ratna, Director, Regional and Multilateral Trade Relations, Department of Commerce, New Delhi, Dr. Pam Rajput, Executive Director, Women’s Resource and Advocacy Centre, Rebecca Band, CUTS CITEE, Sri. Anil K. Singh, CEO NEED, the Executive Member of The Crafts Council of UP Dr. Usha Kohli and other delegates.

Ms. Priyanka Dutta, HR Manager, NEED offered a warm welcome on behalf of CUTS and NEED to the dignitaries as well as to the stakeholders and the producer’s group. While referring to the old saying, “Behind every successful man there is a woman” she emphasised that, while feeling pride in the saying, we should also take into account women’s immense contribution in social, political, cultural, trade and economics

dimensions. Trade policies do not address unequal distribution of resources. Many female workers are in the informal sector and remain invisible in statistical records. Ms. Dutta acknowledged that NEED and CUTS have been initiating in Uttar Pradesh the development of a coherent approach towards women's inclusion in trade.

Rebecca Band, from CUTS CITEE, Jaipur, put forth a summary of the **TDP project** which focuses upon linkages between trade, development and poverty reduction. She explained the **activities** that were carried out for the project: Analysis of stakeholders' perceptions, background papers and case studies, briefing papers, networking, and national dialogues. **National Dialogues** have been carried out extensively with an objective to gather stakeholder views. The core objective of the project is to mainstream trade into national development/poverty reduction strategies so there is policy coherence and relevance. The other main **objectives** include: To facilitate cross-fertilisation of experience and lessons learnt, capacity building, to facilitate synergy between government and civil society organisations (CSOs), and to advocate development-oriented trade policies. Her presentation was further translated in Hindi by Mr. Anil. K. Singh.



Mr. R. S. Ratna, Director, Department of Commerce, greeted everybody and expressed his personal views upon “**National Foreign Trade Policy and Gender Dimensions**”. Mr. Ratna put forth **the chief objective of Foreign Trade Policy** i.e. to reduce poverty through development with both positive as well as negative outcomes. Although gender impact of trade policy has received increasing attention, in theory **trade remains 'gender-neutral'**. Trade enhances or diminishes opportunities in some sectors, regardless of gender. Recognition of different impacts of trade policies upon men and women is essential, as is an assessment of the impact of trade liberalisation on women. An Impact Assessment would help to decide the kind of policy to be framed and its outcomes.



Mr. Ratna presented the salient features of the present Foreign Trade Policy and its Annual Review by the Commerce and Industry Minister. He discussed a **relevant database** highlighting women's work in India, and the **impact of liberalisation** in crucial sectors of agriculture, food processing industry, textiles, handicrafts, electronics, leather, and services (especially business process outsourcing (BPO)). Further, he emphasised that in order to double employment, economic activities for women are necessary since many of the workers are female. This was illustrated by the example of the BPO industry.

Although gender is an important aspect of trade, no special focus has been given to women while constructing a trade policy which remains **'gender neutral'**. Mr. Ratna questioned if there can be a gender-sensitive FTP, and what it would look like. What

would be the impact of such a policy on gender inequality? What would be the mode of approach – WTO/FTAs negotiations, policy formulation, incentives? Can we identify ‘Gender Sensitive Products?’

Challenges: Research on gender requires the collection of gender disaggregated data, which is difficult since the majority of female workers are associated with the informal sector.

Road Ahead: Significant research studies highlighting crucial determinants like number of migrants, impact assessment, whether or not experiments carried out by other countries might not be beneficial in India’s context, etc.

Mr. Ratna specifically expressed that if the policies are utilised in a fruitful manner they can benefit women as well.

Open Floor Discussion

Dr. Pam Rajput commented that the issue of how gender affects trade has been silent whilst the developing economy has had a direct impact upon every woman. A woman builds the survival strategy of her family. Therefore, policy analysis, impact analysis, and advocacy are essential. Trade policies are not only ‘gender neutral’ but also ‘gender blind’. We have drifted away from the objective of ‘poverty elimination’ and towards ‘poverty reduction’. There is an increasing need to involve more and more CSOs and to organise open door dialogue with the government functionaries in order to ensure inclusive growth. Gender disaggregated data needs to be collected and submitted to policy officials for formulating any policy.



Session I: Gender, trade and micro-enterprise



Mr. Anil. K. Singh, CEO NEED, made a confession that his presentation would not be data-driven, but instead he would be ‘**voicing the voiceless**’ and laying forth the perceptions and observation of the grassroots people. The biggest factor behind poverty is that people are largely unorganised. The **interrelation between gender and employment** was laid out, citing examples of how intensive trainings, skill upgradation techniques and exposure visits have brought the producer groups to the level of self-marketing their products.

The huge gap between work and respective earnings earned by the women producer groups is rampant. Moreover, the work produced by women producer groups has not been mainstreamed. Employment opportunities for women producers are rare.

While referring to his discussion with **Usha Thorat, Deputy Director, RBI**, he mentioned that only 6.5 percent of rural dwellers have financial accessibility. There is a large need for credit accessibility along with savings, composite insurance and social security.

Intensive research and data collection needs to be done on gender inclusion as well as social inclusion while registering growth rate. A vivid glimpse of **agriculture and textile sectors** was presented. Corporate farming lacks direct involvement to accessibility. The structure, system and functionality are 'them' driven and not driven by people's necessities. Therefore, there is a **need for an organised approach and collective collaboration** towards development. He discussed **mobilisation dynamics** like: '**Mobilisation within-** Depicting our mindset'; '**Mobilisation over-** Necessity to develop connectivity on a broader scale'; '**Mobilisation to-** Enhanced accessibility'; and '**Mobilisation with-** Interrelating the powerless with the powerful'. The participation of women producers is a mandatory element of advocacy.

Emerging Challenges and Changes: The big gap between supply chain and policy interventions and the lapse in demand generated at the grassroots level, gives way to develop a stronger cohesive force down the line in order to harness the supply chain. The idea was brought out explicitly through the illustration of several schemes and programmes run at the grassroots level for leveling gender gaps and the consequent lack of knowledge and information leading to non-percolation of resources. **Policy responses** from the perspectives of women producer groups include skill upgradation and enhancement of traditional skill through proper back up.

Mr. Singh concluded by raising questions like "Does export-led growth as recorded have a direct relation with poverty eradication?", and "How far is it pro-poor driven, gender driven and how can it help us in understanding the process of reform?".

Open Floor Discussion

Ms. Rebecca Band, CUTS CITEE commented that it is impossible for Northern consumers to remain unaware of the poor working conditions in which many products are made. However, they remain caught in the system and because of their own constrained resources, prefer to continue to buy the cheaper products available to them.

Dr. Usha Kohli, Board Member, Crafts Council of UP, while emphasising the gender perspective through the prism of trade and economy, remarked that producer groups are not made known of the several schemes meant for them by the government. This

leads to a further lack of transparency between the producer groups and the functionality of the government System and we need for a proper follow up system .

Mr. Lavi Tikkha, NGO representative remarked that mobilisation of the masses often turns to violence.

Mr. Anil. K. Singh, CEO NEED suggested that through organising such groups and linking them with organised institutions would lead to strengthening and enhancing their collective power to raise their voice and place their needs through infusing the key elements of social cohesion and social inclusion through the core element of social discipline.



HOD of Economics IT College

While answering the question of Mr. Tikkha, **Sri. R. S. Ratna** responded that gender-based policy can only gradually come up effectively within the next 5-8 years. He also gave the examples of Bangladesh and Africa who have evolved as garment exporters.

Dr. Khosla, Economist, remarked that globalisation has led to feminisation of work and informalisation is rising. The informal sector is highly absorbing migrants but they are never transformed from unorganised to organised class.

Students of Economics, Lucknow University suggested that government should build linkages with academic institutions for wider implementation of the interventions directed.

Mr. Anil. K. Singh further expressed necessity of developing an entrepreneurial drive, creating powerful institutional support, and a gender approach instead of programmatic approach.

Session II: Elaborating the gender dimensions of trade

Ms. Rebecca Band, CUTS CITEE, presented background concepts of gender, especially as relates to macroeconomics and globalisation, before going into more depth CUTS' proposed research and advocacy.

While the concept of gender budgeting is gaining legitimacy in India, it is necessary to take this exercise further by formulating a coherent understanding of the impact of trade liberalisation on gender relations and vice versa: the impact of gender inequalities on trade liberalisation. By providing policy prescriptions, gains for women can be capitalised, previous losses can be compensated and reversed, and future losses can be avoided.

The NFTP, like most other policies, is *gender-neutral*: it assumes liberalisation will affect men and women equally, despite women's disproportional representation in at least the first, if not all three of the thrust sectors of the special focus initiatives (agriculture, handicrafts/handlooms, and marine products).

Since gender inequalities will influence trade policy outcomes, the key questions to address are: what are the constraints women face and how can the government address these? The objective of the CUTS project would be to influence the next NFTP after 2008.

Just as the relationship between trade liberalisation and pro-poor growth or poverty reduction is a very contentious one, so too is the relationship between trade liberalisation and gender inequality. It is a two-way relationship because on the one hand, trade liberalisation can have adverse and differential effects on men/women and the relations between them; and on the other hand, gender-based inequalities impact on trade policy outcomes, such that trade liberalisation policies may not yield expected results.

Some women may gain in some ways, most often in that they have alternative job options. Other women (or even those same women) may lose, by their work increasingly becoming casualised with less benefits and security. As women increasingly take up paid employment, their household duties do not necessarily get redistributed to their partners, hence the double/triple burden.



Mr. R. M. Nair, Gen. Manager, SIDBI, expressed his views upon “**Financial Inclusion from Gender Perspective**”. SIDBI is a national bank whose mandate is to help small and cottage industries since a major part of masses live in unserved regions. They work in collaboration with NGOs for maximum reachout in order to strengthen and sustain them as a substitute for banking institutions.

While extending gratefulness to institutes like IFAD, DFID-UK, Mr. Nair emphasised upon the fact that for most micro-finance institutions (MFIs), the motive has been profit making and the social slant has declined. SIDBI has successfully

merged the social mission along with financial inclusion. This has been a source of inspiration for many commercial banks.

He presented certain figures from an upcoming impact analysis study. Amongst forty Lac borrowers, 95 percent have been women belonging to scheduled castes and tribes (SC and ST), and other backward communities. SIDBI has brought effective MFI service to 72 percent of the population who did not have access to credit. 73 percent of the clientele belongs to SC and ST. 80 percent of the borrowers are women. 96 percent of whom belong to the self-help group (SHG) model, 98 percent to the Grameen model. There has been ensured outreach of 30 percent to borderline areas.

The same families and individuals were tracked over a period of seven years. 71 percent of girl children now attend private schools which depicts their increased affordability. Majority of the people now attend private clinics. 65 percent of the women are now engaged in economic activities. In this way, women have started contributing to their family income. Thus, the condition of housing, education and health has improved largely. However, increased income is not proportional to expenditure on assets, and there is an increased attitude of borrowing and additional work for women.

Open Floor Discussion

Dr. Pam Rajput, Executive Director, Women's Resource and Advocacy Centre remarked that if micro-finance is panacea, then how come problems still exist in society?

Mr. Anil. K. Singh, CEO NEED, replied that we should understand the value of delivering money to the deprived community and cited the example of the potters of Village Mahetopur in Block Kakori. They managed to scale-up their productivity 200 percent and link the product to five-star hotels.

Dr. Pam Rajput, Executive Director, Women's Resource and Advocacy Centre, presented her views on "**Gender Implications of the EU-India Free Trade Agreement**". 300 FTAs have been negotiated globally out of which 119 have been negotiated in Asia Pacific alone. The FTAs serve as a potent mode of going beyond WTO thus focusing chiefly upon livelihood generation. The EU committed 470 million for economic development. The concept of development has drastically changed with the onset of liberalisation. The concept of 'Aid for Development' has shifted to 'Aid to Trade'.

India ranks tenth in importance as an EU trading partner, whilst the EU comes first for India. **The common objective** is trade liberalisation, but this will have different implications on the unequal partners. Analysis suggests "**The greater integration, the more gains.**" But the concept loses its vitality with unequal partners. However, gains for the countries with FTAs are not guaranteed and often the effect is short lived.

In the latest human development report, India is only ranked 128 with a high rate of illiteracy, 80 percent of the children are malnourished and high MMR infection. The economic activity rate can be reported at 32.7 percent for rural women and 16.6 percent for urban women. She also reported that in rural India, 3 billion days per year are spent on merely gathering fuel.

The **mandate of EU Commission** is to keep in mind both environmental and social aspects in its framework of reference. But the Global Europe Document speaks only of maintaining Europe's competitiveness.

Feminisation of employment is a myth. In Export Promotion Zones (EPZs), a decline from 48 percent to 36 percent employment has been recorded. The women producers work in vulnerable conditions for low wages. They have not seen the benefits of livelihood enhancement, income generation and improved standards of living. She also presented a sectoral review. In agriculture, corporatisation is taking place. In retail, for petty traders there should not be corporatisation. The economy has suffered a shift to 'mall culture' but what percentage of people are benefiting from the mall culture and at what cost? In essential services, the enhanced enforcement of IPR will eventually put health services at a much higher price leading to corporate hospitals which the poor cannot afford. In tourism, loss of livelihood has led to drastic hidden implications.



Dr. Pam Rajput, Executive
Director, Women's Resource and
Advocacy Centre

The **mantra of economic growth** is fine, but the definition of poverty needs to be changed. Poverty has broader implications on social growth in terms of social equality and social widening. There should be **transparency** in the negotiation process and it should be subjected to the Right to Information Act. The impact of trade should be understood from a multilevel approach: in government and in CSOs.

We need to build capacity, have a strong research base and network for proper utilisation of resources and interaction with Government. We need a parliamentary committee of women to be proactive and enhanced linkages between ministries.

Open Floor Discussion

Mr. Anil. K. Singh, CEO, NEED, remarked that focused and concentrated efforts need to be directed in order to build a stronger network with like minded stakeholders. There is an increased need of capacity building of stakeholders.

Mr. R. S. Ratna, Department of Commerce, mentioned Newton's law of motion in reference to the GOI. There is an immediate need to identify important sectors and deliberate with government on a regular basis. This calls for an integrated approach within government departments. Existing WTO Cells can be strengthened through capacity-building interventions with the support of Ministry of Commerce.

Concluding Remarks

Ms. Priyanka Dutta, HR NEED, concluded that we must initiate an integrated and inclusive approach with government departments. On behalf of CUTS international and NEED, she extended her appreciation to the distinguished guests and team members for their precious time.

**“GENDER AND TRADE: HOW TO ENGENDER INDIA’S NATIONAL FOREIGN
TRADE POLICY?”**

Venue: Crystal Hall, The Taj Residency, Lucknow.

Time: 9:30 am to 5:30 pm

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Participants	42
Women Producer Group Members	03
Resource Persons	05
NEED's and CUTS Team	05
TOTAL	55

PARTICIPANTS

S.No.	NAME	Organization
1	Deepashree Mohan	Craft Council U.P. 0522-2309656
2	Seema Singh	Care India, Sitapur 9336334040
3	Shrayana Bhattacharya	Inst. Of Social Studies Trust, Indian Habitat centre, New Delhi
4	Usha Kohli	Craft Council U.P. 0522-2309656
5	Dr. R.S.Rathore	Dy. Director General, UPCAR, Lucknow
6	Shashank Vage	Programme Co-Ordinator, IISP, Lko
7	Nirankar Singh	Journalist, A-13/6 Park Road, Lko-1
8	Manju Mishra	T.M.K.J., Lko
9	Avinash Rastogi	HDFC
10	Anupam Srivastava	I.N.C.F.
11	Arif Rizvi	Doordarshan
12	Yogesh Bardhu	IDS, Aliganj, Lucknow
13	Lavi Tikkha	Avadh Upbhokta
14	S.Srinivasan	SIDBI, Lucknow
15	Rajan Lal Sharma	Bhartiya Upbhokta Samiti
16	Khush Devi	Bhartiya Upbhokta Samiti
17	M.P.Singh	Bhartiya Sewa Sansthan
18	Prathiba Mishra	Trainee Journalist, Doordarshan
19	S.K.Nayak	WLC College, Lucknow
20	Moulshree Mishra	Trainee Journalist, Doordarshan
21	Saunil Singh	Member, CCC
22	Rishabh Gupta	Consumer Gild
23	Indra Pal Singh	UP Mahila Kalyan Nigam
24	Meenu	SABLA

25	Sadhna Mehrotra	Laxmi
26	M.N.Lari	Mia Dastkaar
27	Pramod Singh	Aaj Newspaper
28	Dr.Anupama	I.T. College,9935834548
29	Neha Pathak	I.T.College,9415464631
30	Deepa Mitra	I.T.College,9335250852
31	Mehnaz	I.T.College,9936155126
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33	Shristee Chandel	I.T.College,9450384500
34	Arun K.Mishra	INCF, Lko 9415548369
35	Smila Tripathi	
36	J.P.Pae	
37	V.K.Rastogi	228/117,Raja Bazaar,Lko 9335019632
38	Rajeev Mullick	Hindustan Times
39	Shambhu Saran Verma	Khas Khabrein
40	Sneha Tiwari	Hindustan
41	Tarannum Manjul	Indian Express, 9415016360
42	Kumund Srivastava	Voice Of Lucknow,9415752737

RESOURCE PERSONS

S.No.	NAME	Organization
1	Dr. Pam Rajput	Women Resource and Advocacy Centre, 2064, Sector 15C, Chandigarh 0172-2545425
2	R.S.Ratna	Director, Department of Commerce, GOI
3	Rebecca Band	CUTS, Jaipur
4	R.M.Nair	SIDBI, Lucknow
5	Anil Singh	CEO, NEED, Lucknow

PRODUCER GROUP

S.No.	NAME	Organization
1	Saibun	Nari Shakti Kendra, NEED, Lko
2	Sunita	Nari Shakti Kendra, NEED, Lko
3	Pushpa Sharma	Nari Shakti Kendra, NEED, Lko

NEED and CUTS Team

S.No.	NAME	Organization
1	Mahendra Gailakoti	NEED
2	Priyanka Dutta	NEED

3	S.M.Imran	NEED
4	Pushpa Singh	NEED
5	Anutosh Biswash	CUTS

List of Media Persons during Press-Conference on Nov. 29, 2007 at Taj Residency, Lucknow

S.No.	NAME	No. of Participants
1	Print Media	23
2	Electronic media	07
3	NEED and CUTS Team	05
4	Producer Groups	02
	Total	37

Detailed List of Media Persons

Print Media

S.No.	NAME	TELEPHONE	AGENCY
1	Anil Srivastava	Swatantra Chetna	9336857216
2	Arun Pathak	Voice of Lucknow	9415596916
3	Bhavana Pandey	Swatantra Bharat	9415577947,9838071417
4	Sunil Kumar	Times of India	9936234153
5	Imraan	United Bharat	9305396937
6	Vijay Kant Mishra	Rashtriya Sahara	9935395292
7	Nimesh	Dainik Jagaran	9793086318
8	Umesh	Dainik Jagaran	9415766555
9	Pratik Awasthi	Dainik Hindustan	9889370224
10	Shambhu Sharan Verma	Khas Khabrein	9335224429
11	Snehaa Tiwari	Hindustan	9935627665
12	Tarannum Manjul	Indian Express	9415016360
13	Kumund Srivastava	Voice of Lucknow	9415752737
14	Rajeev Mullick	Hindustan Times	9415577874
15	Mohd. Faisal Fareed	Pioneer	9452040956
16	Gyan Prakash	Amar Ujala	9935097411
17	Trilochan Singh	Dainik Jagaran	9450658060
18	Indresh Rastogi	Aag {Urdu}	9451908304
19	Vishal Srivastava	Indian Express	9415085217
20	Alok Bajpai	Aaj	0522-2209312
21	Mumtaz Ali	Avadhnama	9935535160
22	Audesh Shukla	Charti Rajneet	9839327148
23	Prashant Dixit	Rashtriya Sahara	9415564511

Electronic media

S.No.	NAME	Org.	Contact No.
1	B.Haider	Sahara Samay	9839234737
2	D. Mishra	Photographer SS	
3	A.D.Singh	AIR	9452778253
4	Prathiba Mishra	Doordarshan	9984072966
5	Monusree Mishra	Doordarshan	
6	Ahtesham Siddiqui	E.T.V. News	9453221000,9336399300
7	Deep Chandra	Photographer	9415020063

Linkages between Trade, Development and Poverty Reduction
Gender and Trade
How to engender the National Foreign Trade Policy of India?
 30 November 2007, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh

Agenda

Inaugural Session: Gender and trade from a government perspective

- 0945 – 1000 *Introduction of the TDP Project*
 Rebecca Band, CUTS CITEE
- 1000 – 1030 *National Foreign Trade Policy and gender dimensions*
 R.S. Ratna, Director, Regional & Multilateral Trade Relations, Department of
 Commerce
- 1030 – 1100 Tea/Coffee

Session 1: Gender, trade and microenterprise

- 1100 – 1300 Anil Singh, Network of Entrepreneurship and Economic Development
- 1300 – 1400 Lunch

Session 2: Elaborating the gender dimensions of trade

- 1400 – 1430 *CUTS gender and trade project: what is to be researched, why and how?*
 Rebecca Band, CUTS CITEE
- 1430 – 1500 *Financial Inclusion from Gender Perspective*
 R. M. Nair, Gen. Manager, SIDBI
- 1500 – 1530 Discussion
- 1530 – 1600 Tea/coffee
- 1600 – 1630 *Gender Implications of the EU-India Free Trade Agreement*
 Dr. Pam Rajput, Executive Director, Women's Resource and Advocacy Centre
- 1600 – 1800 Discussion