

Negotiation Kit for Beijing + 10

Women and the Economy

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OVERARCHING CONCERN

In the ten years that the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) have existed side by side, the institutional arrangements of the former have persistently undermined the inter-governmental commitments of the latter. WTO global economic policy is generally geared towards fiscal constraint, trade, and financial liberalization. Its regulatory institutions are universalizing property rights. These processes lack sensitivity to social outcomes which constitute women's equity, equality, and empowerment.

GAINS

- Gender budgeting has been institutionalized and is proving to be a vehicle for the accounting of social goals in at least one aspect of national economic planning.
- Governmental and inter-governmental efforts are linking women entrepreneurs with opportunities opened up by liberalization.
- Sex-disaggregated data are now more widely available.

GAPS

- On the part of national women's machineries and women's non-governmental organizations and mass organizations, there is a lack of political and technical skills to critically engage with macroeconomic issues from a gender perspective.
- Fiscal constraints—and binding global free trade agreements that promote privatization erode the capacity of many governments to protect social reproduction and economic development particularly the commitments made to food security and sustainable women's incomes & livelihoods. - exacerbated by the debt repayment burden

EMERGING ISSUES

- The deepening of global economic integration through regulatory frameworks and modalities being integrated into the WTO, financial institutions, OECD, and regional free trade agreements are moving governments farther away from economic commitments made to women in the BPFA.

- The promotion of GATS Mode 4 (Movement of Natural Persons) as a leveler of opportunities for developing countries in a globally integrated world is a threat to the human rights of migrants and to migrant women workers.
- The increased trans-border activities of trans-national corporations create a trail of social and environmental costs and disasters for which they remain unaccountable.

RECOMMENDED LANGUAGE

Reference: in BPFA Document

Paragraphs 58, 59, 165 & 167

Reference in BPFA+5 Outcomes Document

Section III, paragraph 35, 36, 37, 38, 39

Section IV, A, paragraphs 74 (a), (b), 82 (l), (m), 101 (a), (c), (g)

By Governments, International Financial Institutions, and Trade Organizations:

- Ensure that economic policies, practices and agreements do not violate international human rights obligations, including economic, social and cultural rights, or undermine the capacity of states to protect social reproduction.
- Hold multi-national corporations and other international organizations particularly the WTO accountable for violations of human rights and social, economic, and cultural rights.
- Democratize decision-making in financial institutions and trade organizations and take effective measures to address the challenges of globalization. This can be done through the enhanced and effective participation of developing countries in the international economic policy decision-making process, and by guaranteeing the equal participation of women, particularly those from developing countries, in macroeconomic decision-making.
- Support the promotion of economics that takes into account the social reproductive side of the economy and values the many dimensions of women's work.

By the UN system:

- Ensure that special Rapporteurs on poverty, structural adjustment, and foreign debt integrate a gender perspective into their work.
- Develop system-wide monitoring mechanisms to ensure that international and domestic economic policies and agreements do not impact negatively on the human and economic rights of women.

By Civil Society Organizations:

- Increase the capacity of women's organizations and networks to monitor and assess macroeconomic policies and programs from a gender-sensitive perspective.

<p>Thematic Focal Point for Women and the Economy International Gender and Trade Network - Asia</p>
