

## WTO PUBLIC FORUM 2018

### SESSION 72: WORKING SESSION

#### *Data and statistics for gender-responsive trade policy*

#### *Organized by UNCTAD*

*Panel:*

Isabelle Durant, Deputy Secretary-General, UNCTAD

Marie-France Paquet, Chief Economist, Global Affairs Canada

David Luke, Coordinator, African Trade Policy Centre, UNECA

Amelie Kvarnström, Trade Adviser, National Board of Trade, Sweden

Nadim Ahmad, Head, Trade and Competitiveness Statistics Division, OECD

Alison Holder, Director, Equal Measures 2030

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Introducing the session, Ms. Durant highlighted the need for more and better data to guide gender-responsive and inclusive trade policy. In many countries, governments committed to developing such policies are hindered by lack of data. In response, UNCTAD has begun a new work stream on gender statistics. She called for collaboration to develop a common understanding of data needs. In line with the Forum's theme "Trade 2030," she asked panellists to consider two questions, namely what data we have now, and what data we need for the future.

Ms. Paquet explained that policies in Canada must include a gender analysis, and highlighted new gender chapters in two recent Canadian FTAs. Analysis based on employer survey data affirms that trade is not gender neutral. What is needed is detailed longitudinal data linking employees and firms to trade. Policy makers should consult statistical authorities about data needs. Statistics Canada has launched a gender statistics webpage to provide data in one place. Overcoming data gaps will require creativity in piecing together information sources.

Mr. Luke emphasized challenges related to data availability in Africa. Effective policies require a good understanding of women and men in global value chains. Gender-related issues are multidimensional, but lack of basic gender and business statistics prevents making the necessary links. Nevertheless, important steps are underway to improve statistical capacity, including training for policymakers and a trade observatory. UNCTAD's Trade and Gender Toolbox is useful for ensuring that national strategies support inclusive gains from liberalization in Africa.

Ms. Kvarnström said that studies of high-income countries find different impacts on men and women from trade, but in unexpected ways. Lack of data prevents us from understanding the problem and identifying solutions, whether those be changes in trade policy or in national regulation.

Mr. Ahmad called for a holistic approach to gender and trade that considers the whole value chain, global and domestic. Using available information to reveal gender differences in trade can help motivate countries to invest in gender-disaggregated data. Combining existing data with the employee and management structures of exporting firms would provide unique insights. Gathering new data or linking existing information will require significant resource shifts at the national level, a challenge for countries with less developed statistical infrastructure. Public-private partnerships may help fill some gaps, for instance on social aspects and barriers to trade participation.

Ms. Holder explained that we need to move toward gender-transformative trade policy. To measure progress toward gender equality, her organization has developed an SDG Gender Index and Gender Advocates Data Hub. Her work with women's organizations reveals that gender advocates lack data to support their work. She emphasized the importance of democratizing data, getting it into the hands not only of government officials, but also of women's organizations who can use it to drive change.