



TPSA Project Holds a Kickoff Meeting for the Gender and Trade Dialogue Group

The Canada-Indonesia Trade and Private Sector Assistance Program's (TPSA) gender equality strategy seeks to ensure equitable access by men and women to opportunities that will ultimately facilitate increased exports to Canada. Under the strategy, TPSA will identify and raise awareness of barriers that may inhibit small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs owned or operated by women from exporting to Canada. The strategy will also build stakeholder understanding of how gender may affect access to international trade opportunities.

There is an emerging consensus in the literature that, in the current context of integrative trade and globalization, increased trade raises the income of the poor and that the transition costs to a more open economy are generally small relative to the overall benefits. A 2013 UNDP Human Development Report attributed hundreds of millions of people being lifted from poverty at least in part to openness to trade.¹

Yet, literature and practice reveal that some groups do not benefit as much as others from trade liberalization or initiatives relating to new markets opening, at least in the short term. These groups often include women in export-oriented manufacturing engaged in low-wage, precarious work,² as well as SMEs that are owned or operated by women.

Gender analysis shows that these groups are disadvantaged because of lack of access to opportunity, skills development, and productive resources necessary for business expansion. Discriminatory laws, cultural norms related to gender roles in marriage, and reproductive and unpaid care responsibilities also result in restrictions on women's economic participation. The keys to addressing this disparity



GTG members discuss the TPSA gender strategy.

are gender-based analysis that identifies specific mitigation strategies, general awareness-raising on gender equality issues, and women's empowerment leading to increased capacity, decision-making, and opportunities.

Both the Government of Canada and the Government of Indonesia make commitments to international conventions and agendas that affirm the rights of women to work, own property, and run businesses in full equality and free from discrimination.



“Women are strong, successful, and resilient business persons; they are able to multi-task, and sometimes their businesses are more successful than those operated by men, yet they face a number of challenges. Some of these challenges include lack of access to productive resources and social and cultural norms that put pressure on women. Women also concentrate at the lower end of the value chain and many operate informal businesses.”

—IBU SRI DANTI ANWAR
Ministry of Women's Empowerment

- Poppy Dharsono (Women's Garment Association)
- Sulikanti Agusni (Former Deputy Minister of Women's Empowerment)
- Imas Shidiq (Indonesian Indigenous Entrepreneurs Association)
- Francisca Indarsiani (Global Affairs Canada)
- Yongki Komaladi (PT. Sumber Kreasi Fumiko)
- Binsar Marpaung (Association of Footwear)
- Rahmah (Kopepi Ketiara Aceh)

The activity was facilitated by the TPSA gender team: Kathleen Speake (Canadian Gender Equality Expert), Leya Cattelaya (Indonesian Senior Gender Equality Consultant), and Dati Fatimah (Indonesian Gender Equality Officer).

The Gender and Trade Dialogue Group (GTG) is an important mechanism that engages public and private actors with economic mandates and brings awareness to gender equality and trade issues within the TPSA project.

Dialogue Group Objectives

The kickoff meeting for the GTG was held in Jakarta at the Mercantile Athletic Club on May 19, 2016, and was facilitated by the TPSA gender team. In attendance were 21 participants representing government, business associations, and private companies. They included:

- Budi Hansyah (Ministry of Trade)
- Sri Danti Anwar (Senior Adviser to the Minister of Women's Empowerment)

The main objectives of the meeting were:

- to discuss and accept a terms of reference for the GTG based on the TPSA gender equality strategy
- to discuss and provide recommendations for the formation of the gender equality and trade survey
- to agree on the purpose of the next GTG meeting

Terms of Reference

GTG members reviewed and accepted the terms of reference for the group. They agreed that GTG members would share their knowledge and experience on gender equality issues, particularly in TPSA's industries of focus (coffee, apparel, and footwear), and would carry out (informal) policy dialogue between and among SMEs, associations, and the government to advance TPSA's gender equality strategy. Specifically, the GTG will provide input for planning and assessment of select activities—including to the gender and trade survey, gender-related technical assistance workshops, and gender value chain analysis in the three target industries.

Gender and Trade Survey

The TPSA gender team provided a briefing on the development of a gender and trade survey. The survey findings are expected to contribute to the understanding of what barriers to export Indonesian SMEs face and whether these barriers differ if the SME is owned/operated by a woman or a man. The findings will provide analysis and



The TPSA gender team (left to right): Leya Cattelaya, Dati Fatimah, and Kathleen Speake.



recommendations for both government and private stakeholders on how to improve export readiness for SMEs owned or operated by women. The TPSA gender team asked GTG members to provide their comments on the survey approach, methodology, and questions. They made the following general recommendations:

- That the survey report be informed by an analysis framework, taking into consideration the context of global trade, the global value chain and power relations, the socio-economic context in Indonesia, and the context of each sub-region/industry surveyed.
- That the survey address questions to SMEs owned or operated by both men and women in order to have a disaggregated evidence base.
- That the survey understand that women may be "hidden" in the value chain; they work in informal SMEs or as managers in businesses owned by men.
- That there be a clear definition of what is meant by "export ready."
- That the survey be trade-focused. While there have been a number of surveys on the overall challenges that face SMEs in Indonesia, TPSA's important and unique contribution would be a focus on trade-related factors.
- That the survey be practical and brief. GTG members mentioned the prospect of survey fatigue and the challenges of convincing respondents to participate in the survey.

"Women-owned businesses need role models and access to mentors. In founding my cooperative, I have always put an emphasis on mentoring others. That is a reason we are strong today."

—IBU RAHMAH, KOPEPI KETIARA
Winner of three awards for organic, fair trade coffee at the Specialty Coffee Fair in Atlanta

Regarding the formulation of trade-focused survey questions, participants suggested it would be important to gather both quantitative and qualitative information to understand gender differences in:

- the export value proposition according to respondents

- the profile/characteristics of successful exporters
- access to quality trade-related information, skills training, technical assistance, and B2B support
- issues relating to SMEs meeting labour standards
- issues relating to SMEs meeting technical and voluntary standards
- the impact of export regulations on SMEs
- issues relating to the role of information technology
- issues relating to competitiveness
- the kind of access SMEs have to government support and services from business associations
- issues around the decision of some SMEs to remain informal (i.e., not registered).

Next Steps

The TPSA gender team thanked participants for their contributions to the survey instrument and approach. The GTG agreed to meet again to discuss the results of the gender and trade survey when it is completed. The GTG also suggested that the final report be disseminated broadly to a variety of government stakeholders, including those with mandates relevant to the proposed recommendations. Ministries to be involved would include: Ministry of Trade, Ministry of Industry, Investment Coordinating Board (BKPM), Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs, and Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection.

Stakeholders initiated a number of follow-up conversations in the days after the meeting. For example, a group of women who owned footwear SMEs gathered for an informal roundtable with the TPSA gender team in Bandung on May 25, 2016. They discussed barriers to exporting and helped to further inform the content of proposed survey questions.

Results/Feedback

The TPSA gender team asked participants for their feedback on the dialogue group's meeting. Most appreciated being involved and liked the participatory style of facilitation. They were highly engaged in discussions, did not check their cell phones, and stayed for the duration of the event. A major challenge was the large size of the group. Some felt there was not enough time for them to provide



Women owners of footwear SMEs participate in the GTG.

their comments. Diversity was also a challenge. Participants represented the public and private sectors, there were both senior representatives and practitioners, and also gender specialists and those with limited understanding of gender and trade. These factors affected their willingness to engage in discussions, with some participants clearly more active than others.

Participants are looking forward to the next GTG meeting. Some suggested that there be more frequent and informal sharing on topics of specific interest organized by industry.

The gender team believes that the first GTG meeting demonstrated a high level of interest and motivation in advancing the goals of the GTG.

Conclusions

Participants held different perspectives on whether there are gender-related barriers in international trade. Those who have worked in the field of women's empowerment strongly believe that the barriers are real. Others do not see differences between men's and women's access, which may be because the Indonesian national legal framework is gender-neutral. However, when women discuss their practical experience, and when tools of gender-based analysis are used to explore the differences, it becomes evident that women experience challenges accessing the international market that are different from those experienced by men, and the de facto result may be discriminatory. In one example, the TPSA gender team brought forward the results of rapid gender analysis in the coffee sector that demonstrated women's lack of access to training opportunities. Some participants

noted that this was the first time they had been given exposure to gender-based analysis, and they remarked on the power of having such evidence.

"Women are often denied access to credit at banks, and access to tendered contracts."

—YURIKA FRATIWI

Chairperson, Small and Micro Entrepreneurs' Association

The GTG is an important platform for informed discussion, awareness-raising, and multi-sector communication around gender and trade issues in TPSA. Because gender-equality mandates are weak or unstated in trade support institutions, it is critical to have a cross-sector mechanism that engages those people equipped and interested to take forward discussion, practice, and action that promote gender equality in access to international markets.

At a practical level, the first GTG meeting was helpful in contributing to the gender and trade survey questionnaire, which the TPSA gender team believes is now informed by a strong practice perspective.

About the TPSA Project

TPSA is a five-year C\$12-million project funded by the Government of Canada through Global Affairs Canada. The project is executed by The Conference Board of Canada, and the primary implementation partner is the Directorate General for National Export Development, Ministry of Trade.

TPSA is designed to provide training, research, and technical assistance to Indonesian government agencies, the private sector—particularly small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)—academics, and civil society organizations on trade-related information, trade policy analysis, regulatory reforms, and trade and investment promotion by Canadian, Indonesian, and other experts from public and private organizations.

The overall objective of TPSA is to support higher sustainable economic growth and reduce poverty in Indonesia through increased trade and trade-enabling investment between Indonesia



Participants at the Gender and Trade Dialogue Group gather for the kickoff meeting.

and Canada. TPSA is intended to increase sustainable and gender-responsive trade and investment opportunities, particularly for Indonesian SMEs, and to increase the use of trade and investment analysis by Indonesian stakeholders for expanded trade and investment partnerships between Indonesia and Canada.

The expected immediate outcomes of TPSA are:

- improved trade and investment information flows between Indonesia and Canada, particularly for the private sector, SMEs, and women entrepreneurs, including trade-related environmental risks and opportunities;
- enhanced private sector business links between Indonesia and Canada, particularly for SMEs;
- strengthened analytical skills and knowledge of Indonesian stakeholders on how to increase

trade and investment between Indonesia and Canada;

- improved understanding of regulatory rules and best practices for trade and investment.

For further information, please contact the Project Office in Jakarta, Indonesia:

Mr. Gregory A. Elms, Field Director

Canada-Indonesia Trade and Private Sector Assistance (TPSA) Project

Canada Centre, World Trade Centre 5, 15th Floor
Jl. Jend. Sudirman Kav 29-31 Jakarta 12190,
Indonesia

Phone: +62-21-5296-0376, or 5296-0389

Fax: +62-21-5296-0385

E-mail: greg@tpsaproject.com

ENDNOTES

¹ United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report 2013: The Rise of the South: Human Progress in a Diverse World* (Geneva: UNDP, 2013).

² "Precarious workers are those who fill permanent job needs but are denied permanent employee rights. Globally, these workers are subject to unstable employment, lower wages, and more dangerous working conditions." International Labor Rights Forum, *Precarious Workers*, www.laborrights.org/issues/precarious-work (accessed August 17, 2016).