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Gender Equality and Trade Policy

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International trade interacts with gender equality in different ways. Its impact is not neutral. The different impacts of international trade upon them are conditioned by the distinct roles of women and men in economic activity.

Recognizing the socio-economic gaps between both sexes, the most recent trade policies include gender provisions as a means to promote the economic empowerment of women. In some cases, gender-specific provisions are included in agreements to promote equality, and there are also initiatives to mainstream a gender perspective into general trade rules, and into support instruments for the export sector. The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum (APEC) has been a pioneer in including gender issues into its agenda. A stand-alone chapter on gender and trade in a bilateral trade agreement was included first in the 2016 free-trade agreement between Chile and Uruguay. Another milestone was the Joint Declaration on Gender and Trade, endorsed by 118 countries in the context of the 11th Ministerial Conference of the WTO in December 2017. At the firm level, trade policy in Latin America and the Caribbean has been developing gender initiatives to further women's export entrepreneurship.

Future actions on gender and trade can be implemented in three different areas: generation of data disaggregated by sex; development of gender-specific trade policies at the national, bilateral and multilateral levels; and promotion of women's export entrepreneurship, where trade promotion agencies (TPOs) play a key role.

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Joint Declaration on Trade and Economic Empowerment of Women, on the occasion of the 11th Ministerial Conference of the WTO, in Buenos Aires (December 2017).

Introduction

The inequality gap between women and men is especially profound in the economic sphere and, considering recent trends, this is where the gap would take the longest to close. According to the *Global Gender Gap Index* of the World Economic Forum (WEF, 2017), at the current rate, women's economic participation and opportunities gap would close only in 219 years! Gender inequality, not only carries serious costs in terms of social justice and human dignity, but also reduces economic growth and competitiveness. The OECD estimates that the economic losses caused by gender discrimination [1] could reach US $11,750 billion or 16% of global income in 2016 (Ferrant and Kolev, 2016) (see table 1). By including a gender perspective, trade policy could contribute to enhancing opportunities for women and reduce these losses.

Table 1

OECD countries and regions: Loss of income related to gender discrimination, 2016
(billion dollars)

Region	**Losses**
OECD countries	6, 116
East Asia and Pacific	2, 440
South Asia	888
Europe Eastern and Central Asia	733
Latin America to the Caribbean	658
Middle East and North Africa	575
Sub-Saharan Africa	340
World	**11,750**

Source: Elaboration by the author based on Ferrant and Kolev (2016), The economic cost of gender-based discrimination in social institutions, Development Center of the OECD, Paris.

Gender equality is one of the sustainable development goals (SDG) of the UN 2030 Agenda to which governments, businesses, civil society and other actors of the international community have committed. SDG number 5 specifically addresses gender equality. Gender is also a cross-cutting theme in another 11 of the 17 objectives. As proposed by ECLAC (2016), "Without gender equality, sustainable development is not sustainable and is not development".

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda of 2015, which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda, establishes a specific link between trade and gender equality. Paragraph 90 recognizes "The crucial role of women, as producers and traders" and the need to "address their specific challenges in order to facilitate women's equal and active participation in domestic, regional and international trade" (United Nations, 2015).

What can trade policy do for gender equality?

International trade interacts with gender equality in different ways. Its impact is not neutral (Joekes and Weston, 1994; European Parliament, 2015). The distinct roles of women and men in economic activity also condition the different impacts of international trade (GIZ, 2014). Trade impacts women through different transmission channels: i. work

[1] *Gender* is the set of culturally specific characteristics that identify the social behavior of men and women and the relationships between them. *Gender* does not simply refer to women or men but to the relationship between them and the way this is socially established (FAO, Gender vocabulary).

(employment, wages and wage-gap, work conditions), ii. entrepreneurship (access to financing , information asymmetries), iii. consumption, iv. allocation of fiscal resources for the provision of social services, v. roles within the household and as care - takers [2] (Cagatay and Erturk, 2004; Jobes, 2010; Fontana, 2004 and GIZ, 2014) .

Measuring the specific gender impacts of trade is difficult due to insufficient sex-disaggregated data about employment, income and other economic indicators. In the case of women's export entrepreneurship there is an almost complete lack of data. Progress in the disaggregation by sex of national and international economic statistics has been very slow, despite the multilateral commitments on this issue made over twenty years ago at the 1995 Women's Conference in Beijing.

Despite these difficulties, various studies have addressed these impacts, using different methodologies. Some of these are: gender equality elasticities (van Staveren, 2007), social accounting matrices (Bussolo and de Hoyos, 2009), general equilibrium models with gender variables (Fontana 2004; Azar et al., 2007), gender audits , ex ante and ex post assessments of trade agreements that include gender variables (GIZ, 2014). The studies confirm that the impact of trade on women is ambiguous and differs between sectors, territories, socioeconomic and educational levels. On the one hand, trade liberalization can generate increased exports and with them new jobs and income, facilitating the empowerment of women. On the other hand, this opening also increases imports which, in turn, can negatively affect sectors and female employment. The net impact of trade liberalization is ambiguous.

A study of the gender impact on employment and the wage gap of the CAFTA-DR Agreement (Buzzolo et al., 2011) exemplifies this ambiguity. To the extent that trade liberalization changes the relative prices of goods, these changes induce a reallocation of the factors of production between sectors that occupy men and women differently, and this may lead to varying levels of employment and remuneration. On the one hand, the tariff opening in the United States has the effect of reducing the wage differential between men and women in the DR-CAFTA countries as market opportunities in the United States increase; on the other hand, opening in the CAFTA countries tends to accentuate the gap by increasing imports. There does not seem to be a statistically significant relationship between trade openness and the gender differential in labor market participation or the reallocation of jobs.

The impact of trade on developing countries varies by industry and location. For example, trade expansion may exacerbate gender disparities in agriculture-based economies in Africa, but reduce them in economies with an important manufacturing sector such as Honduras (Bussolo and de Hoyos, 2009).

Gender-disaggregated data on employment, which is the most readily available, shows only a partial picture of the interaction between gender and trade. It is necessary to generate quantitative and qualitative data to assess the gendered impact of trade through all the different transmission channels identified above (i.e. employment, entrepreneurship, consumption, social services, roles in households and as caretakers), and not only through data on women's employment and wages.

There has often been an assumption that export promotion policies (like other policies in the microeconomic field) are gender neutral; that is, that these policies have indistinct results for women and men . Only recently, recognizing the gender-based social and economic gaps between both sexes, public policies have introduced a gender dimension in order to promote women's economic empowerment. In trade policy, this new approach is observed both in the recent incorporation of gender provisions in preferential trade agreements, as well as in export promotion policies. In some cases, gender-specific instruments are developed to promote equality in trade, but there are also initiatives to mainstream a gender perspective into overall WTO-based trade disciplines, and into general support programs for the export sector.

[2] Care refers to the activities, goods and services required for the daily reproduction of people, which are important for economic development and welfare. Most care activities are done by women through unpaid work, which is generally not considered in national accounts.

There are several examples of the recent incorporation of gender provisions in trade policy. The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum (APEC) has been a pioneer in incorporating gender issues into its agenda. More recently, the 2016 trade agreement between Chile and Uruguay was the first to include a stand-alone chapter on trade and gender. At the multilateral level, in December 2017, 118 member countries and observers of the World Trade Organization (WTO) endorsed the Joint Declaration on Gender and Trade, in the context of the 11. WTO Ministerial Conference in Buenos Aires. Initiatives to promote women's export entrepreneurship have also been introduced in several national and regional trade-policy agendas in Latin America and the Caribbean. In some cases, the support of international development cooperation has been instrumental to this end.

This document presents: i) information for some countries on the participation of women-led export companies, ii) examples of international and regional initiatives on gender and trade, iii) new trade agreements that include gender chapters or provisions, and iv) good practices of trade promotion organizations (TPOs) in Latin America to empower women and promote exports.

1. Women as exporters

1 .1 Women-led export companies

According to databases of the International Financial Cooperation (IFC)[3], globally companies led by women represented approximately 31% of all companies in 2014. These companies are those that are owned by a woman or have a woman in a decision-making position[4]. These companies tend to be smaller and are concentrated in certain sectors (commerce, beauty and food services), which have lower entry-barriers and profits. The predominance of men and inequality at the firm level is also present in export firms, although this may be mitigated in the case of a higher socio-economic level of women entrepreneurs.

Only a few countries have data on the participation of women in the export sector. In a study of export companies conducted in 20 developing countries from different regions of the world, the International Trade Center (ITC, 2015) shows that only 15% of these companies were led by women in 2014. In the three Latin American and Caribbean countries included in the study (Jamaica, Paraguay and Trinidad Tobago), this proportion reached 27%. The women-led export companies tended to hire proportionately more women and were concentrated in the food, textile and clothing sectors. Mostly they exported to neighboring countries and their level of productivity was low.

Due to lack of data, the measurement of the participation of women-led export companies is usually attempted through indirect methods. One, is the list of registered users of services of the trade promotion agency or the surveys made from that record. Another, rather imprecise method, is to use data from the customs export forms and consider as women-led export companies only those entries which register a natural person with a female name[5]. Due to the availability of some of this information, the cases of Chile and Peru will be presented below.

Chile

According to a study on women entrepreneurs in Chile, only 26% of economically active women declared being entrepreneurs or self - employed in 2015. Most of them indicated that they had started a business because they needed to increase their income. Women-led businesses have a lower level

[3] For more information, see https://www.smefinanceforum.org/data-sites/ifc-enterprise-finance-gap

[4] This data base includes as women decision-makers the managers, department heads and coordinators of a company.

[5] The companies listed as legal entities, where sex of the owner or decision-maker is undetermined, are discarded.

of formalization and perceive proportionately less income than those led by men (Mujeres del Pacífico, 2016).

The gender gap perceived by the women, both the actual entrepreneurs and those aspiring to be, is quite profound. In 2015, 52% of the women considered that it is more difficult to do business for women than for men, either because of sexist cultural and societal patterns, or due to men's higher income and wealth. In the international ranking of business opportunities gaps between men and women, Chile ranks 49 of 60 countries (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2015/2016). The aspiration to expand their business nationally or internationally is directly related to the women's income level.

There are some indirect estimates of the participation of women exporters within the total universe of export companies. Between 20 and 30% of the clients of the trade promotion agency ProChile have historically been women exporters (Table 2), who have participated mostly in capacity-building activities. A survey conducted in 2005-2006 showed that women-owned export companies accounted for 21% and those with women in executive positions 28% of total ProChile clients (CENDEC, 2007) . The participation of women among ProChile clients is similar to their participation in the total nationwide number of companies. Another study reinforces this fact: the participation of women exporters is similar to the national average of 20% recorded in a study of the Center for Women's Business Studies (CEEM) of 2006.

Table 2
Chile: Clients of ProChile, by sex, 2005-2006
(*In percentages*)

	Owners	Executives
Women	21	28
Men	79	72

Source: Prepared by the author on the basis of data from CENDEC (2007).

Export companies led by women were concentrated mostly in the same sectors as small businesses at the national level in 2006; manufacturing, agriculture and services. Participation was higher in the last two sectors. Many women-led companies sought innovative and distinct markets niches. Frequently, they tried to differentiate their product through special attributes. The identification of a specific market niche was usually the result of an intended search. Many entrepreneurs used the Internet to be informed, establish contacts and promote their products (CENDEC, 2007).

The export companies led by women are mostly SMEs. They are individual or family companies, associative or part of a consortium. Women entrepreneurs share many of the characteristics of exporters in general, but also face specific barriers related to their gender roles.

In 2015, 26% of ProChile users were women (PMG, Management Modernization Program Report, 2017[6]). This is consistent with the data on women's participation in the total number of national companies in the Chilean Longitudinal Business Survey. This survey estimates that companies led by individual women, and individual companies with limited liability (EIRL)[7] had a participation of 39.2% and 22.9%, respectively (Ministry of Economy, 2017).

Given that the data of export companies led by women are uncertain, the results of studies which use different methods of calculation can vary substantially. A study published by DIRECON-ProChile in 2017 used a different method to estimate the participation of women in exports in

[6] The PMG is a useful tool that evaluates information and performance indicators of public agencies. The gender-equality indicator was introduced in Chile in 2002 and is one of the performance indicators of DIRECON- ProChile.
[7] There is no sex - disaggregated data for legal entities.

2016. It actually combined data from several sources: i) Customs records of natural persons with a female name, ii) records of ProChile clients to help identify women-led companies among those firms which were legal entities with no gender attribution, and iii) data from the Internal Revenue Service to segment the companies by size. According to this study, only 3% of all export companies were led by women, and accounted for barely 0.8% of total exports. This study underestimates the participation of export companies led by women because it excludes companies that are registered on customs forms as legal entities (in which case sex of owner or decision-maker cannot be determined), and that have not been ProChile clients. This is the case of a majority of export firms.

Table 3
Chile: Participation of women-led export firms, 2016
(*In percentage*)

	Export firms	Exported value
Companies led by women *	3	0.8
Other companies **	97	99. 2

Source: Prepared by the author with data from Customs and ProChile, analyzed in DIRECON-ProChile (2017).
* Only includes natural persons of female name registered by Customs, and women's companies registered as such by ProChile
** Includes natural persons with a male name and all legal persons not identified by sex.

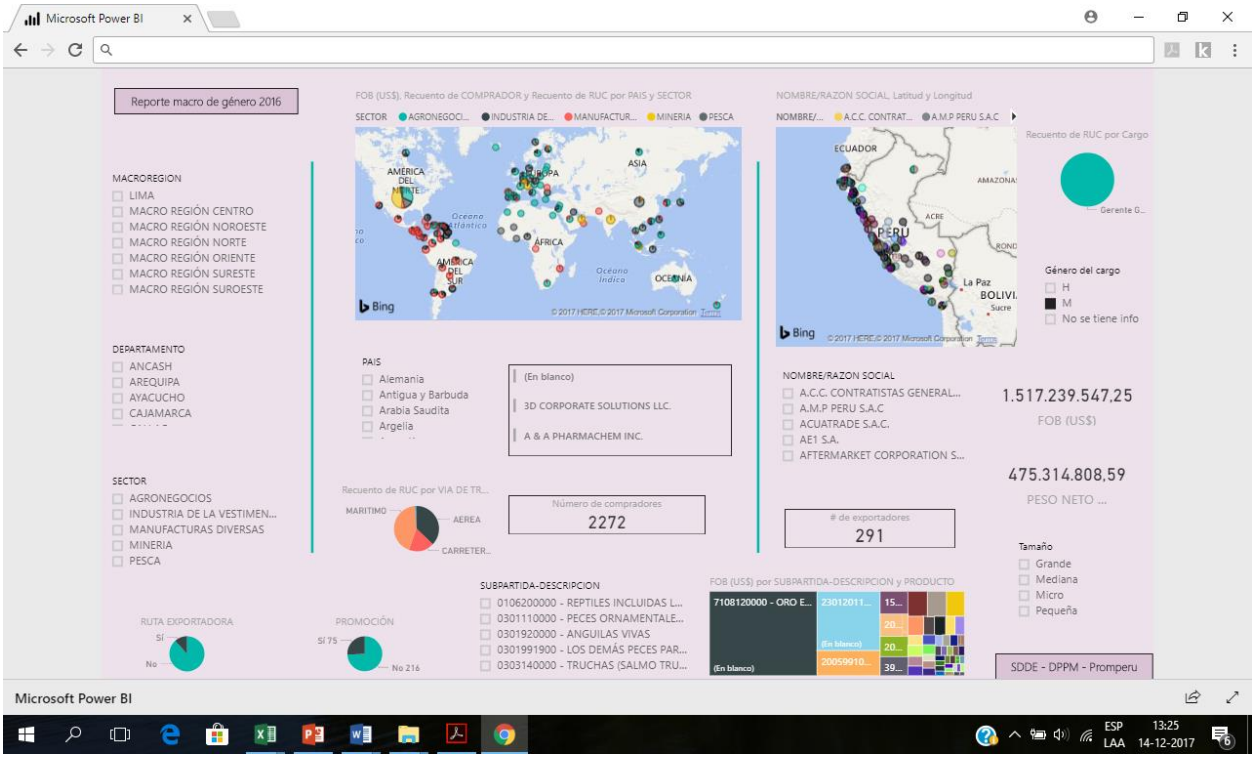
According to the DIRECON-ProChile study, more than the majority (67%) of the export companies led by women were small-size and micro enterprises, but these only represented 11% of total exports. The remaining 89% corresponded to 54 large companies. The women's export firms were concentrated in the center-south of Chile and contributed in 2016 a total of 14,601 jobs. Most exports by women's firms (82%) were food-products. The main destination markets were the United States (16.7%), the PR of China (14.9%), the European Union (14.7%), Japan (9.3%), Canada (3.1%)), the countries of the Pacific Alliance (13.8%) and Mercosur (12.8%).

Peru

In Peru, the PROMPERU trade promotion agency has developed an information platform with data on export companies. This platform identified women-led companies by cross-referring its own data with statistics from Customs and the records of the Ministry of Production. This data identified 291 women-led companies that exported a total of 1.5 billion dollars in 2016 (PROMPERÚ, 2017). These companies were predominantly micro, small and medium enterprises (129, 77 and 70 companies, respectively). Only 15 were large companies which exported a total 1.2 billion dollars. This database also identified 2,173 companies led by men (which exported 23.2 billion dollars), and 5,045 companies where it was not possible to identify the sex of the exporter (which exported 11.5 billion dollars) (Diagram 1). This data, like that of DIRECON-ProChile, tends to underestimate the participation of women-led export companies, and acknowledges that it is not possible, with the current data, to disaggregate the majority of companies by sex.

Women-led export firms concentrate in agribusiness (17%), the garment industry (16%), manufactured products (58%), fishing (6%) and mining (3%). These companies sold their products to a total of 2,272 buyers in countries in Africa, North America, South America, Asia, Europe and Oceania. The companies led by women are mostly concentrated in Lima and the Pacific coast.

Diagram 1
Peru: PROMPERU information platform on export companies led by women, 2016



Source: Image of PROMPERU information platform .

El Salvador and Nicaragua

In Central America, there are estimates for El Salvador and Nicaragua about the participation of women entrepreneurs in exports. In El Salvador, in 2016, 46% of the export companies supported by the trade promotion agency PROESA, mainly SMEs, were women entrepreneurs. In Nicaragua, a study by Lindo y Blanco (2014), based on data from the Center for Export Procedures (CETREX), shows that out of 1,456 export firms in 2013, 546 were natural persons and of these 188 (34%) were women . In the case of legal entities, the disaggregation by sex is uncertain.

1 .2 Barriers affecting women exporters

There are numerous barriers that hinder the equal participation of women in economic activity and foreign trade. Women who export or attempt to export face, on the one hand, the same barriers as their male counterparts, but also confront difficulties related to gender discrimination and stereotypes. There are regulatory and cultural barriers (property rights, laws restricting the activity of women and other restrictions), access to capital, access to market information and allocation of roles within society and the family. Likewise, non-tariff measures that affect small and medium-sized companies are especially burdensome for women-led companies (ITC, 2015).

In the legal sphere, women face great obstacles. A study by the World Bank (2015) indicated that in 155 of the 173 economies reviewed there was at least one law that impedes women's economic opportunities, with a total of 943 legal impediments. Between 2013 and 2015, 65 economies had made only 94 reforms that increased women's opportunities.

In Latin America, women entrepreneurs face multiple barriers to reach international markets. Groups of women exporters in Chile (CENDEC, 2007) and in Ecuador, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Peru (Frohmann, Mulder and Olmos, 2016) reported difficulties both in business-related matters (where gender also matters), and gender stereotypes (see table 4).

Table 4
Selected countries (Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Peru): Obstacles to women's export entrepreneurship, 2005 and 2015

Business-related obstacles	Gender-specific obstacles
Lack of legal backing	Male-chauvinist mentality of clients
Access to information	Barriers to women in managerial positions
Access to financing	Cultural stereotypes
Regulatory barriers	Gender roles and use of time
Property rights	Inequality and discrimination
Risk-rating	Lack of recognition
Access to employment and wage gap	Need to validate and legitimize their work

Source: Elaboration of the author based on CENDEC (2007); and Frohmann, Mulder, Olmos and Urmeneta (2016) .

2. International and regional trade agreements which address gender

2 .1 Regional trade agreements

APEC

The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum (APEC) is the regional trade cooperation initiative that has the longest record of mainstreaming gender equality into its cooperation and trade policy (True, 2008). APEC brings together major economies of the Asia Pacific region, including Chile, Peru and Mexico from Latin America. APEC has developed the necessary institutional mechanisms and generated databases and studies to address gender issues. Like most APEC initiatives, gender cooperation programs are not binding.

Work on gender issues began with the agreement on the *Framework for the Integration of Women in APEC*, at the Auckland Summit in New Zealand, in 1999[8]. The core elements of the *Framework* were: i. gender analysis to examine the differences between women and men in the deliberations and recommendations of APEC; ii. to collect and use sex-differentiated data at APEC meetings and conferences; and iii.to promote the participation of women in the institutional framework of APEC. These initiatives aimed at the equal integration of women entrepreneurs in the APEC economies in the 21st century. The *Framework* also included an APEC Practical Guide for Gender Analysis. An Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Gender Integration was created to assist the Senior Officials Meeting (SOM)[9].

The *Framework* was promoted by the APEC Network of Women Leaders. This non-governmental and business network was created in 1996 and played a very relevant role in introducing gender issues in APEC. It brings together women from many sectors - government, business, academia, civil society, indigenous and rural women, scientists- and issues recommendations on gender and policy to delegates and APEC officials[10].

Over the years, various institutional mechanisms have been developed in APEC to position the gender perspective in trade policy. Currently, there are two complementary mechanisms. The first is the Women and the Economy Forum (WE), which brings together the government authorities that address gender issues in the member economies. The second is the Public Private Dialogue on Women and the Economy (PPWE), which brings together women entrepreneurs, academics and government

[8]For more information, see http://www.apec.org/About-Us/About-APEC/~/media/Files/AboutUs/About%20APEC/History/02_aggi_framewk.ashx
[9] SOM members are high-level representatives of each of the 21 APEC economies
[10]For more information, see http://apecwln.org/

official to discuss, among others, issues related to finance and markets, skills and capacity building, female leadership, technology and innovation. Each of the APEC economies has a focal point that coordinates projects and participation at the local level. The APEC Secretariat has a Director of Gender Integration Programs.

Through research projects, APEC generates data and studies, highlighting best practices that promote women's empowerment. The *Women and the Economy Dashboard* is a set of 75 indicators that measure changes in the status of women in the APEC economies. There is also research on women's entrepreneurship in the APEC region that facilitates the development of public policies.

Cotonou Agreement

The 2002 Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the ACP countries (Africa, Caribbean and Pacific) highlights the importance of gender equality in development cooperation. The agreement was signed in Cotonou, Benin, and mainly includes unilateral preferences for the access of products from the ACP countries to the EU market. Article 31 of the Cooperation Strategies deals with Gender Issues and contemplates "a gender sensitive approach at all levels of development cooperation, including macroeconomic policies, strategies and operations", as well as promoting "the adoption of specific positive measures that favor women", in politics, support of women's organizations, access to social services and productive resources (land, credit, work), and taking into account the special needs of women in emergency and rehabilitation operations (Partnership Agreement 2000).

The 2008 CARIFORUM Agreement with the European Union was the successor of the Cotonou Agreement for the Caribbean countries, and provided for reciprocal preferences. This Agreement adopts the gender commitments of Cotonou, but does not elaborate on them. Women are only mentioned in the context of the broader objectives of sustainable development (Jackson and Wedderburn, 2009).

Commonwealth Secretariat

The Secretariat of the Commonwealth of Nations, which includes 10 English - speaking Caribbean countries, published a Guide to Action on Gender and Trade in 2007 (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2007). This guide defines the elements that negotiators should consider in order to integrate gender into trade negotiations. The trade negotiators should be aware of the gender impacts of the legal framework being negotiated; that is, for example, the market access conditions in sensitive sectors for female employment or the list of services reservations sensitive to gender equality. Negotiators should bear in mind the information about the differential impact of the agreements on women and men, and focus on the achievements they aim at reaching on gender issues. It is also relevant to protect the basic labor rights of women, to maintain ongoing consultations with stakeholders in civil society and women's organizations; and include gender experts at the highest levels of the negotiating teams.

2.2 Trade and gender in the Pacific Alliance and Mercosur

The Pacific Alliance

The Pacific Alliance is an integration agreement established in 2011. Its 4 full members are Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru. The Alliance engages in joint cooperation activities and common business platforms, with the aim of achieving the deep integration of their economies, as well as a joint international projection, especially in the Asia Pacific region. In 2016, the 4

countries had a joint GDP of US $ 1,753 billion and a population of 221 million. Their participation in world trade reached 3.3% of the total in 2015[11].

The gender inequality gap in the Pacific Alliance countries is not consistent with their level of income and development (OECD, 2016). Great challenges to bridge the gap between women and men persist, as observed in the indicators of the 2016 UNDP Human Development Report (UNDP 2016) and the 2017 Gender Gap Report of the World Economic Forum (see Table 5). The case of Chile is particularly striking: the country has a relatively high score in the overall Human Development ranking, but its gender inequality scores are poor, especially regarding the economic participation and opportunities gap. In this context, initiatives on gender and trade can be particularly important.

The rate of female entrepreneurship is higher in the Alliance countries than the average 10% of OECD countries. In Colombia, 45% of women are entrepreneurs, 39% in Peru, 29% in Mexico and 25% in Chile. However, in the 4 countries there are significant gender gaps in terms of business formality and growth, survival rate, income, financial inclusion and access to credit (OECD, 2016).

Table 5

Countries of the Pacific Alliance: Ranking of human development and gender gap, 2015-2016

Country	UNDP Human Development Index (188 countries)	UNDP Gender Inequality Index (188 countries)	WEF Ranking overall gender gap (144 countries)	WEF Ranking of economic participation and opportunities gap (144 countries)
Chile	38	65	63	117
Colombia	95	89	36	32
Mexico	77	73	81	124
Peru	87	86	48	98

Sources: Elaboration by the author on the basis of United Nations Development Program (UNDP, 2016), Human Development Report 2016; and World Economic Forum (2017), Report on gender gaps.

Gender issues have been addressed by the Pacific Alliance through different channels. A technical group on gender was established in 2015, as a result of the 10. Presidential Summit, where the heads of state expressed their "commitment to include gender as a crosscutting theme in the work of the Pacific Alliance and, to this end, establish a Working Group to develop a strategy that incorporates the issue in the agenda" [12]. The Working Group has three mandates: to mainstream a gender perspective into the institutional mechanisms of the Alliance, to integrate women in international trade and to establish a business platform for women entrepreneurs.

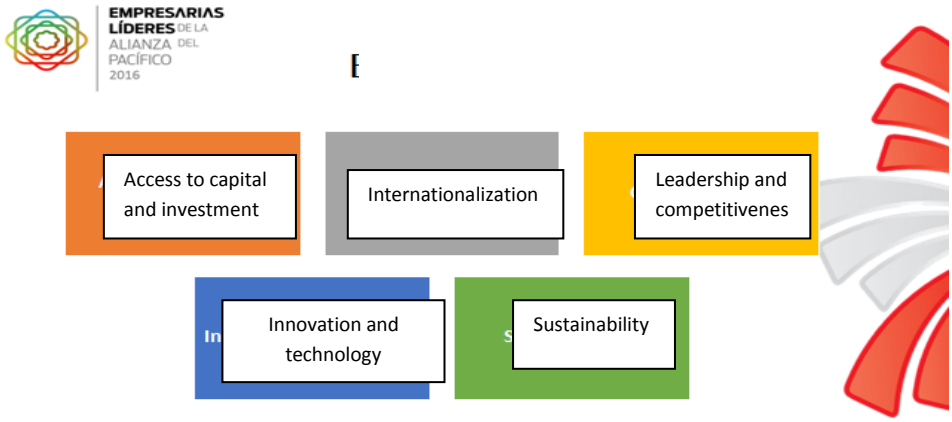
Annually, the trade promotion agencies of the 4 countries' (ProChile , ProColombia , ProMexico and PROMPERÚ) organize the Forum of Women Entrepreneur Leaders of the Pacific Alliance. This Forum brings together women entrepreneurs from the four Alliance countries to encourage and promote business and strengthen empowerment and competitiveness, innovation, new business opportunities and internationalization (see Diagram 2). The Forum includes seminars and a business conference which is attended by vendors and buyers.

[11] DIRECON based on World Bank, ITC and IMF data, https://www.direcon.gob.cl/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Alianza-del-Pac%C3%ADfico-anual2016 -6.pdf

[12] For further details, see https://alianzapacifico.net/grupos-tecnicos/

Diagram 2

Core issues addressed by the Women Entrepreneur Leaders of the Pacific Alliance



Source: https://alianzapacifico.net/alianza-del-pacifico-realiza-foro-de-empresarias-lideres

Additionally, the Community of Women Entrepreneurs was established in the Pacific Alliance with the aim of promoting the economic empowerment of women in the countries of the Alliance. It is a virtual space that allows entrepreneurs to connect directly and explore business opportunities, exchange relevant information to strengthen their business and leadership skills, as well as first- hand information about events and online courses in the framework of the Alliance[13]. It is a platform where business tenders for vendors and buyers may be published.

Mercosur

The Mercosur is a trade and integration block established by the Treaty of Asuncion in 1991, with Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay as founding members. In 2006, Venezuela joined the group, but in December 2016 its membership was suspended. In 2016, Mercosur had a GDP of US $ 2,426 billion, a population of 260 million and represented 1.31% of world trade[14].

There is also a gender inequality gap in the Mercosur countries, as illustrated by the indicators of the 2016 Human Development Report (UNDP , 2016) and the Gender Gap Report 2017 of the World Economic Forum (see table 6) . The case of Argentina is striking: it occupies a relatively high place in the ranking of human development, but its gender inequality gap regarding economic participation and opportunities is very poor. In this context, initiatives on gender and trade are particularly important.

Table 6

Mercosur countries: Ranking of human development and gender gap, 2015-2016

Country	UNDP Human Development Index (188 countries)	Gender Inequality Index UNDP (188 countries)	WEF Ranking Overall gender gap (144 countries)	WEF Ranking. Gender gap in economic participation and opportunities (144 countries)
Argentina	45	77	34	111

[13] https://connectamericas.com/es/community/comunidad-mujeres-empresarias-ap# The Community is part of the ConnectAmericas platform of IDB Development. Its purpose is to help small and medium enterprises in Latin America and the Caribbean to access international markets.

[14] DIRECON, based on World Bank , ITC and IMF data, https://www.direcon.gob.cl/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/MERCOSUR-anual2016-3.pdf

Brazil	79	92	90	93
Paraguay	110	104	96	90
Uruguay	54	55	56	91
Venezuela[15]	71	101	60	67

Sources: Elaboration by the author based on Human Development Report 2016 (UNDP 2016); and GenderGap Report 2017 (WEF 2017).

There are multiple Mercosur initiatives referring to gender equality, but only some of them indirectly address the economic empowerment of women (Mercosur, 2016). In 1998, the Special Meeting on Women (Reunión Especializada de la Mujer, REM) was established to analyze the condition of women, taking into account the existing legislation in the member countries with regard to equal opportunities. The Declaration on Social and Labor Issues, adopted in 1998 by the Common Market Council (CMC), included provisions on non-discrimination and equality. Throughout the history of MERCOSUR, after the establishment of REM, many gender-related regulations were adopted on issues such as: gender-based violence, international trafficking for sexual exploitation, participation of women in politics, domestic work, rural women and wage labor, rural education, and development of a social economy that is inclusive for women.

In the economic sphere, the Common Market Council (CMC) approved Recommendation No. 02/10 which, among other measures, promotes the participation of women in public and private decision -making levels, as well as mainstreaming gender into the regional and international agreements signed by MERCOSUR.

Gender mainstreaming in the MERCOSUR was strengthened by CMC Decision No. 24/11 which raises the status of the REM to a Meeting of Ministers and High-level Officials on Women (RMAAM), which occupies a relevant role within the institutional structure of the block. This was a milestone for the development of gender policies in the MERCOSUR, and established the RMAAM's role of advising the CMC and proposing measures, policies and actions on gender.

In 2014, Policy Guidelines for Gender Equality were established which mandated that regional integration must be designed to equally benefit women and men. The Guidelines consider equity in relation to the rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities. In this sense, it is a priority that agencies of the regional bloc consider the impacts in terms of social inclusion and human development according to criteria of equality and equity between men and women (Mercosur, 2014).

In the private sector, the Mercosur Women's Forum was established in Argentina in 1995. The objectives of this Forum are to promote the participation of women in the Economic and Social Consultative Forum of MERCOSUR and actively participate in all MERCOSUR Working Groups. The Forum also promoted closer relations between women in the MERCOSUR countries and provided leadership training, in order further women's participation in the various activities of the MERCOSUR.

The MERCOSUR gender equality policies address only indirectly the economic empowerment of women through international trade. Actions to promote the participation of women in trade are mostly taken at the country level.

2 .3 International business platforms

International Trade Centre (ITC) and the SheTrades platform

In line with its policy of gender mainstreaming, since 2010 the International Trade Center (ITC) has developed its program Women and Trade, which aims to increase the economic benefits of women entrepreneurs in developing countries by supporting the internationalization of their

[15] Venezuela was suspended from the Mercosur in December 2016.

businesses. As indicated on the ITC website, the program has been implemented globally together with more than 100 trade promotion organizations (TPOs).

The program's main objectives are to i. increase the demand for goods and services provided by women entrepreneurs; ii. strengthen the women's business capacities in partnership with the TPOs; iii. strengthen the TPO's capacities to provide better services to women, and iv. create awareness among policy makers about the potential of women entrepreneurs and the need to remove barriers to their participation in international trade.

A specific program is the ITC-led Global Platform for Action on Sourcing from Women Vendors, which seeks to increase sales by women to government, corporate and institutional buyers. This initiative "aims to increase the amount of government, institutional and corporate procurement secured by women vendors from developing countries, increasing their participation in untapped markets". The Platform was established in 2010 and will run until 2020. To date (December 2017), international agencies, governments, buyers, TPOs, associations of women entrepreneurs and business representatives from 48 countries have participated in this initiative[16].

Another program aims to increase the participation of women-owned businesses in the public procurement market. This market reaches as much as 30% of GDP in developing countries, and 10-15% in developed countries. It is estimated that currently only 1% of contracts are awarded to women entrepreneurs. Participation in this market is complicated by difficulties in accessing information, understand the procedures and meet the requirements.

The ITC flagship gender program is SheTrades[17] launched in 2015 at the International Women in Business Forum held in conjunction with the World Trade Organization's 10th Ministerial Conference in Nairobi. SheTrades offers women entrepreneurs a platform for internationalization through access to global networks, in order to share information about their businesses, increase their visibility and create networks and connections with clients and other women. SheTrades also helps large corporations to find women-led companies to include in their own supply chains. Throughout 2016 and 2017, ITC introduced the SheTrades platform to TPOs and entrepreneurs in different parts of the world, including several Latin American countries. It aims to reach 1 million women entrepreneurs by 2020.

Diagram 3
SheTrades business platform

[16] For further information see http://www.intracen.org/CCI/women-and-trade

[17] For further information, see https://shetrades.com

Fuente: https://shetrades.com

WEConnect International

WEConnect International is a business platform created in 2010 in the United States which aims to support women entrepreneurs to achieve the same opportunities as men to design and implement business solutions and participate in global value chains. It identifies, trains, and certifies firms, registered outside the United States, that are either women-led or owned (51% of ownership). The platform connects these businesses with buyers from multinational companies that together make purchases of more than US$ 3 billion (WEConnect, 2015).

WEConnect is sponsored by international organizations and multinational companies. It includes women entrepreneurs from 50 countries, including 6 from Latin America (Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico and Peru). It has an ISO certification to certify women-owned businesses and has developed a company logo for firms that are certified. The "Women Owned" certification requires high standards (see Box 1) and links business qualifications with gender. The platform has approximately 5,400 members, of which 752 have been certified, and 77 large corporations are willing to do business with them [18]. By 2015, over 6,643 entrepreneurs had participated in the training programs. Further, there were 280 *matchmaking* business meetings and 388 contacts with multinational companies.

Box 1
Requirements for the "Women Owned" certification

[18] For further information, see https://weconnectinternational.org/en

Evaluation of business readiness and certification

What is business readiness? Multinational companies have identified 15 key factors to evaluate the ability of a company to access their supply chains.

- Up to date business governance documents
- Tax returns for the last three years
- Website and email address for customers
- Insurance
- Business plan / marketing plan
- Dun & Bradstreet number
- Up to date financial statements / audited financial statements
- Billing and invoicing systems
- Documented hiring and firing procedures
- Documentation of the facility where the company operates
- Loans or financing / line of credit
- Multinational partners, agents, customers (purchase orders, invoices, etc.)
- Supplier diversity program
- Sustainability or "green" measures
- Social Media Plan

Source: https://weconnectinternational.org

Internet platforms such as SheTrades and WEConnect offer good opportunities to women who want to publicize their companies in order to engage in international business, and connect with other women entrepreneurs. They are attractive for their easy access and use, and offer business information and interesting training programs, coaching and business mentoring. However, the platforms are relatively new and have not yet proven their potential to effectively attract and develop women-led companies and facilitate businesses at a larger scale.

3. New trade agreements with gender chapters or provisions

Mainstreaming gender into trade policy has several positive externalities. On the one hand, it helps promote inclusive and sustainable trade and development. On the other, the tools of trade policy can also be used to facilitate the economic empowerment of women. In Latin America and the Caribbean, there is history of trade agreements containing some provisions on women (Car, Kotschwar and Salazar-Xirinachs, 2006). There have also been initiatives to support gender-mainstreaming in international trade (Eguiluz , Vasquez and Espino, 2012), but there is no precedent of specific gender chapters in trade agreements before 2016.

Very recently, a small group of countries, starting with Chile, Uruguay and Canada, has been including specific gender chapters or provisions in new or updated trade agreements. Between 2016 and 2017, Chile negotiated gender chapters in its Free Trade Agreement with Uruguay, in updating its FTA with Canada, and in the trade liberalization agreement with Argentina. In 2017, negotiations began to upgrade the Strategic Partnership Agreement between Chile and the European Union, which is also expected to include gender provisions. Gender issues have been raised in the negotiations between the Pacific Alliance and associate countries (Australia, Canada, New Zealand and Singapore), and Canada has proposed to include a chapter on gender in the renegotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) (see Table 7).

Table 7

Selected countries: Trade agreements and negotiations with gender provisions, 2016-Dec. 2017

Countries	Agreements	Date	Provisions
Chile and Uruguay	Free Trade Agreement	2016	Chapter 14: Gender and Trade. Objectives and advocacy and cooperation
Chile and Canada	Updated Free Trade Agreement	2016-2017	Gender provisions in Appendix II, Chapter N bis: Gender and Trade. Objectives and advocacy and cooperation
Chile and the European Union	Negotiation to update the Strategic Partnership Agreement	2017	Ongoing negotiations
Chile and Argentina	Trade Liberalization Agreement	2017	Additional Protocol to ACE 35 Agreement between Chile and Mercosur
Pacific Alliance (Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru) with Associates (Australia, Canada, Mexico and New Zealand)	Negotiation of trade agreement	2017	Ongoing negotiation
Canada, Mexico and the United States	Negotiation to update the North American Free Trade Agreement	2017	Ongoing negotiation

Source: Elaborated by the author on the basis of information from www.direcon.gob.cl , http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/in-focus/new-trade-strategy , http: // international.gc.ca/trade-commerce/trade-agreements-accords-commerciaux/agr-acc/chile-chili/fta-ale/2017_Amend_Modif-App2-Chap-N.aspx?lang=eng

The texts of the Chile-Uruguay and Chile-Canada agreements are similar. They include objectives and shared commitments, advocacy and cooperation, and stipulate that the issues arising from these arrangements will not be addressed through the dispute settlement mechanism of the respective treaties. They have a clear gender perspective and language that has never before been used in a trade agreement[19].

The agreement between Chile and Uruguay was the first to include a specific chapter on Gender and Trade (Agreement Chile - Uruguay, 2016). The revised Chile-Canada FTA addresses gender issues in Appendix II - Chapter N bis - Trade and Gender, amended Chapter N on Institutional Arrangements and Dispute Settlement Procedures (Canada - Chile Free Trade Agreement, 2017). This was the first time that provisions on gender were included in a significant way in a trade agreement of a G20 economy.

Both texts recognize the importance of mainstreaming a gender perspective into the agreement to promote inclusive economic growth, and the instrumental role that gender policies play in achieving sustainable socioeconomic development. This aims to benefit the entire population, and promote a more equal participation of women and men in business, industry and the labor market (Canada- Chile Free Trade Agreement, 2017). The Agreement between Chile and Uruguay stresses the importance of equal rights, treatment and opportunities between men and women, as well as "the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women based on sex, ethnicity, race, color, national or social origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, religion, political or other opinions, economic status or any other social, family or personal condition" (Chile-Uruguay Agreement, 2016).

The provisions reaffirm the commitments of the parties to promote the relevant international agreements on gender equality. The agreement between Chile and Canada refers to the UN

[19] Nevertheless, some stakeholders believe that the agreements will be merely declarative (Elliot, 2016).

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 1979 (CEDAW), to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as other agreements on gender equality and women 's rights. The agreement between Chile and Uruguay makes special reference to international conventions on the labor rights of women.

Both agreements establish a Gender Committee to organize and facilitate cooperative activities and to report to the Free Trade Commission. The proposed cooperative activities cover a wide range of issues related to the full participation and equality of women at work, business, science and technology, political and social leadership, financial inclusion, among others. Women entrepreneurship and sex-disaggregated data for gender analysis are also promoted. The Agreement between Chile and Canada refers to the 1997 Labor and Environmental Cooperation Agreements between the two countries and encourages initiatives related to gender in these agreements. In the case of inconsistencies, the Agreement on Labor Cooperation will prevail.

The European Union is negotiating for the first time provisions on trade and gender in the update of its Strategic Partnership Agreement with Chile. This could be a pilot project to introduce the subject in other trade negotiations (Statement of Commissioner Malmström in Bridges, 2017). This is consistent with the New Strategy of Trade and Investment in the EU. The European Parliament has been critical of the trade policy strategy of the European Commission. It recently proposed that given the different impacts of trade on men and women, gender impact assessments and a gender perspective should be included in all trade negotiations. The few gender considerations in the text of the recent agreement between the European Union and Canada (CETA) are considered insufficient (European Parliament, 2016).

The government of Canada has proposed to Mexico and the United States that the review of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) include a chapter on trade and gender, and indicated that the rights of women "are at the center of our foreign policy" (Statement by Minister Freeland in Bridges, 2017). In addition, the Canadian government would launch "a feminist policy of international cooperation" because it believes that the economic empowerment of women at the national and international level is essential for economic growth and prosperity. Canada is promoting a progressive trade policy agenda that puts "gender equality, the rights of indigenous peoples, environmental protection and labor standards at the center of the debate," said the Prime Minister Trudeau in September 2017 [20], "a progressive trade agenda is not a frill. In addition to being the right thing to do, it is a practical necessity, without which popular support for a growth agenda cannot be maintained". By December 2017, the response of the other NAFTA partners to Canada's proposal on gender was still unknown.

Another unprecedented initiative was the Joint Declaration on Trade and Women's Economic Empowerment on the occasion of the 11. WTO Ministerial Conference in Buenos Aires in December 2017 (see Annex I). Endorsed by 118 WTO member and observer countries, it is the first time that in the context of a WTO Ministerial gender issues are addressed and that WTO members agree "to collaborate so that trade and development policies are more sensitive to gender issues" (Joint Declaration, 2017). The document makes gender visible as an issue in itself and not only subsumed in other policy areas. Ministers agreed to share policies and programs to encourage the participation of women and, where appropriate, inform these policies voluntarily during the Trade Policy Review of the WTO. There were also commitments to share methods for collecting gender-disaggregated data, to eliminate barriers to the economic empowerment of women, and design and implement more gender-sensitive trade policies. The work program includes topics such as female entrepreneurship and trade, financial inclusion, participation of women-owned businesses in public procurement, among others.

[20] Prime Minister Trudeau in his speech at the Atlantic Council , September 19, 2017, http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/trudeau-delivers-rallying-cry -to-save-global-order

The gender chapters in the bilateral trade agreements and the Joint Declaration on Trade and Women's Economic Empowerment recognize the specificity of gender, give it public visibility and a special consideration, and this is certainly an important achievement. The following step should be to build a gender perspective into the major trade disciplines of the GATT, the GATS and other agreements, in areas such as market access, agriculture, subsidies, services, investment, government procurement, among others (McGill, 2005).

An example in the direction of this transversal approach is the communication on gender equality in domestic regulation made to the WTO Working Group on National Regulation by Argentina, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Iceland and Uruguay in mid-2017. The Working Group discusses disciplines on qualification requirements and licensing and related matters related to trade in services. The proposal, sponsored by 16 other members, states that licensing requirements and procedures, qualification requirements and procedures, should not discriminate based on gender (Communication WTO, 2017). With the necessary political will, the important WTO principle of non-discrimination, applied today to trade among countries, could be extended specifically to women and men, and uphold an important place in trade disciplines.

4. Initiatives to promote women exporters

There are different strategies for mainstreaming gender into trade promotion and support the internationalization of women led companies. The ITC Gender Equity Guidelines present 10 good practices to enhance the impact that trade promotion organizations (TPO) can have on gender equity. This includes identifying and understanding the needs of women-led firms, gathering data disaggregated by gender and measuring results, ensuring that services equally benefit women and men, and building an ecosystem of support for women on legal, financial and corporate issues (ITC, undated).

A study by the *North-South Institute* (NSI) to support cooperation in Canada's free trade agreements with Colombia and Peru, suggests four areas to promote the participation of women as workers, managers and entrepreneurs: statistics and databases to support the development of promotion instruments; economic and trade policies with a gender perspective to increase the participation of women in international trade; labor policies to increase formal employment and reduce the wage gap in the export sector; and complementary policies to create synergies between social, educational, gender, security and institutional policies (NSI, 2013).

The inclusion of a gender perspective in export promotion depends on various factors. First, the authorities' commitment to gender equality and inclusive export development. Second, the demands of women exporters for more participation and for instruments to facilitate the internationalization of their businesses. Third, the support of these programs by international development cooperation agencies is very important, especially in countries with limited resources.

Most TPOs in Latin America preferably work with micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) that export or wish to export in the future. Within this group of firms, on average, between 20 and 25% are women-owned businesses. Only recently some specific programs to promote women exporters have been developed, as well as affirmative action provisions (quotas, preferential co-financing) in general promotional programs, such as trade missions, international fairs, business meetings, among others. The underlying concept has been that the internationalization of women-owned businesses facilitates their growth and competitiveness, and also contributes to women's empowerment and gender equality.

Recently, various TPOs in Latin America have established gender departments or units to promote gender equality in the export sector and are developing plans to provide special services to women exporters. Issues related to gender equality in export value chains have slowly been introduced in the trade agenda. In most countries, the characteristics and needs of women exporters have been identified only partially. The next section presents some of the initiatives to identify the needs of

women and best practices in export promotion with a gender perspective, developed in Argentina, Chile, El Salvador, Peru and Uruguay.

Argentina

In 2017, the Argentine Agency of Investment and Trade launched its program *Mujeres Exportadoras* (Women Exporters), with the purpose of increasing "the participation of women entrepreneurs in trade and investment through trade promotion activities, training and consulting services in international business" (Agencia Argentina de Inversiones y Comercio, 2017). The program focuses on women entrepreneurs across the country and was presented in the provincial capitals.

The program is aimed at micro, small and medium enterprises led by women who want to strengthen or start an international business. It seeks to promote an export oriented business model among women entrepreneurs, with marketing skills focused on external markets, contacts with international buyers, training and access to international business platforms. The program also encourages networks of women exporters, and gives an annual award to women entrepreneurs (Agencia Argentina de Inversiones y Comercio, 2017) .

To participate in the program, the firms must be legally constituted and led by women. That is, that women either own 51% of the firm, or that the CEO or the president of the company is a woman, and/or that 51% of management positions are held by women. The program includes participation in training, business intelligence activities, export groups, trade promotion and business agendas. It encourages the participation of women entrepreneurs in online business platforms. Since the program is new, there is no data available yet on the use of these tools.

Chile

The General Directorate of International Economic Relations (DIRECON) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for trade policy in Chile. ProChile, is part of DIRECON and is the trade promotion agency in charge of promoting the internationalization of Chilean companies.

In regards to gender, DIRECON is committed "to develop activities in strategic areas where it is possible to apply a gender perspective, with the idea of contributing to greater equality between men and women to access and participate in opportunities in foreign markets"[21]. In 2016, DIRECON established a special department to position gender issues in both its internal and external activities, and support and promote the participation of women in international trade.

Between 2016 and 2017, DIRECON developed an intense agenda of initiatives with a gender perspective. In international trade negotiations, for the first time gender chapters and provisions were included in trade agreements; both in new agreements such as those with Uruguay and Argentina, as well as in the up-grade of existing agreements, such as the Chile-Canada FTA and the Chile-European Union Strategic Partnership. At the plurilateral level, DIRECON participates in the Technical Group on Gender of the Pacific Alliance. The gender issue has also been raised in the negotiation of the Pacific Alliance with the four associates (Australia, Brunei, New Zealand and Singapore). DIRECON has also strengthened its work to position gender issues in APEC negotiations. Chile is expected to include gender in many of the activities at the APEC 2019 meetings which it will host. DIRECON has also developed various international cooperation projects on empowerment of women exporters, in collaboration with APEC, the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) and the Chile-Mexico Fund. Gender issues have also been a component of Chile's programs of South-South cooperation programs with developing countries.

[21] For further information, see https://www.direcon.gob.cl/enfoque-de-genero/

ProChile is responsible for the promotion of women exporters. Since 2016, gender mainstreaming has been a focus of activities. The *Mujer Exporta* program was established to support women-led export firms, but also an affirmative action approach was mainstreamed into various promotional tools. In 2016, women participated in all ProChile programs, but were represented most in capacity building activities: 15% of the participants in international trade shows were women, 18% in trade missions, 46% in the Digital Exports Program and 18% in the activities of the services sector[22]. In capacity-building workshops, the participation of women reached 40%.

A total 804 women participated in the activities of the *Mujer Exporta* program in 2016 (see Table 9), not only in the capital, Santiago, but in all regions of Chile. Its objective is to facilitate access by women-led firms to international markets, as well as business networks and contacts with international buyers. The program co-finances the participation of women entrepreneurs in trade missions, international fairs, business conferences, among others. It provides women with training and capacity-building to strengthen their skills to implement an export business plan. The program trains women exporters both in overall business issues, and also in specific gender issues to address business problems that are gender-related.

Table 8
Chile: Activities of the ProChile *Mujer Exporta* program, 2016

Activities	Number of activities	Number of participants	Territorial base and target markets
Training workshops	20	695	Nation-wide. General target markets
Trade missions	5	38	Argentina, Bolivia (EP) , United States, Guatemala, Mexico and Sweden,
Business conferences	1	48	Held in Chile with buyers from Belgium, Arab, Emirates Spain, United States, Panama and Sweden
Export coaching	1	15	General
SIAL Paris trade show	1	4	France
Chile Wine Tour	2	3	Peru and Thailand
Flavors of Chile	1	1	U.S
TOTAL	30	804	All regions of Chile and 14 international markets

Source: Prepared by the author with information from ProChile.

El Salvador

In El Salvador, the trade promotion agency, PROESA, established a Gender Unit in 2015 with an agenda to promote women-led export firms. The agenda included both business and gender-related support strategies. CONAMYPE, the National Commission for Micro and Small Enterprises, has developed Women Entrepreneurship Centers in Ciudad Mujer, which offer commercial information, training, technical assistance for business plans and financial issues, among others. These centers help to identify women-led companies which have an export potential.

Peru

[22] DIRECON-ProChile, PMG Report, October 2016

PROMPERU, the trade promotion agency of Peru, established the *Ella Exporta* (She Exports) program in 2017, in the context of the gender equality policies of the government of Peru. The aim is to develop a specific women's *Ruta Exportadora*, a comprehensive program to support export firms. Data on women's participation in PROMPERU programs is registered in its Customer Relations Management system (CRM), which highlights both the strengths and weaknesses of women exporters and identifies experiences and best practices at the regional and sectoral levels.

Ella Exporta is a special program which offers training and technical assistance to women entrepreneurs. PROMPERU does not use affirmative action quota system to facilitate the women's use of its different promotional tools. Companies led by women are defined as those which are i) 51% woman-owned, ii) where women are decision–makers and iii) where 51% or more of the staff are women. Other requirements to participate in the *Ella Exporta* program are to take the PROMPERU Export Test (indicating the firm's export potential), indicate a strategy to address gender violence in the workplace, have an internationalization strategy, and no significant financial risks. The program has several consecutive modules: export coaching, logistics costs of business plans, corporate social responsibility, finance, e-commerce and digital marketing.

Uruguay

Over the past decade, Uruguay has been noted both for its export orientation, and its gender equality policies. The Uruguay-Chile Free Trade Agreement (Chile-Uruguay Agreement, 2016) included the first chapter on gender and trade to be negotiated. However, there is a significant gender gap in relation to women's economic participation and opportunities (see Table 6).

Uruguay XXI, the trade promotion agency, promotes exports and supports companies that are beginning their process of internationalization or intend to increase exports and diversify markets. The agency recently made a survey about the use of their promotion tools by women-led companies, in order to adjust the existing tools or, if necessary, develop specific programs for women.

Among the firms that make use of the Uruguay XXI promotion tools, many have women in decision-making positions. In 2016, the PROEXPORT program, aimed at the internationalization of micro enterprises, benefited 225 firms, with 130 women working in decision-making positions (Uruguay XXI Institute 2017). Within the 21 companies that received support from FODYME (Fund for Market Diversification), 19 had women as decision-makers. Within the 9 companies which participated in the PROTIC program, there were 4 with women decision-makers; and within the Finishing Schools training program, 48% of participants were women. In the Smart Talent program (Global Services Portal), 53% of participants were women. Finally, according to the survey, 45% of the companies associated with the country-brand program were led by women.

Uruguay XXI is presently promoting the use of the ITC SheTrades business platform, which was launched in August 2017 at a Women in Exports seminar. Women entrepreneurs were invited to register in order to promote their products.

Uruguay has been a case study for international organizations that promote the empowerment of women in the export sector. As a result of a study on the impact of trade liberalization in Uruguay, UNCTAD recommended, among others, to strengthen the land-ownership rights for women, to facilitate their access to productive resources and training, to support their participation in value chains; and to increase their participation in the food industry, in high-productivity services, and in the tourism sector (UNCTAD 2014) .

5. Conclusions and recommendations for an agenda on gender and trade

In 2016-2017, there was a *momentum* in mainstreaming gender issues into trade policy, which had not been observed in the 20 preceding years, even though many of the issues which are currently on the policy agenda had already been raised in the past. The following step should be to build on this

momentum and reorient trade policy in those areas which may impact women and facilitate their economic empowerment.

Sex-disaggregated data

Trade is not gender neutral. It is urgent to develop and implement methods and procedures for the collection of sex-disaggregated data, the use of gender indicators, methodologies for monitoring and evaluation, and statistical analysis with a gender focus.

Adequate information is needed on the impact of trade on women through the various transmission channels (employment, entrepreneurship, consumer-market, social services, roles in the household and as caretakers); in order to allow for a gender analysis of trade policies as an input for trade negotiators, and to promote the participation of women-led companies in exports.

Gender-specific trade policy

Trade policies with gender specificity require a solid foundation of both quantitative and qualitative information, but above all, a political will at the highest level to advance in this direction. Some examples in this direction include the feminist foreign policy which Prime Minister Trudeau seeks for Canada, and the decision by President Bachelet of Chile to include gender chapters in the new trade agreements. The Joint Declaration on Gender and Trade, endorsed by 118 WTO member countries, and the initiatives arising from it, provide a multilateral platform for progress at a global scale.

A gender-specific trade policy can be developed at different levels: i. domestically, with a trade policy that includes a gender analysis; ii. in regional trade agreements, through trade disciplines that consider a gender focus and/or include stand-alone chapters on gender and trade. The WTO, after an initial step of raising gender issues in a general way, should move on to consider a gender perspective in the various disciplines and agreements (market access, subsidies, services, non-conforming measures, government procurement, among others).

Gender and export entrepreneurship

There are several areas related to trade and the economic empowerment of women on which progress is needed at the national and multilateral level in order to promote women's export businesses: first, to identify and eliminate the barriers that limit the participation of women; second, to further financial inclusion; and third, to incorporate women entrepreneurs to value chains and government procurement systems. Trade facilitation initiatives should always strive to provide equal access and opportunities to women entrepreneurs.

Gender programs of trade promotion organizations (TPO)

Gender-specific export promotion has only very recently been raised by TPOs. Sex - disaggregated data of owners or decision makers of export companies needs to be available to define appropriate policies and instruments for women entrepreneurs. TPOs should register sex-disaggregated data for companies using their services, but this information is insufficient to register adequately the participation of women-led companies in total export firms. The main responsibility lies with other public institutions. Information about export firms is based on customs data and the entry about the gender of the export firm's owner or decision-maker should be registered on the customs forms.

Surveys and workshops with women exporters highlight the need for instruments that specifically address their needs and demands. Both the gender and export innovation workshops, organized by ECLAC in 2015 in Ecuador, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Peru (Frohmann et al, 2016), as well as the gender programs developed by ProChile and PROMPERÚ raise similar issues (see table 9). In business matters, the issues to be addressed are mainly market information, training, funding and innovation. Regarding gender-specific issues, the women's needs focus on new approaches and tools that specifically consider women, on learning negotiation skills and protocols, and receiving

mentorship. In all cases, business associativity (particularly through networking) is considered relevant to strengthen the women's businesses.

Table 9
Issues for an agenda to promote women´s export entrepreneurship

Business issues	Gender issues
Market research and trends	Women's empowerment
Business opportunities, marketing skills	Support mechanisms among women, strengthen women´s networks
Innovation and Technology	Motivation strategies, mentoring
Training about international standards and regulations. Quality certification. Trademark registration. Organic production	Negotiation protocols for women with international companies managed by men
Services exports	Export culture with a gender perspective
Financing	Women entrepreneurship
Logistics and management	Personal and professional development
Product diversification	Learn best practices at national and international levels
Labels and packaging	Gender programs in TPOs
Associativity,	Affirmative action for TPO programs
Participation in trade shows	
Technical workshops on export strategies	
Migrants and markets	
E-commerce	

Source: Prepared by the author, based on Frohmann, Mulder, Olmos and Urmeneta (2016), Internacionalización de las pymes. Innovación para exportar, Santiago de Chile.

In addition to developing special programs for women exporters, gender should be mainstreamed into all the TPO instruments to level the playing field for women and men, either through affirmative action initiatives -fees, co-financing, competitions, prizes, dissemination of best practices- or specific gender programs. Finally, special attention should be given to the use of business platforms for women and the opportunities offered by the new gender chapters of trade agreements.

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Acronyms

ACP	Africa, Caribbean, Pacific
APEC	Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation
APEN	Asociación de Productores y Exportadores (Nicaragua)
DIRECON	Dirección General de Relaciones Económicas Internacionales (Chile)
CAFTA-DR	Central American-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement
CEPAL	Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe
CETREX	Centro de Trámites de las Exportaciones (Nicaragua)
CMC	Consejo Mercado Común (Mercosur)
CRM	Customer Relations Management
ECLAC	UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
EU	European Union
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
GATT	General Agreement of Trade and Tariffs
GATS	General Agreement in Trade in Services
GEM	Global Entrepreneurship Monitor
GIZ	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (Germany)
ITC	International Trade Center
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NSI	North-South Institute
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PROESA	Export and Investment Promotion Organization of El Salvador
PPWE	Policy Partnership on Women and the Economy, APEC
REM	Reunión Especializada de la Mujer (Mercosur)
RMAAM	Reunión de Ministras y Altas Autoridades de la Mujer (Mercosur)
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
TLCAN	Tratado de Libre Comercio de América del Norte
TPO	Trade Promotion Organization
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
WE	Women's Entrepreneurship, APEC
WEF	World Economic Forum
WTO	World Trade Organization

Annex I

Joint Declaration on Trade and Women's Economic Empowerment on the Occasion of the WTO Ministerial Conference in Buenos Aires in December 2017

Acknowledging the importance of incorporating a gender perspective into the promotion of inclusive economic growth, and the key role that gender-responsive policies can play in achieving sustainable socioeconomic development;

Acknowledging that inclusive trade policies can contribute to advancing gender equality and women's economic empowerment, which has a positive impact on economic growth and helps to reduce poverty;

Acknowledging that international trade and investment are engines of economic growth for both developing and developed countries, and that improving women's access to opportunities and removing barriers to their participation in national and international economies contributes to sustainable economic development;

Acknowledging the need to develop evidence-based interventions that address the range of barriers that limit opportunities for women in the economy;

Recalling Goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals in the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which is to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls; and

Reaffirming our commitment to effectively implement the obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 18 December 1979;

We have agreed to collaborate on making our trade and development policies more gender-responsive, including by:
1. Sharing our respective experiences relating to policies and programs to encourage women's participation in national and international economies through World Trade Organization (WTO) information exchanges, as appropriate, and voluntary reporting during the WTO trade policy review process;
2. Sharing best practices for conducting gender-based analysis of trade policies and for the monitoring of their effects;
3. Sharing methods and procedures for the collection of gender-disaggregated data, the use of indicators, monitoring and evaluation methodologies, and the analysis of gender-focused statistics related to trade;
4. Working together in the WTO to remove barriers for women's economic empowerment and increase their participation in trade; and
5. Ensuring that Aid for Trade supports tools and know-how for analysing, designing and implementing more gender-responsive trade policies.

Over the next months, we will hold a series of seminars in coordination with relevant international organizations to explore and discuss, among others, the following themes related to trade and the economic empowerment of women:

- The promotion of female entrepreneurship and trade;
- The identification of barriers that limit women's participation in trade;
- The promotion of financial inclusion as well as the access to trade financing and financial assistance for women traders;

- The enhancement of women entrepreneurs' participation in public procurement markets;
- The inclusion of women-led businesses, in particular MSMEs, in value chains;
- The impact of trade facilitation in providing equal access and opportunities for women entrepreneurs;
- The inventory of information sources, their complementarity and the identification of data gaps.

In 2019 we will report on progress towards implementation of this joint declaration on trade and women's economic empowerment.