Understanding the links between trade, government procurement and women economic empowerment: the role of the GPA

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Contents of presentation

The link between trade, GP and women economic empowerment

What is the GPA?

What is the role of the GPA in fostering women business participation?
Why government procurement for women economic empowerment?

- Large markets: 15% of GDP
- Social importance of GP
- Direct impact of policies
- Spillover effects in domestic market
- Export opportunities
What is the GPA?: Basic nature of the Agreement

A binding international Agreement that promotes:

- Access to other GPA Parties’ procurement markets;
- Improved value for money in each participating Member’s procurements;
- Good governance (transparency, fair competition and a key requirement regarding avoidance of corruption).

A plurilateral agreement

- Part of the WTO system (and enforceable under the DSU!) via Annex 4 of the Marrakesh Agreement.
- Recently re-negotiated.
- Membership increasing over time.
Membership & market access dimension

• increasing membership of the Agreement.
  – currently comprises 19 Parties, latest Parties: Moldova and Ukraine
    • 2015 and 2016: two new Parties each
  – encompasses 47 WTO members – up from 22 in 1994
  – several acceding members (incl. Australia, China, Russia) and others with GPA accession commitments (e.g. Kazakhstan)

• significant and growing market access dimension
  – estimated $1.7 trillion, worth about 2.5% of global economy
GPA Members and observers at a glance

Party to the Agreement
Observer Government
State of play and latest developments

10 observers are in the process of acceding

Australia; China;
Albania; Georgia;
Jordan; Kyrgyz Republic;
Oman; Russian Federation;
F.Y.R. of Macedonia; Tajikistan.

Ukraine and Moldova completed their accession processes and became Parties to the Agreement in Summer 2016.

Link to WTO accession: 5 other WTO Members have commitments to seek GPA accession: Afghanistan; Mongolia; Saudi Arabia; Seychelles and Kazakhstan.
Main elements

- National treatment and non-discrimination.
- Detailed provisions on procurement process, to ensure transparent and open competition.
- E-procurement and fight against corruption as new elements.
- Flexibilities for developing economies & only applies to above-threshold covered procurement!
Core principles of the Agreement (basis for legal elements)

- Non-discrimination (especially between foreign and domestic suppliers);
- Transparency of the procurement system and of individual procurements;
- Procedural fairness for suppliers/potential suppliers
The GPA and Women Economic Empowerment
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- Preferential programmes: Use of flexibilities under the GPA
- Advocacy, training and community of female procurement professionals: WTO technical assistance
- The right choices: what to buy, contract size, turnover requirements, payment terms: GPA Committee policy dialogue
- A fair, open and transparent procurement system: GPA minimum standards and e-procurement
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- Small (domestic) contracts
- High-value (domestic) contracts
- Access to global procurement markets
- e-procurement
General remarks

• The global context of the GPA: an emerging pillar of the global economy and important for women businesses that want to access procurement markets

• It has been adapted to take account of the use of electronic tools

• Synergies between good procurement practices, international trade and women economic empowerment need to be harnessed.

• International dialogue is needed!