



Gender Considerations in RECs: The Cases of EAC and MERCOSUR

Simonetta Zarrilli

UNCTAD - DITC
Trade, Gender and Development

28 March 2019
Geneva





The case of MERCOSUR

- 1991 Asunción Treaty & 1994 Ouro Preto Protocol
→ *Gender mainstreaming was not included*
- Civil society engagement - UN Conferences - Governments' orientation
 - → Social & Employment Declaration (1988); Specialized Meeting of Women (1988); Women's Meeting of Ministers and High Authorities (2011); CMC recommendation (2012); Policy Guidelines for Gender Equality (2014)
- GE policies from employment to broader issues
- Mercosur's policies address GEWE through international trade only indirectly



The case of EAC

EAC Treaty (2000)

→ *Gender mainstreaming and GE as fundamental principles of the community. No detailed provision or chapter on gender and trade specifically*

- Common Market Protocol → coordination and harmonization of member countries' social policies to promote equal opportunities & GE
- 2017: Gender Equality and Development Bill → uniform approach to promoting equal rights and GE; harmonization; gender-responsive legislation, policies, programmes, and projects at national and regional levels
- 2018: Gender Policy → institutionalizing gender strategies in the EAC integration process. Strengthen gender mainstreaming in the planning & budgetary processes at the regional/national levels



A Comparative Assessment

Key question - Has the inclusion/exclusion of gender provisions played a major role?

- Difficult to form direct links between gender-related outcomes and GE provisions in the RECs
- Progress, but still gender gaps in both regions
- Possible inhibiting factors:
 - Legal nature of gender provisions
 - Different level of commitment among members
 - Inclusion of gender provisions to meet other goals
 - Accountability of member countries
 - Social norms

What could help



Potential policy tools at the regional level:

- Regional funds
- Collection of gender-disaggregated data
- Platforms to exchange good practices and peer learning
- Accountability & annual reviews



Thank you for your attention!

<http://UNCTAD.org/gender>

gender@unctad.org

<https://twitter.com/unctadgender>



UNITED NATIONS
UNCTAD