



# **BREAKING BOUNDARIES II**

**THE FREE TRADE AREA OF  
THE AMERICAS AND WOMEN:  
UNDERSTANDING THE CONNECTIONS**

While this project is a collaborative USGTN effort, the opinions and analyses presented are those of each individual contributor and do not necessarily represent the views of other USGTN members or of the organizations with which the contributors are affiliated.

Special thanks to the editorial team: Beth Myers (Women's EDGE), Maureen Heffern-Ponicki (American Friends Service Committee), Alexandra Spieldoch (Center of Concern), and Farah Nageer (Center of Concern).

Additional thanks to the Center of Concern and American Friends Service Committee whose generous support made the publication of *Women and the FTAA* possible.

# WHAT IS THE FREE TRADE AREA OF THE AMERICAS?

Alexandra Spieldoch, *Center of Concern*

The Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) is a free trade agreement currently being negotiated among 34 countries in the Western Hemisphere with the exclusion of Cuba. The FTAA governments are working to complete the largest regional integration ever between developed and developing countries, with the goal of increasing the trade of goods and services by the year 2005.

The U.S. government is negotiating the FTAA based on what it perceives as the benefits of the North American Free Trade Agreement or NAFTA. The U.S. considers NAFTA to be a positive model for development and is building on it in current trade negotiations.

Proponents of NAFTA often use statistics to show that economic growth figures have increased for the three participating countries, in particular for Mexico as a developing country. Yet, analysts debate over how these numbers are determined. Many make the claim that NAFTA, and free trade more generally, are negatively impacting people and their environment. Very few have highlighted the particular difficulties that women are facing.

## **What do we know about women's status in the Americas as it relates to trade?**

\* Women are experiencing terrible violence, including rape and death, in Juarez, Mexico in the maquiladora factories (export processing plants) that have opened post-NAFTA. Despite the employment opportunities, the majority of women workers continue to live in poverty because jobs in the maquiladoras offer low pay, few benefits and no security to the workers.

\* Many farmers in the U.S. are seeing their way of life changing. When international trade in agriculture unevenly benefits large corporate farms over family farms, many women farmers are dealing with the consequences. They have been faced with maintaining what is left of their farms while taking odd jobs off the farm to make ends meet and provide for their families.

\* In Latin America, most of the workers on flower farms exporting to the U.S. market are women (70 percent in Colombia and 80 percent in Ecuador). These women workers experience headaches, nausea, birth defects, and miscarriages, among other severe health-related problems, thanks to chronic exposure to poisonous pesticides which U.S. companies are allowed to produce and export through free trade policies as long as they are labeled "unregistered."

\*Post-NAFTA, the majority of working women in the Latin America are located in the service sector (such as teachers and nurses).<sup>1</sup> As of 2000, 97.8% of the more than 2.6 million Registered Nurses in the U.S. were women, who are increasingly contracted as part-time employees with no benefits and no overtime. Trade in services necessarily affects women as workers, consumers and providers to the market, their families and their communities.

\* In the year 2000 women constituted more than half of the migrants in the Americas region.<sup>2</sup> Migration has been on the rise since NAFTA and is a topic that is included in the FTAA negotiations. Due to the large numbers of women migrants, it is essential that trade policy incorporates gender and social impact assessments of its impact on migration.

Many women have been arguing that the theories that led people to believe that free trade will have a positive impact on countries and the majority of peoples are not based on the full story.

Proponents of NAFTA and the FTAA base their arguments on government statistics of national growth, which often leave out important parts of people's lives. These statistics are based only on peoples' relationship to the economy as workers, not as consumers, parents, community activists and citizens. To get a full picture of how trade is affecting people, governments should be looking for indicators such as:

1. Does trade positively affect peoples' access to water, health, education, and shelter? If not, how can trade policy work towards these goals?
2. Is free trade having a negative impact on the environment? If so, how can trade policy be reshaped to ensure environmentally sustainable development?
3. Is trade being shaped out of developmental priorities which have been identified within the United Nations?
4. Is trade impacting workers? If so, how?
5. Are women being impacted differently than men? How can trade policy help to rectify the social inequities that exist in countries worldwide instead of reinforce them?
6. Are women and men being affected differently in the U.S. than in Latin America and the Caribbean? How? Why?

Within the Americas region, there are differences in the quality of life, amount of work done, health, literacy levels, and economic, political and social standing of males and females. If we are serious about promoting equality and the full humanity of all people, we will need to address the causes and consequences of sex or gender-based discrimination in the economy. Many of the economic problems in the world, including in the Americas region, affect women and men differently. Women are too often left behind due to their roles of production within the family, the community, and the formal market. In crafting policies to address these problems, we have to make sure they work for women.

Statistics **do exist** to show that there are serious problems associated with privatization, deregulation, liberalization and free trade that should be rectified and not ignored as negotiators move forward with trade in this region and globally. Any policies meant to benefit people as a whole must incorporate a gender analysis because women are integral to society (including the market) being able to function. The FTAA currently does not come close to doing this. Many U.S. women are very concerned about the increase in militarization in the region, trade in basic services, and the shift from family farming to corporate farming and export led agriculture. A growing number of U.S women recognize the potential impacts of the FTAA on workers, the problems associated with unregulated investment and the overall threats to democracy in the Americas. The women of the U.S. have a large role to play in determining the future of this agreement, and learning more about the consequences of these policies is only the beginning.

# HOW WILL THE FTAA IMPACT WOMEN WORKERS?

Bama Athreya, *International Labor Rights Fund*  
Cathy Feingold, *AFL-CIO*

A decade ago, NAFTA was touted as a win-win situation for all workers. The U.S. government sold NAFTA to the American public with the promise that more trade with Canada and Mexico would create new, well-paying jobs, and improve living conditions in the three countries. Instead, NAFTA has led to the loss of jobs, declining wages, and growing job insecurity. Women have been the first to lose out.

Women workers lose on both sides of the border. When companies move from the U.S. to Mexico and jobs disappear, communities lose a large source of their revenue base. With lower tax revenues, state and local governments face budget shortfalls that force them to reduce or eliminate funding for important public services like health care, education, and social service programs. When services are cut, women must often increase their unpaid labor to cover for these services or make difficult choices between which services they will do without.

Women workers in the profitable Sunbeam Mr. Coffee plant in Ohio lost their jobs when the company moved the plant to Mexico. The women workers in Ohio had well-paying union jobs that had allowed them to support their families. While women workers in Ohio were left with few other employment options, women workers in Mexico who went to work for Sunbeam were often required to take a pregnancy test as a condition for employment and did not earn a living wage. The workers in Mexico continued to live in communities where there were few basic services and their living conditions were deplorable. It is hard to claim women from either country were "winners."

In Mexico, women workers were promised that the maquiladoras, or factories producing for export, would bring them better jobs and better living conditions. The maquiladoras assemble imported component parts to be re-exported for large profits for the multi and trans-national corporations. NAFTA did succeed in bringing more of these factories to Mexico, but much was lost as well. Despite the employment opportunities, the majority of women workers continue to live in poverty because jobs in the maquiladoras offer low pay, few benefits and no security to the workers. The corporations pay low taxes and benefit from weak labor and environmental regulations, leaving communities with few resources and much environmental degradation. The jobs created under NAFTA did not improve the living conditions for the majority of Mexican women workers.

The FTAA would expand the reach of NAFTA, bringing low-wage jobs with no real protection for workers' rights to the rest of the hemisphere. Current conditions in other Latin American countries suggest that expanding export sectors will simply widen the scope of abuse suffered currently by women workers. In the maquiladoras of Central America, women are forced to work long hours for wages that often do not even meet the minimum guaranteed by local law; work weeks of 60 to 80 hours are routine. They are exposed to extremely unsafe working conditions, resulting in illness, the loss of limbs, or even of their lives. In recent years, workers attempting to organize unions in maquilas in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua have been fired, harassed, and intimidated.

In agriculture, too, women are often found in the lowest-paying and most exploitative jobs. Due to trade deals with the United States, the cut flower industry in Colombia and Ecuador has boomed in recent years due to trade deals with the United States. Most of the roses and carnations now sold in the United States come from these two countries. Most of the workers on these flower

farms, 70 percent in Colombia and 80 percent in Ecuador, are women. Many of them bring their children to work alongside them. International organizations estimate that approximately 48,000 of Ecuador's flower workers are children. Workers are often subjected to pregnancy tests before being hired and often fired if they do become pregnant.

Due to chronic exposure to poisonous pesticides, women workers also experience headaches, nausea, birth defects, and miscarriages, among other severe health-related problems. The same trade rules that make it easy for U.S. companies to import cut flowers from Colombia and Ecuador also allow U.S. companies to easily export hazardous pesticides. U.S. companies are allowed to produce and export both banned and never-registered pesticides to any other country, as long as they are labeled "unregistered." U.S. corporations stand to benefit from the FTAA and other regional trade agreements, because such agreements allow them to exploit unprotected workers, and also dump products that could not be sold in the United States.

Women workers need trade policies that protect their rights as women and as workers and improve their living conditions. The jobs created by current trade policies do not represent hope to the women themselves, nor to their children; in such jobs, they can never work their way out of poverty. A fair trade alternative to the current U.S. government proposals would include mechanisms to ensure that workers' rights and environmental protections are being improved in trading nations, not undermined, and would provide a channel of meaningful redress for workers whose rights are violated.

Alternatives to the proposed trade policies should include language to deal with the problems resulting from weak labor protections such as discrimination in hiring practices and sexual harassment. Enforceable worker and environmental protections are needed to ensure that women workers can earn a living wage and work and live in communities that are not hazardous to their health. Women workers who are adversely impacted by trade policies need technical and development assistance that allow them to find employment in other areas. The women workers most affected by these policies should be active participants in helping to shape trade and workplace policies, for this would ensure that trade policies improve the lives of working women

### *DISCUSSION QUESTIONS*

1. How has NAFTA affected the job situation in your town?
2. When jobs leave the United States, who gets these jobs? How are the workers in developing countries treated?
3. Often, by lowering labor costs (mainly by paying workers less), corporations are able to charge less for their products, which may help some poor families. Do you think this is an acceptable practice? How can we make arguments about trade and acknowledge this discrepancy?
4. How can you guarantee that workers are protected in future trade agreements? Who would be important allies to have in this struggle? How can you reach out to these groups?

# SERVICES: NEW DANGERS FOR WOMEN

Maria Riley, *Center of Concern*

The service industry plays such a central role in all human and community life and activities that people take services for granted until they become scarce or are no longer available. The service industry is also critical for the development and smooth functioning of a country. In the U.S. services account for 78% of private sector Gross Domestic Product which is \$6 trillion a year.<sup>3</sup> It covers such key sectors of public life as telecommunications, water supply, energy, health, education, mail delivery, banking, retail sales, and waste management.

Many services such as education and water have traditionally been publicly supplied since they are considered basic, essential services that all people should have access to regardless of their ability to pay. Other services such as banking, accounting, and retail sales have been privately supplied because they are non-essential. But now, in the new trade agreements, even basic, essential services are no longer viewed as social goods, they are commodities to be traded for profit. There are services negotiations in all the current bi-lateral (between two countries) and regional trade negotiations in progress, including the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) and The Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA), as well as in the multilateral negotiations in the World Trade Organization (WTO).

In the past, many people in the U.S. and abroad have paid little attention to trade agreements because they seemed so remote and apparently had little effect on their personal lives. However, the introduction of services into trade agreements will have a more far-reaching impact on the quality of people's lives especially if basic, essential services are included. The FTAA chapter on services would affect the delivery of critical services which are integral to the economic development of countries and by agreeing to trade rules in negotiating a service sector, governments would lose a degree of independence in shaping their own development needs. Critical issues are therefore at stake in the services negotiations of the FTAA, including the role and responsibilities of governments, democratic processes, and countries' right to direct their own course of development. There is also the issue of basic human rights when essential services are transformed into commodities creating a two-tiered system for the delivery of services: quality service for those who can pay and minimal services for those in poverty. Women are particularly vulnerable to this inequity, not only because they are often among the poorest, but also because of their responsibility for social reproduction – the care of families and communities.

## **Critical Issues**

A key political and social issue that the FTAA negotiations in services raises is governments' role and responsibilities in providing essential services to their populations. There is a long history in both developed and developing countries of public (government) responsibility for providing essential human services such as health, education, water, electricity and social safety nets. These services have been understood as government's responsibility within social contracts. Some services are also human rights which, under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, governments are required to ensure for all persons living within their jurisdiction.

FTAA service agreements would not technically demand the privatization of public services, but if a country agreed to allow a certain service sector to be traded, then the legal requirements of the agreements would apply to that sector, whether they are public or private services. This could mean that private sector service providers would be free to enter that market.

Public and private providers of services have different priorities and, therefore, serve communities differently. The private sector is a for-profit sector and has no obligation to provide services to

rural areas or to people in poverty. The public sector has the obligation of serving all citizens, and therefore must often subsidize the service to ensure that it is available to economically disadvantaged areas and people. Private sector services will target the population that can pay for them with the result that countries will end up with a two-tiered system: those who can afford to buy the services will enjoy them and those who cannot afford to buy services will either experience diminished access or no service at all in that sector. Those most deeply affected will be economically disadvantaged areas and people, particularly women.

The U.S. is a good example of a two-tiered approach to services, as illustrated by our health system. A person has health insurance in the U.S. either as an employment benefit or through personal health insurance. Not all businesses are required to offer a health benefit and people in poverty cannot afford personal health insurance. Some 45 million people in the U.S. are without health insurance. The government (public) coverage for the uninsured is through Medicaid which is under-funded and under-resourced and operates as a welfare program. It does not cover the so-called working poor whose income, according to U.S. regulations, is too high to apply for Medicaid, even if they are living below the official poverty level.

Typically, when the people without health insurance become ill, they go to emergency rooms, the most expensive form of health care. But even this resource is becoming scarce. In Washington, DC, the city closed its only public hospital and contracted with a private health care system to serve the needs of those in poverty. The public hospital, DC General, was located in one of the depressed areas of the city making it accessible to those in need. The private system promised to ensure continuing accessibility, but it is now in financial difficulties so the already diminished services to those in need are now even further diminished.

Women have been particularly burdened by this move toward privatization of health services both as consumers and providers. As consumers, women's access to health care both for themselves and their families has become more limited and more inconvenient and time-consuming. Women are the primary providers of health care in both the home and in health care institutions. In the move toward privatization (which often results in cutting staff to save money) a greater number of women than men lost their jobs and their work as health care providers in the home increased as fewer public services were available. Liberalization of essential public services, such as health and education, through the FTAA will only widen the gap between those who can afford private services and those who must depend on public services.

### **Domestic Regulation**

The main barriers to the privatization of services and to the companies seeking to trade freely are domestic regulations—national, state and local laws, so efforts to include services in agreements such as the FTAA necessarily seek to limit and reduce all domestic regulations that might impede trade. The scope of the FTAA services chapter would go beyond national legislation to include regulations at the regional and local levels.

Clearly, the matter of domestic regulations should be of concern to citizens. Regulations exist not only to ensure the quality of the service but also to protect people's rights and to ensure certain social and cultural values and objectives. Domestic regulations include universal access to water, consumer protections, public safety as well as rules to promote development objectives such as universal education and health, environmental protection and human rights for all. Domestic regulations express and protect a people's values and are often the result of citizen lobbying. Yet regulations can be nullified if they are judged to impede trade as defined in the agreements. Many citizens are unaware of this power residing in trade agreements. Democracy is being eroded in several ways. First, citizens are neither informed nor asked to participate in decisions that will affect their daily lives, and secondly, a community's values or decisions as expressed in domestic regulation can be nullified by an unknown panel in a distant organization that oversees the world trading system.

Some services demand a highly sophisticated system of regulations to protect consumers from fraud or from being denied a basic right. The cases of the "so-called energy crisis" in California in

2001 or the water crisis in Bolivia in 2000 are good examples.<sup>4</sup> When California deregulated its energy sector, it opened the way for companies to create a false energy shortage in order to raise prices for both the consumer and the state. The losses were in the millions of dollars. Two years later, investigations of fraud in the energy companies still continue and are a major reason for California's budgetary crisis. Individual citizens will never regain their losses. The third largest city in Bolivia, Cochabamba, privatized its water system by contracting it out to a foreign company. The result was an increase in the cost of water, making it a commodity available only to those who could afford it and disenfranchising those who could not. The people rebelled and the city took back the water system. After such a strong display of grassroots determination, it is discouraging to find out that Bolivia is now being sued by the company for breach of contract.

### **What is at Stake?**

Throughout the world, the critical importance of the work of social reproduction which includes the care of the human family and the building of communities is primarily left to women. It is invisible, undervalued, uncounted, and taken for granted. Social reproduction is considered part of the domestic sphere, the work of women in the household, and hence not a societal responsibility. There is little recognition that the work of social reproduction is the foundation for all other sectors of society.

Essential public services contribute to the success of social reproduction and ease the burdens of women. When water is not affordable, women are the ones who often end up bringing it to the household. If there is no energy for cooking, heating and light, women most often supply it. If healthcare is unavailable, women all too often care for the sick. As a result of providing these basic services when official structures break down, many women and girls are unable to pursue education or job opportunities to enable them to move out of poverty. Unfortunately, this cycle of poverty is often passed on through generations.

The FTAA does not factor in these life realities because trade negotiators insist that trade is only about the exchange of goods and services and is both gender and value neutral. These assumptions must be challenged and alternative agreements framed.

#### **Discussion Questions**

1. Does your family have healthcare? Is it provided by the government, a for-profit company or a mixture of both? Do you rely on the government to provide you with education? Or do you use private education? Does the government have a role in supplying your water or electricity? Are poor citizens in your community getting the same level of services as the wealthy?
2. How are women making up for these shortfalls in education, healthcare, water, and energy in the United States, particularly poor women? How do you think women living in poverty around the world are dealing with the same issues?
3. When services are cut, what impact does this have on women's ability to participate in the workforce? What impact does this have on girls?
4. How do trade agreements currently impact peoples' access to services? How could they in the future?
5. How can you ensure that essential services are protected in future trade agreements? Who would be important allies in your work? How can you reach out to these groups?

# INVESTMENT AND THE FTAA: CAN WOMEN BENEFIT?

Maureen Heffern Ponicki, *American Friends Service Committee*

Investment has long been touted as the recipe for economic vitality. If only a community, region, or country could attract more investment from businesses, then it would thrive. It is certainly true that investment can enormously benefit a community by creating jobs and, sometimes, those jobs stimulate the local economy enough to create even more jobs (secondary jobs). More jobs mean more members of the community have money which increases consumer buying power. The increase in tax revenues is another benefit of investment that helps supply the community with necessary services such as roads, sewers, and schools.

Yet, as many already know, investment doesn't always bring about these changes and investment often is disconnected from the surrounding community with limited development gains. For example, many of the maquiladora factories along the U.S./Mexico border exist as virtual islands within their community, providing jobs – the majority of which are low paying, with little room for advancement, and where basic worker's rights are not respected – but fail to bring secondary jobs to the community. The jobs pay so little that people don't have increased consumer power; and companies are given enormous tax breaks leaving local communities with insufficient resources to match the number of people who have migrated to the area in search of jobs. The *Alternatives for the Americas*, a collection of proposals for how trade and investment can promote sustainable and equitable development, reaffirms the positive role investment can play in a community only if it meets certain requirements:

Foreign direct investment (FDI) can play a positive role when it is invested in productive rather than speculative activities, when it transfers appropriate technology and when it facilitates access to markets and creates employment consistent with democratically determined national development plans (Hemispheric Social Alliance, 2001).

In the proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), government negotiators have clearly ignored these recommendations and other studies that document the failure of the type of investment being promoted in the FTAA. Just as NAFTA, the proposed FTAA shows a clear bias toward corporations by creating a legal framework that provides incentives for large, corporate investors, and hampers local, state, and national governments from designing regulations that would harness investment for productive and social goals. In other words, the agreement has created legal language that gives unprecedented rights to corporations without any requirements for how the investment is used, which will not only decrease the economic benefits for host communities, but also social benefits.

While trade and investment seems to be gender neutral, meaning that it doesn't include language that appears to hurt women and benefit men (or vice versa), the reality is quite different. One needs to first understand women's role in society in order to understand how a treaty such as the FTAA would impact women. Women in most countries lack equal access to land, credit, and education. Women are primarily responsible for maintaining households, caring for children and elderly, and for assuring that the family's food and health needs are met in addition to being income earners. In addition to recognizing the gendered roles in our economy and society, understanding the pervasive inequality between men and women in terms of employment, income, property ownership, and management positions helps clarify how a seemingly gender neutral trade agreement could impact women and men very differently.

Let's take a look at a couple of examples in order to see how women are impacted. The investment chapter of the FTAA prohibits the use of performance requirements. Performance requirements are tools governments use to assure that the economic and social benefits of investment reach the community.

A prohibition on performance requirements would mean governments could not mandate that an investor buy a certain percentage of its raw materials or inputs from local business which was a common tool of government to spur the growth of small, local businesses. Before performance requirements were eliminated with the passage of NAFTA, many small Mexican businesses flourished around the foreign factories on the border. Since NAFTA, these small businesses have suffered since the factories now import 98% of their inputs to production.<sup>5</sup> So much for the ripple effect of investment! This type of prohibition would hurt women-owned small businesses and micro-enterprises. A legal ban on performance requirements could also prohibit a government from mandating other protections such as contributing to workers' pension funds or health and unemployment insurance benefits, or mandating the transfer of appropriate technology including requirements that a certain percentage of women benefit from these programs. By looking at the FTAA draft text in detail, one can see that the agreement would clearly benefit large businesses and not small micro enterprises or women in general. In the U.S., the Community Reinvestment Act requires banks, thrifts, and other lenders to make capital (loans) available in low- and moderate-income urban neighborhoods in order to boost the development of these underserved areas. This is a form of a performance requirement and could be challenged if the FTAA passes as it is proposed.

Another major issue that comes up in the investment chapter of the FTAA is what is called the "investor-state" provision. The FTAA includes, just as NAFTA does, a clause that allows foreign investors to sue another country if they believe that a government regulation infringed on their anticipated profits. This provision has already undermined governments' ability to develop regulations to protect public health and the environment. Furthermore, these disputes are handled by closed, secret tribunals and circumvent local courts. What does this mean for women? A U.S. corporation called Crompton Corporation initiated an investor-state claim under NAFTA against Canada since the Canadian Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PRMA – the Canadian EPA) attempted to phase out a pesticide called lindane that is produced by Crompton. Studies have shown that lindane may cause cancer, especially breast cancer. In fact the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in the U.S. classified it as a restricted-use product in 1985 because of these concerns. Canada's Agency was taking appropriate precautionary steps to protect women's health and NAFTA legally allows a corporation to sue them for this action. The FTAA currently includes this exact legal language and is another example of how corporations are given disproportionate rights in comparison to the protections afforded to citizens. This is just one example of many and is evidence of how the fabric of democratic decision making is threatened trade agreements like the FTAA.

The FTAA could deal another blow to the women in the Americas region by eliminating the right of a government to institute capital controls. Capital controls, which are tools used to prevent rapid capital outflows (such as mandating that a certain percentage of an investor's capital not be withdrawn from that country for a set period of time) are now widely accepted as a sound tool of economic policy that can prevent instability and economic crises and promote national development needs. When investors are able to withdraw their money at any time, this can cause panic and chain reaction events that can result in billions of dollars leaving a country in a very short time frame which can lead to the collapse of an economy. For example, at the time of the Asian Financial Crisis, Malaysia instituted capital controls and studies show that they had a faster economic recovery, higher rates of employment and higher real wages than other Asian countries such as Korea and Thailand.<sup>6</sup> Since women are affected differently than men by economic crises simply due to their different roles in society, capital controls can be beneficial especially in protecting women. For example, many girls around the world are withdrawn from school when their families experience economic problems. In Indonesia, one of the Asian countries that did not

implement capital controls, an 8 year old girl was pulled from school by her parents because they could not afford the \$2 school uniform at the time of the crisis.<sup>7</sup>

As mentioned earlier, women comprise the majority of the workers in the export processing zones (EPZs) or maquiladoras in Latin America, which have been growing over the years. The FTAA could surely impact the regulatory climate in which they operate. Current research shows that women are segregated into low-paying jobs and do not have equal access to management positions in the factories. They are often victims of sexual harassment and subject to mandatory pregnancy testing. Since the investment chapter of the FTAA aims to facilitate corporate investment, there are no clauses, for example, that mandate that investors respect the International Labor Organization's (ILO) convention on workplace discrimination against women. Furthermore, there are no mandates that require investors to give adequate notice to local communities of their intent to shut down nor any enforcement mechanism to require investors to justly compensate workers according to national labor laws.

Fair trade that integrates the economies of the Western Hemisphere is not only possible, but it can also work to promote sustainable and equitable development as opposed to taking us backwards. In the *Alternatives for the Americas* document mentioned earlier, a series of fair trade alternatives are proposed.<sup>8</sup> This compilation of peoples' alternatives clearly advocates for governments being able to implement national development policies while at the same time remaining open to the economy. The document states that governments should, "protect small, local, family and community enterprises from unfair foreign competition and require corporations to give preferences to small producers, women, indigenous communities, and other traditionally marginalized groups when extending contracts or credit in the case of financial corporations" (HSA, 2001). Proposals have been submitted to negotiators that call for an international tax on foreign exchange transactions with the money being set aside in a social and economic development fund in order to decrease economic volatility. Contrary to the investor-state provision proposed in the FTAA, alternatives call for trade disputes to be handled by courts in host countries so that citizens can participate. The dispute would go to an international tribunal only if all other means are exhausted and investors would not be able to sue over public interest laws. In order to stem the abuses in EPZs, governments would also be able to impose performance requirements.

Lastly, women have been calling for gender impact assessments to be conducted before a trade agreement is signed. Impact assessments are a prerequisite for negotiating just policies that will benefit the majority of people. Understanding how women can be disproportionately hurt by trade agreements necessitates looking at the projected impacts and not only at the language in an agreement. Gender impact assessments, therefore, should be a cornerstone of women's efforts to work for just trade policies.

In conclusion, investment has the potential to play a positive role in our communities and in women's lives only if properly regulated to generate growth in the domestic economy and promote social goals. The proposed FTAA would allow unregulated investment to trump women's rights and all levels of government would be handicapped in promoting domestic social goals. This can be seen by looking at the FTAA proposals on the "investor-state" provision, performance requirements, capital controls, and other investment rules. Alternatives do exist and trade policies that promote both social and economic goals are possible and easily attainable. The FTAA would do neither.<sup>9</sup>

## Discussion Questions

1. In the past, the U.S. government has been able to regulate companies in order to ensure that investment benefits people in the community. Would the FTAA affect local and state officials' ability to protect their communities? Would investment rules in the FTAA affect your ability to protect yourself and your community as an activist?
2. What should be the proper relationship between companies (both national and multi-national) and countries? Does the relationship change whether the company is foreign or domestic?
3. Who regulates how companies act? Are existing regulations primarily benefiting communities, the companies, individuals (both as workers and consumers) or perhaps, all or some of these? Do you believe that even though companies bring jobs to a community, they also have other obligations to that community? If so, what would those obligations be? If not, why?
4. How would you write trade rules to ensure that investment serves the community and countries' ability to be able to grow in a sustainable and just way?

# TRADE IN AGRICULTURE: THE MARKET VS. SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS

Denise O'Brien, *Women, Food and Agriculture*  
Alexandra Spiello, *Center of Concern*

Over the years the idea of a free market system of trade promised farmers that their income would rise as more countries bought their products. Unfortunately, free trade has had the effect of displacing small and medium farmers in the U.S. while benefiting the large agribusiness groups who are able to effectively compete in the global market. U.S. agribusiness groups such as Monsanto, ConAgra, and Cargill have even helped to write trade language for the U.S. government and have certainly done so in their best interest.

## **The U.S. Context**

In 1995, the Freedom to Farm Bill was introduced by Congress to phase out subsidies to farmers in seven years in order to promote free trade in agriculture goods. This policy was supposed to ignite competition in the agriculture market, creating more sales for U.S. farmers who embraced export led agriculture while reducing the U.S. government's responsibility to subsidize this sector. Seven years later, this policy has resulted in low commodity prices and high production costs (such as fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides and the fossil fuels it takes to produce the chemicals) which have pushed out small and medium farmers from being able to compete.

In 2002, a revised Farm Bill was passed through Congress after much lobbying from U.S. farm groups for increased protection. Unfortunately, the new bill offers no solution to stabilizing commodity prices and specifically protecting small and medium farms. While it does provide more subsidies to the agricultural sector, most of this aid is in the form of export credits which benefit corporations whose production is geared towards export led growth. An insufficient amount will benefit the U.S. family farm to be able to compete in this arena. Although trade in agriculture is occurring, a consolidated number of agribusiness groups actually control the global market.

According to Paul Johnson, the number of U.S. farms has dropped from seven million to 2.16 million, with 170,000 of them accounting for 68% of production today.<sup>10</sup> More than 72,000 family farms disappeared between 1992 and 1999. Prices for commodities plummeted as have family farm incomes.<sup>11</sup> In 1999, Americans paid \$619 billion for U.S. food, but farmers only received \$121 billion. The Environmental Working Group has reported that over 60 percent of subsidies that are written in the 2002 U.S. farm bill to aid U.S. farmers will go to the top 10% of the biggest U.S. producers which are largely corporate and not family farms.

The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) provides an example of the negative impacts that farmers in both the United States and Mexico have experienced as a result of free trade. Many farmers in both countries have left the farm for low wage, service industry jobs while young people flee from rural to urban areas in hopes of a better standard of living. Even though many young families would like to stay in rural areas to raise families, they are often forced to leave as there are very few opportunities to make enough income to have a comfortable lifestyle. Migration is now the major topic between the U.S. and Mexico because of the incredible migration patterns that have emerged mainly with unskilled Mexican laborers trying to find work in the U.S., often as seasonal, often underpaid agricultural workers with no benefits or social protections.

According to a recent study by the Hemispheric Social Alliance (HSA) on the impacts of NAFTA, it is clear that Mexico's farmers are also experiencing a crisis. This study shows that Mexico has

eliminated price controls and reformed land to make way for export led agricultural production. Post-NAFTA, Mexico has experienced an increase in poverty in rural areas, land displacement for indigenous groups and a general lack of competitiveness in the international market. An unevenness in natural resources, technology, and government assistance existed between the U.S. and Mexico prior to NAFTA. However, where Mexico has continued to eliminate tariffs and lower its subsidies as part of its commitment to NAFTA, the U.S. has not lowered its subsidies in key areas of production where Mexico could actually benefit. In other words, Mexico has been cutting its farm aid programs in order to meet implementation standards of NAFTA while the U.S. has actually increased farm aid with the majority of the aid via export credits which are going to corporations. Cruz and Rindermann write that "since NAFTA, 33 percent of the value of agricultural production in the U.S. has been subsidized, while in Mexico, only 16 percent receives such support."<sup>12</sup> They also write that U.S. imports are replacing national products, contributing to rural unemployment, negatively impacting Mexico's physical infrastructure, increasing Mexico's dependency on food imports, and contributing to migration. According to Cruz and Rinderman, Mexico imports corn from the United States because it is cheaper than the national corn that is available; meanwhile, small and medium corn producers in Mexico are forced to find other work. Their findings show that the same trend is occurring with soybeans, wheat, beans, rice, potatoes, cotton, apples, pork and cattle.<sup>13</sup>

What we are seeing is that industrial agri-business has taken a stranglehold on a once diversified, somewhat environmentally balanced agricultural system. Questions about food security emerge. One question relates to the issue of dependence on the importation of food and a region's ability to grow the food that meets basic food requirements. Iowa, for instance, also imports approximately 85% of the food that is consumed by its population. If there were a crisis in the transportation industry and trucks could no longer deliver food, most of the population would be negatively impacted. The lack of a back up system to feed people is a problem that is not addressed in the discussions around trade.

Another question related to food security is the fact that a concentrated system of food production is vulnerable to contamination and disasters such as outbreaks of disease or natural disasters. Comparative advantage is the guise that corporations use to push countries into growing specialized items for the global market. However, systems where only certain crops are raised leave areas vulnerable to insect and disease infestations where the only alternative available to control pests and diseases is the high use of toxic chemicals.

Studies now show that industrial agricultural production often includes the overuse of chemicals which lead to contaminated air, water and soil. Activists make a connection between these chemicals and increasing numbers of cancer where these chemicals are being used.

Finally, there is the issue of genetically modified food production. In the U.S., "the Food and Drug Administration has ruled that genetically engineered food is "substantially equivalent" to regular food and needs no long-term testing or labeling. An estimated 60 percent of the processed food in grocery stores today contains genetically modified ingredients derived from such widely bioengineered crops as soybeans and corn."<sup>14</sup> Since the long-term impacts of these foods are unknown, the U.N. Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety allows nations to regulate imports of food products containing genetically modified organisms (GMOs), and to require the labeling of GMO products. Yet, the U.S. is systematically against labeling of GMO food or even restricting its trade within the FTAA context.

As the movement towards adoption of the FTAA goes forward, people throughout the region are incorporated into a system that could cause more problems for small and marginal farmers. Women are part of the debate. Women grow approximately 65% of the food in the world. Interestingly however, women's work on the farm in the U.S. has never been documented. So, women's financial contribution in this country has gone uncalculated for a few hundred years. Over the years, U.S. women have worked on farms to help raise crops and livestock. As the prices remained flat and interest rates and agriculture input have risen, women have been forced

off the farm and into low wage jobs in order to put food on the table and maintain the family's health coverage. In many instances today, men and women are both working off the farm to maintain a modest standard of living.

For a variety of reasons, including their social status and role of power within the household and the community, women farmers experience a different level of vulnerability and marginalization. In terms of health, there are large numbers of breast cancer clusters in areas where farm workers live and work. When food security is threatened, women, who most often prepare food in the home, are left struggling.

Despite all the dreariness of what currently exists, there is a beacon of light in the future. A new type of agriculture is emerging that supports small farms that raise food for people to eat. Sustainable agriculture is making a strong case for keeping the rural United States viable. Sustainable agriculture utilizes humans, the environment and the economy to create a just food system. This movement is being led by women in the U.S. Women are organizing as farmers, as staff of non-profit organizations, and as leaders in policy to create a more livable world. Local food systems are being created to cut down on fossil fuel usage and to bring more nutritious food to the table. Farmer's markets are exploding all across the U.S. as well as Community Supported Agriculture farms (farms where people buy a membership to a farm and receive the farm's bounty weekly during the growing season).

In spite of the emerging energy that is being generated towards sustainable agriculture, the gains made are still vulnerable to the whims of the corporations, those who own the process of negotiating trade. Until there is balance in the area of trade and food security for all, the FTAA must be challenged.

#### Discussion Questions

1. Many people are interested in protecting small farmers in both the United States and in developing countries. How do you think we could do that? Also, why is it important to protect both, not just one or the other?
2. Many people are interested in protecting small farmers in both the United States and in developing countries. How do you think we could do that? Also, why is it important to protect both, not just one or the other?
3. Food Security is defined the United States Department of Agriculture as access by all people at all times to enough nutritious food for an active, healthy life. Is trade helping or hurting more people reach the goal of food security? Could it have a role to play in achieving food security? What would a trade policy that worked towards food security look like?
4. Unlike many other goods and services that are being traded, agriculture and food are very close to all of our families. We deal with food every day and depend on it to keep U.S. healthy and alive. Because of the importance of agriculture for survival, many believe that this is a different kind of issue, and consumers should have more of a say in any agricultural policy. Do you agree or disagree? If you think you should have more of a say, how can you make that happen?

# Trade, Militarism and Women

Mary Zerkle, *American Friends Service Committee*

Militarism is a process that spreads military values and structures throughout society, and this affects the average person not only through direct military intervention but also through involvement in politics and the economy. The links between free trade and militarism have never been clearer than they are now, in the shadow of 9/11 and the war on terror. For example, the Bush administration has done a lot to make it seem as though the promotion of free trade and protecting our national security are the same thing, equating economic and military interests. In fact one section of the United States National Security Strategy calls for the U.S. to “ignite a new era of global economic growth through free markets and free trade.”<sup>15</sup> The document goes on to state “a strong world economy enhances our national security by advancing prosperity and freedom in the rest of the world...We will promote economic growth and economic freedom beyond America’s shores.” In other words, the U.S. has publicly announced that the promotion of free markets and free trade is an important element of U.S. national security and thus defensible by military action.

The ties between free trade and the defense of our country are so connected in the ideology of this administration that those struggling for fair-trade policies are being painted as a threat to national security. U.S. Trade Representative Robert Zoellick has publicly condemned global justice demonstrators as aiding terrorism. This makes it even harder for those in the U.S. who oppose these policies to speak out in the current atmosphere of fear. During many public demonstrations, police violence has been used to stifle the voices of those calling for fair trade. In another show of disregard for democracy, the administration will now request that negotiating texts for almost all future trade agreements be classified for national security reasons due to a court order mandating that they release the text of the U.S.-Chile free trade agreement (as requested under the Freedom of Information Act). Economic matters qualify as one of the rationales for national security classification.

For a glimpse of the increasing interconnectedness of economic and military policy, just look at Latin America. The U.S. is extending its military reach in the region, with military bases and/or forward operating locations in Ecuador, Columbia, Peru, Aruba, Curacao, Cuba, and Puerto Rico and has plans for further expansion. Meanwhile, the U.S. is pushing for new trade agreements in the region such as CAFTA (Central American Free Trade Agreement) and the FTAA, which would reinforce the economic strategies pursued by the United States and international financial institutions.

The 2003 aid package to Colombia included \$93 million dollars to train and equip a Colombian military unit to protect an oil pipeline that is run by Occidental Petroleum from guerrilla attacks. Occidental has spent millions of dollars lobbying the U.S. government for this money and this money supports a military that has committed countless human rights violations. This type of funding is an unprecedented move by the U.S. to blatantly support private corporate infrastructure. The U.S. rationale is that the defense of the pipeline is critical to energy security. The U.S. is perpetuating a particularly dangerous and long military campaign that has killed thousands of innocent Colombians. For example, in 1998 three American pilots from a security firm that Occidental uses mistakenly targeted the town of Santo Domingo near the pipeline as a hostile threat and killed eighteen civilians.

In a nutshell, the US uses military bases, funding for military operations, training of military personnel at schools such as The School of the Americas, and arms sales as methods to protect the interests of large corporations, defend the economic policies being employed, and guarantee U.S. access to natural resources. The FTAA is an agreement that will also grant further rights to

U.S. corporations by setting up a legal framework for free market economics such as privatization, and allowing foreign corporations greater access to natural resources.

All of this has a disproportionate effect on women. For instance, women are often forced into prostitution when displaced from their communities whether through unfair trade policies or due to military campaigns. As mentioned above, it is clear that the military is being used to protect foreign economic interests in Colombia and women have suffered from the correlating increase in human rights violations. In addition, women in the U.S. are affected as we see the military budget grow unchecked, while tax cuts for the wealthy and a growing deficit create the rationale for

For many years activists across the hemisphere have alleged that U.S. military policies are used to enforce economic interests. By looking at concrete examples such as Colombia's pipeline it becomes easier to see these links. The conflation of free trade policies and the national security of our country can only work to serve the interests of multinational corporations and those who support and benefit from their success. Those working for fair trade policies and global justice need to highlight the deliberate way that the U.S. is linking trade and militarism.

# TRADE, MIGRATION, AND WOMEN

Bama Athreya, *International Labor Rights Fund*  
Cathy Feingold, *AFL-CIO*

Small farmers in Mexico cannot compete with large corporations exporting cheap food under NAFTA, so many of them have lost their land and have been forced to migrate. This forced migration means that many families are separated. Migrant workers have been left out of the text of NAFTA under the assumption that free trade will improve living conditions for all workers and eliminate the need for workers to migrate. The FTAA, like NAFTA, could lead to painful dislocations of small farmers and other local producers of goods and services, without providing any means to assist them locally, or dealing with the additional exploitation they may face as migrants.

Migrant labor is the source of enormous profit in many industries. Increasingly, more women are choosing to migrate in order to find work. Employers often seek women migrants because of the gender stereotype that these women will be more passive, lower-cost and easier to fire. Due to restrictions placed on migration, women must often seek to migrate illegally, which makes them more vulnerable to trafficking and violation of their rights.

Today, the overwhelming majority of garment workers in the U.S. are immigrant women, as are the majority of the lowest-paid farm workers. The U.S. Department of Labor estimates that more than half of the country's 22,000 sewing shops violate minimum wage and overtime laws. Many of these workers labor in dangerous conditions including blocked fire exits, unsanitary bathrooms, and poor ventilation. In addition, workers commonly face verbal and physical abuse and are intimidated from speaking out, fearing job loss or deportation. As for migrant farm workers, they are often forced to work extremely long hours under hazardous conditions, and as whole families often migrate from Mexico to the U.S. during harvest season, child labor is also rampant in this sector.

When migrant workers are forced to seek employment in other countries, they often do not enjoy the protections of their basic rights. In the United States, the Supreme Court recently upheld that undocumented workers do not have the same rights as documented workers. In the *Hoffman Plastics* case, the Supreme Court agreed that Hoffman Plastics could deny a machine operator back pay when the company had illegally fired him for union activity. Even though the National Labor Relations Board believed he deserved 3 ½ years of back pay, the Supreme Court sided with employers and gave a blow to immigrants and their advocates throughout the United States. Now, employers can knowingly use undocumented workers and feel that they can hire and fire them with no repercussions. This strengthens the ability of employers to exploit migrant labor.

Guest workers in the health care industry have also been disadvantaged by NAFTA. Under NAFTA, hospitals were allowed to hire nurses on temporary visas with no protections for the rights of these workers. Many of these nurses are women who come from countries where there is a great shortage of qualified health care providers. In the U.S., the fact that their visa is tied to their employer weakens their ability to engage in union activities or advocate for their rights. Overall, their exploitation undercuts conditions for all nurses.

Far from being a social drain, the presence of undocumented people makes a net positive contribution to the U.S. economy. According to the National Immigration Forum, undocumented immigrants pay about \$7 billion annually in taxes. Some taxes paid by the undocumented, including \$2.7 billion annually to Social Security, and \$168 million into state unemployment benefit funds, are direct subsidies to these systems, since undocumented workers cannot by law collect any benefits for their contributions.

Trade is a major contributor to the increasing number of immigrants living in the United States and to the social and economic challenges associated with the movement of persons. As such, trade policies should be held accountable to human rights conventions that exist to ensure that individuals and their families receive just working and living conditions wherever they live. Women are increasingly migrating in search of better economic opportunities. It is important to look at the way women are affected by migration in order to develop policies that protect their rights where they live and work.

# WHAT CAN WE DO?

We find ourselves in an increasingly globalized economy of which some trends, such as technology gains, we have little control over. Yet, know that we do have choices in other areas such as how to integrate economies through a trade agreement, and that agreements such as the FTAA will have significant impacts on our lives and the lives of our sisters and brothers around the world. Trade has the potential to bring many benefits to women depending on how it is structured. Trade could be used to rectify some of the existing gender inequalities in our societies; trade could bring more opportunities to communities around the world; and trade could be used to give small producers larger markets. Yet what we see in the proposed FTAA is an agreement that affords no protections for workers, especially women; it sets rules that allow private corporations to provide our basic, essential services such as water and health; it grants corporations a multitude of rights and privileges without any correlating obligations to the communities in which they operate; and the agreement makes rules that clearly are biased toward large producers such as agribusiness.

The FTAA would only serve to entrench existing gender inequalities that leave women with unequal access to land and credit; shouldering the unpaid burden of caring for family and community needs such as childcare and healthcare; and underpaid in the formal economy as well as subject to sexual harassment and discrimination.

We can do better than this. We can demand that our governments create an agreement that will promote healthy communities and will especially work for gender equality. Women around the world are organizing and mobilizing for fair trade alternatives to the FTAA. Here are some ideas for how we can act to make the change we know is possible:

**Learn and read more about the FTAA** – The first step in understanding our global economy is taking some time to read about the proposed FTAA. To begin the process, read the *Alternatives for the Americas* (go to Alliance for Responsible Trade: <http://www.art-us.org>). You can also search your local newspapers, the internet, local libraries, and bookstores for good articles, stories, and books.

**Join a local or national organization or campaign that works to promote fair trade policies.** By joining like-minded individuals, you can use the power of numbers to change the way policy is made.

**Sign anti-FTAA post cards** – Millions of people from around the hemisphere will be delivering their vote on the proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas to trade ministers in Miami November 20 and 21<sup>st</sup>, 2003. Sign the post cards and send them to the AFL-CIO who is collecting all of the U.S. ballots (go to [www.aflcio.org/stopftaa](http://www.aflcio.org/stopftaa)).

**Educate your Members of Congress** – Members of Congress will be eventually asked to vote on the Free Trade Area of the Americas, and are currently voting on a number of smaller trade bills. Contact them to tell them that you want trade policies that are fair and that take into account the needs of women. To find the contact information for your Representatives, go to <http://www.house.gov>.

**Contact the United States Trade Representative-** The United States Trade Representative (USTR) is the government office responsible for negotiating all of the U.S. trade agreements. Contact them and let them know what you want included in the FTAA and all future trade agreements. You can find their contact information at <http://www.ustr.gov>.

**Educate your local and state elected officials/pass local resolutions** – Get your city council or County Board of Supervisors to pass a resolution in favor of a policy you support. For example, cities across the U.S. have passed resolutions opposing the proposed FTAA. Many states have passed legislation that will analyze the impact of proposed trade agreements on state governance and a state's capacity to make public health and environmental regulations.

**Write letters to the editor** – Write a letter to your paper. Your letter has the best chance of being published if it is a reaction to a story in the paper. Keep it short and concise and focus on one main point.

**Host a house party** – This is a chance to educate your friends, relatives, and neighbors. For example, many people have hosted parties to show the Bill Moyer's special entitled, *Trading Democracy*, that examines NAFTA's Chapter 11. You can order tapes at: [http://www.cwa-union.org/international/ftaa/bill\\_moyers\\_order.asp](http://www.cwa-union.org/international/ftaa/bill_moyers_order.asp).

**Buy "Fair Trade" products** – Buy fair trade coffee, tea, chocolate and other goods. Get your faith group or union to pass a resolution committing to serve fair trade coffee; tell your local supermarket to sell fair trade items; host a fair trade party, wine tasting, or chocolate tasting in order to introduce your friends to fair trade.

# Resources

## International Gender and Trade

International Gender and Trade Network - <http://www.igttn.org/>

Red de Genero y Comercio - <http://www.generoycomercio.org>

## U.S. Gender and Trade

American Friends Service Committee

<http://www.afsc.org>

Center of Concern - <http://www.coc.org>

Women's Edge - <http://www.womensedge.org>

AFL-CIO - <http://www.aflcio.org>

International Labor Rights Fund - <http://www.laborrights.org>

Development Gap - [www.developmentgap.org](http://www.developmentgap.org)

Women, Food and Agriculture - [www.wfan.org](http://www.wfan.org)

Coalition for Justice in the Maquiladoras – [www.cjm.org](http://www.cjm.org)

Alternative Women in Development, NY

## National and Regional NGO Alliances

Alliance for Responsible Trade - <http://www.art-U.S.org>

Citizen's Trade Campaign - <http://www.citizenstrade.org>

Hemispheric Social Alliance - <http://www.asc-hsa.org>

The People's Summit - <http://www.peoplessumit.org>

## Official Resources

United States Trade Representative - <http://www.ustr.gov>

The Official Page of the Free Trade Area of the Americas - <http://www.ftaa-alca.org/>

## **Who is USGTN?**

The US Gender and Trade Network (USGTN) is part of the North American region of the larger International Gender and Trade Network (IGTN). USGTN is an informal working group of women who have been meeting since 2001 to research and educate about trade liberalization and its impact on women, families, and communities in the U.S., as well as to advocate for fair trade alternatives. USGTN participates in the regional and national campaigns against the FTAA and advocates and lobbies for gender impact assessments of US trade policies. USGTN has also developed popular education materials to further women's voice on gender and trade in the US. USGTN partners with the Latin America Gender and Trade Network (LAGTN) and the Caribbean Gender and Trade Network (CAGTN) in advocating against the FTAA.

## **What are our partners doing on the FTAA in the Americas region?**

The Latin America Gender and Trade Network has undertaken diverse activities in capacity building with the women's and social movements around macroeconomics and trade along with government advocacy calling for more transparent negotiations, especially in the FTAA. The Network has published a series on gender and trade, including alternatives to the FTAA process. They organized a seminar on the FTAA in Argentina and a meeting in Rio with other women's networks in the Latin America region. They are active in researching the impacts of trade on women in Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Mexico and Uruguay. They also participate in the regional and national campaigns against the FTAA. To access their web site, go to [www.generoycomercio.org](http://www.generoycomercio.org). The Caribbean Gender and Trade Network has completed pilot studies in each of the four Windward Islands on vegetable production as an alternative to the declining banana industry. The Network has written economic literacy materials and organized workshops on the ABCs of Caribbean trade policies. CAGTN also participates in the regional and national campaigns against the FTAA.

## **What is the larger IGTN**

The International Gender and Trade Network is a network of feminist gender specialists who provide technical information on gender and trade issues to women's groups, non-governmental organizations, social movements and governments. IGTN also acts as a political catalyst to enlarge the space for a critical feminist perspective and global action on trade and globalization issues. It is a Southern-led network that builds South/North cooperation in the work of developing more just and democratic policy from a critical feminist perspective. IGTN is organized in seven regions: Africa, Asia, Caribbean, Europe, Latin American, North America, and the Pacific.

## **IGTN's Political Agenda is Fourfold:**

1. To support global and regional economic integration rules and processes that support sustainable social reproductive (care economy) work of all people, particularly women; and to oppose all rules and processes that compromise that work.
2. To monitor negotiations in order to expose and oppose undemocratic trade rules.
3. To build alternatives from a feminist perspective.
4. To work to achieve just and democratic economic policy domestically and globally.

For more info on USGTN as well as the IGTN, go to [www.igtn.org](http://www.igtn.org). To sign-up for the IGTN monthly bulletins, contact the IGTN secretariat at [secretariat@igtn.org](mailto:secretariat@igtn.org).

---

<sup>1</sup> *The Worlds Women 2000: Trends and Statistics*. United Nations: New York, 2000, p. 114.

<sup>2</sup> This refers to South/South migration within Latin America and the Caribbean as well as South/North migration from Latin America and the Caribbean to the U.S. and Canada.

Zlotnik, Hania. *The Global Dimensions of Female Migration*, March 2003.  
[www.migrationinformation.org/Feature/display.cfm?ID=109](http://www.migrationinformation.org/Feature/display.cfm?ID=109)

<sup>3</sup> Coalition of Service Industries. Remarks by Robert Vastine, President of Coalition of Service Industries to the Bogota Chamber of Commerce, Bogota, Colombia.

<sup>4</sup> Although neither the California energy crisis nor the Bolivian water crisis was related to a services agreement, they both illustrate the need for strong governmental regulations in service sectors.

<sup>5</sup> Arroyo Picard, Mtro. Alberto et. al. *Balance of North American Free Trade Agreement in Mexico: Lessons for The Free Trade Area of the Americas Negotiations*, Red Mexicana de Accion Frente al Libre Comercio, 2001.

<sup>6</sup> Kaplan, Ethan and Dani Rodrik, *Did the Malaysian Capital Controls Work?* Harvard University, February 2001.

<sup>7</sup> Kristof, Nicholas. "With Asia's Economies Shrinking, Women Are Being Squeezed Out," *New York times*, June 11, 1998.

<sup>8</sup> Hemispheric Social Alliance, *Alternatives for the Americas*. Can be downloaded at: <http://www.asc-hsa.org/>.

<sup>9</sup> Information for this section was also taken from ASYCUDA, Automated System for CU.S.toms Data. [www.asycuda.org](http://www.asycuda.org).

<sup>10</sup> "The Future of Farming". Paul D. Johnson. *Denver Post*. June 15, 2003. The Environmental Working Group.

<sup>11</sup> "Trading Away U.S. Farms." Robert E. Scott and Adam S. Hersch. September, 2001.

<sup>12</sup> "NAFTA's Impact on Mexican Agriculture: An Overview." Manuel Angel Gomez Cruz and Rita Schwentesius Rinderman. Centro de Investigaciones Economicas Sociales y Tecnologicas de la Agroindustria y la Agricultura Mundial, Programa Integracion Agricultura-Industria. Taken from *Lessons from NAFTA: The High Cost of "Free Trade."* Hemispheric Social Alliance. June, 2003, pp. 23-34.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 23-43.

<sup>14</sup> "The Future of Farming." Paul D. Johnson. *Denver Post*. June 15, 2003. The Environmental Working Group.

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.whitehoU.S.e.gov/nsc/nss.html>