

Trade-Related Capacity Building

Concept: Trade-Related Capacity Building

Author: Laura Chrabolowsky , Carleton University

Date Entered: 2005-05-05

Description Trade-Related Capacity Building is a joint initiative by International Trade Canada (ITCan) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). This initiative evolved from the Doha Declaration, where developing countries affirmed that they will continue to support progress in trade liberalization only if their interests are addressed in a more meaningful way in trade agreements and agreement implementation.

By means of this initiative, CIDA contributes to Canada's international commitment in the support and training of trade officials and the elaboration of trade policy in developing countries. The initiative critically explores the relationship between free trade and poverty alleviation within the context of multilateral trade negotiations taking place at the World Trade Organization (WTO). CIDA's strategic approach outlines the necessary additional measures to be taken by developing countries to make effective the positive effects of trade liberalization in the reduction of poverty. The specific trade-related needs are grouped into four areas:

- National trade and development policy capacity
- Trade readiness (access to information, infrastructure, and business relationships for public and private sector business)
- Effective participation in international trade agreements (developing strong and coherent negotiation position and strengthening implementation strategies)
- Business, social, and workforce adjustment programs and policies

The participation of CIDA and ITCan in the implementation of this strategy is particularly relevant within the context of globalization. Trade has been one of the first and most important vehicles for international economic integration and the negotiations taking place at the WTO have led the way to the expansion of trade into the areas of services, government procurement, intellectual property, and investment. Those negotiations have a direct impact on the capacity of states to provide the conditions for the well-being of their populations. The effects of international trade agreements on domestic policy clearly impact the autonomy of the nation-state to protect certain industries and vulnerable groups.