

COPLA (Comercio y Pobreza en Latino América)

Improving Regional Analysis and Lesson Learning Sharing to Support Pro-Poor trade Policies in Latin America

Latin America is a region with significant levels of persistent poverty. Around 57 million people continue to suffer extreme poverty and some 130 million have incomes below US\$2 per day. At current rates of poverty reduction, the region is in danger of failing to achieve the income target of Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 1, and is off-track on targets on maternal mortality, health, and environmental sustainability.

Larger trade flows offer the opportunity to increase the rate of poverty reduction directly, through increased job opportunities and reduced cost of consumption, and indirectly, by accelerating growth. However, in Latin America, increased international trade flows, brought about by liberalisation, have yet to contribute significantly to faster growth and poverty reduction. It is increasingly recognised that for the poor to benefit from trade liberalisation, complementary policies linked to trade may be needed to help the poor take advantage of new opportunities, and to protect and help the vulnerable. Furthermore, the extent to which benefits are realised and losses protected against depend on how well different stakeholders and policymakers are able to organise themselves to engage in constructive, evidence based dialogue on appropriate policy measures.

The Latin America Pro-Poor Trade (COPLA) programme will seek to support the adoption of policies that promote the reduction of poverty and inequality through trade, thereby contributing to the achievement of the MDGs. It will support the development of regional lesson learning on how pro-poor trade considerations can inform trade-related policy, and how discussions on trade and poverty issues can be made more evidence based, inclusive, and constructive.

The programme will generate case studies in 3 separate countries, and in each case focus on specific trade and poverty issues: SMEs, gender, lagging regions and indigenous groups. Programme activities will be targeted at four inter-related outputs:

1. Output 1 will, in selected countries, strengthen the capacity of civil society and representatives of the poor to be more effective in engaging in specific, evidence based, trade and poverty dialogue;
2. Output 2 will, in the selected countries, build the capacity and willingness of policy makers from relevant government departments to interact with each other and with civil society around evidence and policy on specific trade and poverty issues;
3. Output 3 will help to build constructive, evidence-based dialogue between policy makers and civil society on selected trade and poverty issues, through specific dialogue events as well as through use of local media and other channels;
4. Output 4 will learn lessons from programme activities in selected countries and communicate these regionally.

By supporting regionally the integration of pro-poor perspectives into trade and related policies, the programme will facilitate opportunities to reduce poverty through trade, benefiting potentially the 130 million people that currently live in poverty in the region.

Consortium members:

- ODI
- CIES - Consorcio de Investigación Económica y Social (PERU)
- CIPPEC - Centro de Implementación de Políticas Públicas para la Equidad y el Crecimiento / Flasco Argentina - Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (ARGENTINA)
- Nitlapán - Research and Development Institute Nitlapán of the Central American University (NICARAGUA)
- GNTP - Grupo Nacional de Trabajo para la Participación (BOLIVIA)

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<http://www.odi.org.uk/Rapid/Projects/RAP0049/Index.html>