

WTO CLAIMS PROTECTIONISM WILL WIDEN WEALTH GAP (FINANCIAL TIMES)

Financial Times
9 September 2024

Mounting protectionism threatens to unwind 30 years of progress in closing income gaps between poor and rich countries, the World Trade Organization has warned.

The WTO said in a report published on Monday that income per capita in low- and middle-income countries had almost tripled between the creation of the body in 1995 and 2023. Global income per capita had increased by a lower percentage of about 65 per cent over the same period.

WTO director-general Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala said the findings countered “the currently fashionable notion that trade, and institutions like the WTO, have not been good for poverty or for poor countries”.

However, Okonjo-Iweala acknowledged that globalisation had led to many people in rich countries feeling “left behind” and “unable to benefit from new opportunities”.

“Their frustration [has] fuelled a political backlash against international trade,” said Okonjo-Iweala on Monday.

Some believe the backlash against trade has weakened the role of international standard-setters, such as the WTO.

“Other priorities for governments are more important than [trade] predictability,” said Dmitry Grozoubski, executive director of the Geneva Trade Platform think-tank. “Increasingly, on things that governments really care about, they are beginning to obviate or straight up ignore WTO rules.”

Lawmakers in advanced economies — including the world’s largest, the US — increasingly view protectionism as a means to show that they recognise the impact that globalisation has had on manufacturing jobs closer to home.

Former US president and Republican nominee Donald Trump has promised 10 per cent tariffs on all imports, should he win a second term in November. Imports from what was once the US’s biggest trading partner, China, are set to face a levy of 60 per cent.

His successor Joe Biden has maintained many of Trump’s policies. Current US Treasury secretary Janet Yellen has said that the US has lost 2mn manufacturing jobs since China joined the WTO in 2001.

While the WTO said most workers had benefited from trade, it acknowledged there were exceptions. Those living in rural areas or without relevant skills had become more vulnerable to trade-related job losses.

States in the US rustbelt such as Michigan, which industrialised early, have suffered a dramatic loss of export trade since the 1970s, while southern states have thrived. Carmakers and others have invested there because land and workers are cheaper.

The WTO director-general argued that protectionism was not an effective policy to correct inequalities, noting that trade restrictions can hurt economies as they tend to raise production costs, while “inviting costly retaliation from disgruntled trading partners”.

Research from the Peterson Institute estimates that Trump’s proposed tariffs will cost the average US household \$1,700 a year, with poorer households facing an even higher burden. The UK’s exit from the EU single market brought about a 6 per cent jump in food prices. The increase in the cost of living for the poorest households was 52 per cent higher than for the richest households, according to a study cited by the WTO.

"We need open trade, [...] but we also need complementary policies," said Ralph Ossa, chief economist at the WTO. "If you want to help workers, you need to make sure that you have the domestic policies in place that help them move towards opportunity."

HIGHER TARIFFS TO HIT POOREST COUNTRIES HARD, UNLIKELY TO PROTECT JOBS, WTO SAYS (WALL STREET JOURNAL)

Wall Street Journal
Paul Hannon
9 September 2024

Increased protectionism will hit the world's poorest countries hardest, and is a costly and counterproductive way of protecting jobs in rich countries, the World Trade Organization said Monday as it called for a period of "reglobalization" to reduce global inequality.

Barriers to trade have been creeping higher for the better part of a decade, including the broad-based tariffs introduced by Donald Trump in 2018 and the U.K.'s decision to leave the European Union two years earlier, with recent actions including measures targeting Chinese-made electric vehicles. Seeking a second term in November presidential elections, Trump is advocating for a ramp-up in tariffs to hit all imports to the U.S.

Ahead of its annual public forum, the WTO made the argument for free trade in a new report, citing its transformative role in lowering poverty and income inequality. Between 1995 and 2022, the WTO estimated that the share of poor and middle-income economies in global trade grew to 38% from 21%, while the share of trade between those economies in world trade almost quadrupled, increasing to 19% in 2021 from 5% in 1995.

During that period, income per person in poor and middle-income countries tripled, the WTO said.

"These are difficult times for globalization," said Ralph Ossa, the WTO's chief economist. "What is really important to do is change the narrative."

Support in rich countries for higher tariffs goes back to the "China shock" of the early 2000s, when a boom in imports of cheap, Chinese-made goods helped keep inflation low but at the cost of some manufacturing jobs in the U.S. and elsewhere.

Higher tariffs appeared to some to be a way of protecting the manufacturing jobs that remained. More recently, barriers to trade have been presented as a way of ensuring economic resilience, particularly after the disruptions to supply chains caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Growing geopolitical tensions have also been cited as a justification for protectionist measures, as a way of reducing reliance on hostile or potentially hostile countries for key goods.

Some economists see a simpler explanation for the greater political appeal of protectionist measures.

"Individuals who see their relative economic and social status in decline inevitably want to place the blame somewhere," economists at UBS wrote in a recent report on the U.S. election. "The simple solution is to find a scapegoat, but in the world of scapegoat economics, some unfortunately see foreigners as one of the easiest groups to blame."

Whatever their justification, the WTO said increased barriers to trade will hurt poor countries most, since they rely on foreign investment and the trade it generates for access to better technology.

"Continued fragmentation of the global economy under geopolitical pressures would disproportionately impact low-income economies, which are furthest from the technological frontier and rely on access to foreign markets for sustained catch-up growth," the WTO said.

While it is widely accepted that globalization helped reduce the income gap between rich and poorer countries, some economists assert that it widened the gap between rich and poor within countries.

But looking at the data on trade and inequality within countries around the world over recent decades, the WTO found that there isn't a strong, uniform link.

"There is no correlation," said Ossa. "Trade does generate winners and losers, but it's hard to make generalizable statements."

The WTO acknowledged that some people in rich countries lost their jobs or felt left behind during the period of globalization that it wishes to revive. But it argued that barriers to trade are the wrong way to try to fix those problems, and can often force some workers to lose their jobs so that others might keep theirs.

"Restricting trade is typically an expensive way to protect jobs for specific groups within society, and can raise production costs, while inviting costly retaliation from disgruntled trading partners," said Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, the WTO's director general.

Instead of raising barriers, the WTO said governments should help workers acquire new skills that are in high demand, and make it easier for them to move to locations where new jobs are being created.

"If you want to help, the more promising approach is to help workers move towards opportunity," Ossa said.

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TARIFFS TEND TO HIT THE POOR HARDER, WTO SAYS (REUTERS)

9 September 2024

Reuters News

By Philip Blenkinsop

BRUSSELS (Reuters) - Import tariffs tend to disproportionately hit low-income households, the World Trade Organization said in a report on Monday, countering what it sees as backlash against open markets and rising protectionism.

WTO Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala said the 2024 World Trade Report reaffirmed trade's role in reducing poverty and sharing prosperity "contrary to the currently fashionable notion" that trade was creating a more unequal world.

Globally, restrictive trade policies often have a disproportionate impact on low-income households, women and on smaller companies that may struggle with increased fixed costs of trade, the WTO report said.

The United States is poised to hike tariffs on a range of Chinese imports, including a quadrupling of the rate for electric vehicles, while Canada has matched the U.S. EV rate and the European Union had introduced its own EV duties.

China has responded with investigations into EU dairy, pork and brandy imports and canola from Canada.

U.S. presidential candidate Donald Trump has proposed a 10% tariff on all imports and a higher rate for those from China.

The WTO report said that on the whole, low-income households typically faced a greater burden from higher tariffs.

In the United States, consumer goods from China that are now exempt from import tariffs are predominantly shipped to low-income regions, benefiting poorer households.

Richer households consume a greater share of imports from high-income economies, the WTO report said.

Protectionist policies may fail, the report said, because they often lead to higher domestic prices that reduce consumption. They may also lead to damaging retaliation by trading partners.

Tariffs then prove politically hard to remove even when no protection for a sector is needed, locking in higher prices.

The WTO report concludes that protectionism is not an effective path to inclusiveness, but an expensive way to protect specific jobs that can raise costs for other sectors and risk retaliation from disgruntled partners.

WTO WARNS NATIONS THAT PROTECTIONISM MAY WIDEN RICH-POOR GAP (BLOOMBERG)

By Brendan Murray / Bloomberg
09 Sep 2024, 11:07 pm

(Sept 9): The World Trade Organization (WTO) urged governments to resist tariffs and other barriers to international commerce, arguing that protectionism risks undoing three decades of unprecedented progress in narrowing the gap between rich and poor nations.

The WTO report offers a staunch defence of globalisation at a time when some of its pillars — low tariffs and rule enforcement — are under attack. Former president Donald Trump has vowed to put tariffs on all US imports if he returns to the White House, a move that WTO director-general Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala has cautioned would spark a “free-for-all” of instability and uncertainty for companies.

“Restricting trade is typically an expensive way to protect jobs for specific groups within society” Okonjo-Iweala wrote in the foreword of the new report. It can “raise production costs, while inviting costly retaliation from disgruntled trading partners.”

Between 1995 and 2023, global per-capita income adjusted for inflation rose by about 65%, helping reduce the share of people classified as poorest of the poor to 10.6% from 40.3%, the Geneva-based WTO said in a report released on Monday. Still, 712 million people globally lived in extreme poverty in 2022, it said.

With such mixed success, some leaders have questioned whether free trade governed by rules at the WTO spreads economic benefits fairly, leading to waves of tariffs and export controls from some of the organisation’s founding members.

“A more promising path towards a global economy that works for everyone lies in what we at the WTO have been calling ‘re-globalisation’ – bringing more economies and communities from the margins to the mainstream of the global economy by helping them attract more trade-oriented investment,” according to Okonjo-Iweala.

But the WTO chief, whose five-year term expires on Aug 31 next year, said trade alone can’t close the world’s income disparities.

“Countries need to act to ensure that as many of their citizens as possible can benefit from the opportunities created by open and rules-based international markets — or are, at least, cushioned against the downsides” of technological change or import competition, she said.

WTO WARNS TRADE TARIFFS MORE LIKELY TO HIT POORER PEOPLE (TELEGRAPH)

The Daily Telegraph
10 September 2024

Import tariffs tend to disproportionately hit low-income households, a World Trade Organisation (WTO) report has warned.

Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, director general of the WTO, said the report reaffirmed trade's role in reducing poverty and sharing prosperity "contrary to the currently fashionable notion" that trade was creating a more unequal world.

The WTO report said that low-income households typically faced a greater burden from higher tariffs.

In the US, consumer goods from China that are now exempt from import tariffs benefit poorer households. Richer households consume more imports from high-income economies, the report added.

WTO SAYS TRADE ALONE WON'T BRIDGE GAP BETWEEN ECONOMIES (AFP)

By AFP - Agence France Presse
September 9, 2024

The World Trade Organization said Monday that open trade alone was not enough to reduce inequalities between wealthy and developing nations and more was needed to help poorer countries.

The WTO's 2024 report on global trade looked at the role that commerce has played to narrow the gap between economies since its creation in 1995.

"Perhaps the biggest takeaway from the report is its reaffirmation of trade's transformative role in reducing poverty and creating shared prosperity," WTO Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala said in the foreword.

This conclusion, she added, runs "contrary to the currently fashionable notion that trade, and institutions like the WTO, have not been good for poverty or for poor countries, and are creating a more unequal world".

"But the second biggest takeaway is that there is much more we can do to make trade and the WTO work better for economies and people left behind during the past 30 years of globalisation," Okonjo-Iweala said.

The report found that low- and middle-income economies tend to engage less in international trade, receive less foreign direct investment and depend more on commodities.

They also export fewer "complex products" and "trade with fewer partners", the WTO said.

"Protectionism, the report demonstrates, is not an effective path to inclusiveness," Okonjo-Iweala said, warning that it can raise production costs and invite "costly retaliation from disgruntled trading partners".

WTO chief economist Ralph Ossa added: "Less trade will not promote inclusiveness, nor will trade alone."

"True inclusiveness demands a comprehensive strategy -- one that integrates open trade with supportive domestic policies and robust international cooperation," Ossa said.

The report said domestic policies that are needed to make trade more inclusive include vocational training, unemployment benefits and "education for a more skilled and mobile workforce".

It also called for "competition policy to ensure consumers benefit from lower prices, reliable infrastructure, and well-functioning financial markets".

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WTO SAYS WORLD TRADE ALONE DOES NOT HELP AGAINST POVERTY (DPA)

9 September 2024
dpa International Service in English

Geneva (dpa) - The World Trade Organization (WTO) admits that not all countries and not all members of society benefit from trade and economic development.

Nevertheless, according to the World Trade Report 2024, which was published on Monday, global trade has contributed to poverty reduction in many countries.

In absolute terms, however, global income inequality is practically the same as it was just over 100 years ago, the WTO writes, referring to the 2022 Global Inequality Report. In 1910, the income of the richest 10% of the world's population was 41 times higher than that of the bottom 50%. In 2020, it was 38 times higher.

The WTO says global trade offers opportunities, but they must be flanked by social measures and international cooperation. Education and training opportunities, unemployment benefits, a competition policy to lower prices, a reliable infrastructure and well-functioning financial markets are all needed.

According to the WTO, on average, the per capita income of low- and middle-income countries tripled between 1995 and 2023 after adjusting for inflation, while the global average only increased by 65%. The trend has slowed since the 2007/2008 financial crisis, and the coronavirus pandemic has reversed it.

Overall, the World Bank categorizes around 130 countries with low and medium incomes, including China.

OMC ENFATIZA PAPEL DEL COMERCIO EXTERIOR PARA REDUCIR DIFERENCIAS DE INGRESOS ENTRE PAÍSES (EFE)

Ginebra, 9 sep (EFE).- La Organización Mundial del Comercio (OMC) presentó este lunes un análisis con datos que indican que el comercio exterior ha tenido un papel importante a la hora de reducir las diferencias de ingresos entre las economías menos avanzadas y las más desarrolladas.

Esta conclusión se contrapone con la noción de que el comercio e instituciones como la OMC no han ayudado a revertir la pobreza o a que los países de menores recursos progresen, subraya el informe anual de la organización, que este año está dedicado a esta cuestión.

El informe muestra datos sobre el vínculo entre la participación en el comercio y la reducción de las disparidades de ingresos entre las economías.

Por ejemplo se constata que la elevada participación del comercio en el PIB entre 1996 y 2021 está relacionada con un crecimiento más rápido de las economías de ingreso bajo y medio, indicó la OMC.

En esta línea, se destaca también que la pertenencia a la OMC y a su predecesor, el Acuerdo General sobre Aranceles Aduaneros y Comercio (GATT), ha impulsado el comercio entre los Estados miembros en un 140 por ciento.

Asimismo, las economías que son objeto de negociaciones para entrar en la organización crecen a un ritmo 1,5 % superior a la media durante su período de adhesión.

Por otra parte, el informe indica que las reducciones de los costos del comercio entre 1995 y 2020 hicieron que los países en desarrollo redujeran entre un 20 % y un 35 % más rápido la distancia entre sus ingresos con los de los países más ricos.

Por todo ello, los economistas de la OMC hacen hincapié en el estudio en la necesidad de que los países tengan una estrategia que combine comercio abierto con políticas internas de apoyo a la formación profesional, prestaciones de desempleo y una política de competencia que permita que los consumidores se beneficien de precios más bajos.

Se destaca igualmente la importancia de infraestructuras fiables y de mercados financieros que funcionen bien. EFE
is/jgb

GEOPOLITICAL TENSIONS, DIGITAL REVOLUTION, CLIMATE CHANGE RESHAPE DEVELOPMENT: WTO (XINHUA)

Source: XinhuaEditor: huaxia2024-09-09 23:43:16

GENEVA, Sept. 9 (Xinhua) -- Emerging global trends such as geopolitical tensions, digital revolution and climate change are reshaping the landscape of trade-led development, the World Trade Organization (WTO) said in a flagship report released on Monday.

In the 2024 edition of the "World Trade Report," the WTO estimated that global factors such as geopolitical tensions, regional conflicts and trade sanctions have impacted the stable foundation of world economic growth in the past 30 years, potentially leading to trade fragmentation.

On the other hand, the increased capital and skill intensity of modern manufacturing has reduced the scope for manufacturing-led growth in low-income economies. Meanwhile, climate change poses even greater challenges, particularly for these nations.

However, the report also emphasized new opportunities brought by these global trends. For instance, developing economies can lower trade costs through digitalization, pivot toward service-led growth, or seize the demand for renewable resources in the global green transformation to achieve development.

WTO Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala delivers a speech during the 12th China Round Table on WTO Accessions held in Abu Dhabi, the United Arab Emirates, Feb. 25, 2024. (WTO/Handout via Xinhua)

The report presented strong evidence that trade has played a crucial role in narrowing income disparities among economies since the WTO was established 30 years ago.

"Perhaps the biggest takeaway from the report is its reaffirmation of trade's transformative role in reducing poverty and creating shared prosperity," WTO Director General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala said in her foreword to the report.

"But the second biggest takeaway is that there is much more we can do to make trade and the WTO work better for economies and people left behind during the past 30 years of globalization," she added.

The report noted that between 1996 and 2021, a high trade share of GDP was strongly linked to faster growth in low- and middle-income economies, helping them narrow the gap in GDP per capita with high-income economies.

The WTO highlighted the need for supportive domestic policies such as vocational training, unemployment benefits, education for a more skilled and mobile workforce, and competition policy to ensure consumers benefit from lower prices, as well as reliable infrastructure, and well-functioning financial markets.

William Widjaja (2nd L), the procurement director of Indonesia's retailer Kawan Lama Group, visits the booth of a supplier during the 135th session of the China Import and Export Fair in Guangzhou, south China's Guangdong Province, April 16, 2024. (Xinhua/Liu Dawei)

It urged the reduction of trade costs, the bridging of the digital divide, and updates to the WTO rulebook to account for the increasing significance of trade in services, and digital and green sectors.

The report also calls for better coordination among international organizations, since this could help leverage synergies between trade policies and complementary policies, and boost inclusiveness across and within economies. ■

TRADE PART OF SOLUTION BUT NOT ENOUGH FOR INCLUSIVE GLOBAL ECONOMY: WTO REPORT (HINDU BUSINESSLINE)

Amiti Sen
9 September 2024

Trade is part of the solution for a more resilient and inclusive global economy, but trade alone may not be enough, per 'World Trade Report 2024' released by the WTO.

"...complementary policies are essential to enable individuals and firms to move to where the gains from trade are, and to share the gains from trade more evenly. Such complementary policies may cover various aspects of the economy, including financial, labour, energy and housing markets," the report shared by the WTO on Monday noted. The report focusses on 'Trade and inclusiveness: How to make trade work for all'.

Trade challenges

The report pushed for efforts by member countries to address evolving trade challenges in digital trade, green trade and in the services sector, to "seize opportunities" for convergence and inclusiveness through digital and environmental transformation.

Highlighting the trade convergence that took place since the WTO was established, the report pointed out that between 1995 and 2022, the share of low and middle-income economies in global trade grew from 21 per cent to 38 per cent, while the share of trade between developing economies in world trade almost quadrupled, increasing from 5 per cent in 1995 to 19 per cent in 2021.

However, this convergence process slowed since the global financial crisis, as the average share of trade in GDP of low- and middle-income economies has remained relatively constant. "Economic convergence even went into reverse during the Covid-19 pandemic, which hit growth in poorer economies hardest," the report highlighted.

The report produced data suggesting a strong link between trade participation and the narrowing of income disparities among economies. From 1996 to 2021, a high trade share in GDP is significantly correlated to faster growth in low- and middle-income economies, converging to the level of GDP per capita in high-income economies, it stated.

"Perhaps the biggest takeaway from the report is its reaffirmation of trade's transformative role in reducing poverty and creating shared prosperity — contrary to the currently fashionable notion that trade, and institutions like the WTO, have not been good for poverty or for poor countries, and are creating a more unequal world," WTO Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala said in her foreword to the report.

But much more needed to be done to make trade and the WTO work better for economies and people left behind during the past 30 years of globalisation, she added.

Proactive role

The report suggested that the WTO could play a more proactive role in facilitating the implementation of existing WTO agreements, such as the Trade Facilitation Agreement, which would unlock significant potential gains for developing economies.

It advocated restoration of an effective and fully functioning dispute settlement mechanism as binding commitments significantly reduce trade policy uncertainty, which in turn increases investments and fosters growth.

It also made a case for efforts to address evolving trade challenges in digital trade, green trade and in the services sector.

(The writer is in Geneva at the invitation of WTO)

PROTECTIONISM WON'T MAKE TRADE MORE "INCLUSIVE," WTO SAYS (POLITICO)

By Doug Palmer · Sep 9, 2024, 4:56 PM

Not everyone has benefited equally from trade, but that's not a good reason to erect trade barriers, the World Trade Organization said in its annual report.

“Protectionism, the report demonstrates, is not an effective path to inclusiveness,” WTO Director General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala says in an introduction. “Restricting trade is typically an expensive way to protect jobs for specific groups within society, and can raise production costs, while inviting costly retaliation from disgruntled trading partners.”

The theme of the report, “Trade and Inclusiveness: How to make trade work for all,” is essentially the same as the one for this week’s WTO Public Forum, though the title for that annual event is “Re-Globalization: Better Trade for a Better World.”

Shifting U.S. landscape: Both sound similar to the Biden administration’s “worker-centered” trade policy, which puts increased weight on the views of organized labor and others who have felt left out of the U.S. trade policymaking process.

The inclusiveness theme is less in line with Trump’s policies, which are driven more by the perception that other countries cheat and take advantage of the United States and that the WTO trading system also is badly tilted in those other countries’ favor.

However, since Trump’s presidency, both Republicans and Democrats also have put much greater emphasis on U.S. security concerns related to trade, particularly in regard to China. Biden has also maintained Trump’s protectionist tariffs on Chinese goods and steel and aluminum and avoided new tariff-cutting agreements.

Against that backdrop, the report said its “main conclusion is that reducing trade would diminish opportunities for growth and inclusiveness, but relying solely on trade and trade policy would not fully capture these opportunities.”

What countries should do: That means “complementary domestic policies are required to make trade more inclusive,” the report said.

In other words, Okonjo-Iweala writes, “countries need to act to ensure that as many of their citizens as possible can benefit from the opportunities created by open and rules-based international markets — or are, at least, cushioned against the downsides of economic change, whether these are due to technological change or to increased import competition.”

“This means investing in education and infrastructure, maintaining an appropriate competitive environment, implementing effective adjustment and redistribution policies including active and passive labor market support, avoiding a race to the bottom on taxation, and so forth,” she said.

Putting in a good word for trade: Meanwhile, the report emphasizes the positive contribution that trade has made since the WTO came into existence nearly 30 years ago on Jan. 1, 1995.

“Trade has played a significant role in reducing poverty, especially in low- and middle-income economies,” the report said. “Trade has raised incomes and led to higher growth, resulting in significant benefits for some of the most vulnerable groups within economies.”

WTO: COMPLEMENTARY DOMESTIC POLICIES NEEDED TO MAKE TRADE MORE INCLUSIVE (INSIDE US TRADE)

By Hannah Monicken / September 9, 2024 at 1:40 PM

Trade policy alone cannot ensure that the benefits of global trade are widespread, the World Trade Organization says in its latest annual report, calling for complementary domestic policies – such as those that facilitate labor force movement, improve digital connectivity and foster education opportunities – while warning that protectionist policies will not improve inclusiveness.

The WTO’s 2024 World Trade Report, released on Monday and titled “Trade and Inclusiveness: How to make trade work for all,” argues that while trade in recent decades has proven highly effective at reducing poverty and spurring development, some countries – and some people within other countries – have not shared in those benefits.

“Trade has proven to be a powerful driver of inclusiveness,” WTO Chief Economist Ralph Ossa told reporters on Monday at a press conference focused on the report. According to the report, per capita

incomes in low- and middle-income countries tripled and the global share of people living in extreme poverty has fallen from 37.5 percent in 1995, when the WTO was established, to 9 percent in 2022.

However, Ossa added, “too many economies and people are still left behind.” The report points to two types of economies that largely have not benefited: Those with low levels of trade participation and those highly dependent on a specific commodity, frequently to the exclusion of economic diversification. In addition, the report says income inequality is a key reason why some populations fail to benefit from trade and cites the U.S. as an example.

“On average, income inequality has slightly declined over the past 30 years, but it remains high in absolute terms, and some large economies face rising inequality,” the report says. “However, the global average hides that some of the largest economies in the world, including China, Japan and the United States, saw steep increases in inequality in the 1990s and 2000s.”

Accordingly, “although trade is part of the solution for a more resilient and inclusive global economy, trade alone may not be enough,” the report adds. “A more inclusive global economy requires policies that reduce the barriers and obstacles that currently prevent marginalized individuals, firms, regions and economies from participating fully in and benefitting from global markets.”

Inclusiveness has been a priority for the Biden administration and is a concern frequently cited by U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai and incorporated by her agency in various trade talks. One of the main ways in which the U.S. has aimed to promote inclusiveness globally is its effort to diversify supply chains – with a particular focus on critical industries like semiconductors and critical minerals and certain regions like Latin America and Southeast Asia, through initiatives like the Indo-Pacific Economic Partnership for Prosperity and the Americas Partnership for Economic Prosperity.

Asked whether such regional nearshoring and friend-shoring efforts work against broader global inclusiveness, Ossa said no – to a point.

“Diversification, I think, is a good thing. The concern that we have with fragmentation is that it basically undermines to some extent the inclusiveness or the comprehensiveness, let’s say, of this diversification strategy,” he said. “We also see [diversification] unfolding and would also even view it for the countries that are maybe then part of these regional supply chains as a great opportunity for development.”

“So, you know, I think there’s nothing wrong with it,” he added. “We just have to make sure it has to stay broad enough and inclusive enough.”

The report also warns that protectionism – for instance, export restrictions and high tariffs – are counterproductive to promoting inclusiveness.

“Trade protection for specific groups in a given industry can raise the production costs for other sectors that rely on protected but more expensive goods or inputs whether produced domestically or imported,” it says.

Ossa similarly argued that raising tariffs can end up affecting low-income people as well as low-income countries’ exports.

The Biden administration has undertaken some domestic policies that the WTO likely would classify as protectionist. (Neither the report nor Ossa spoke to individual country policies.)

Most notably, the administration is set to raise tariffs on a number of Chinese products and has implemented industrial policy plans – like the Inflation Reduction Act – that restrict who can benefit from certain incentives.

Additionally, former President Trump, the Republican presidential nominee, has proposed a 10 to 20 percent across-the-board tariff – and potentially higher duties on goods from China or other countries he says do not treat U.S. products fairly.

Instead, the WTO report urges domestic policies that facilitate further trade participation or remove barriers that keep people and businesses from benefiting.

In particular, the report cites a need for digital connectivity and digital infrastructure to facilitate broader digital trade. Additionally, countries can support workers who have been negatively affected by trade with “a mix of labour market adjustment, competitiveness and compensation policies” such as unemployment benefits, vocational training and competition policy that reins in “excessive market power of certain large firms,” it says.

The authors also advocate for access to education for a skilled workforce and “[i]ncreasing the participation of vulnerable groups in the decision-making process.”

“Maintaining open and predictable rules-based trade should be part of any country’s path to greater inclusiveness,” WTO Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala said in a foreword, urging policymakers to “take to heart the lessons from this report.”

“There is no substitute for complementary domestic policies: to make trade work for more people, the wider economy needs to work for everyone,” she added.

She also called for “renewed political support” for multilateral cooperation, echoing the report, which says international cooperation can support inclusiveness alongside open global trade and complementary domestic policies. It cites efforts within the WTO and with other international organizations. -- Hannah Monicken (hmonicken@iwpnews.com)

OMC MOSTRA O BRASIL ATRASADO NA CONVERGÊNCIA COM OS RICOS (VALOR)

Por Assis Moreira, Valor — Genebra

A Organização Mundial do

Comércio (OMC) mostra como o Brasil está atrasado na tentativa de convergência para um nível de renda por habitante das economias desenvolvidas, quando comparado a emergentes como China e Índia. Em seu ‘Relatório sobre o Comércio Mundial 2024’ publicado nesta segunda-feira, a entidade global aponta um ‘vínculo estreito’ entre a participação no comércio global e a redução das disparidades de renda entre as economias.

Pesquisa focada no período indo de 1996 a 2021 conclui que uma parte importante do comércio no Produto Interno Bruto (PIB) está correlacionada de ‘maneira significativa’ a um crescimento mais rápido nas economias de renda baixa ou média, e portanto convergindo na direção de um nível de PIB por habitante de economias de renda alta.

A redução

A redução de custos comerciais entre 1995 e 2020 resultou numa convergência de renda de 20% a 35% mais rápida dos países de renda baixa ou média com as economias desenvolvidas.

Ou seja, para a OMC até um terço dessa convergência pode ser atribuída a redução nos custos comerciais. E isso teria tido impacto na vida de milhões de pessoas. Argumenta que a parcela de pessoas vivendo na extrema pobreza em economias de renda baixa e média caiu de 40% para cerca de 11% desde 1995, enquanto a participação do comércio no PIB desses países dobrou de 16% para 32%.

Hoje, constata a OMC, o Brasil, China, Indonésia e outros países em desenvolvimento fazem quase 60% do PIB mundial, enquanto a fatia das economias desenvolvidas fica agora em cerca de 40%. Nos últimos 15 anos, a China sozinha fez 35% do crescimento nominal do PIB mundial, comparado a 27% no caso dos EUA.

O relatório menciona ‘evidências empíricas’ de que reforma unilateral do comércio em economias em desenvolvimento, como corte de tarifas de importação, resultaram em reforço do crescimento econômico entre 1 e 1,5 ponto percentual, resultando ‘potencialmente’ em uma renda entre 10% a 20% maior em mais de uma década.

No entanto, nota a OMC, a convergência de renda tem sido desigual, deixando algumas economias para trás. Um terço dos países de baixa e média renda, representando 13% da população global, cresceu mais

lentamente do que a média das economias desenvolvidas, o que levou à divergência e não à convergência.

Essas 'economias divergentes' estão localizadas principalmente na África, na América Latina, no Caribe e no Oriente Médio – e o Brasil entre elas.

O fosso (gap) de participação comercial é a fatia do comércio de bens e serviços no PIB, ajustada pelo tamanho do país, expressa como uma diferença percentual em relação à média do grupo de renda. A velocidade de convergência da renda é o crescimento anualizado da renda real per capita entre 1996 e 2021, expresso como a diferença do crescimento médio nas economias desenvolvidas.

O Brasil aparece na pesquisa da OMC com uma participação média no comércio abaixo da média de seu grupo de renda (renda média alta), refletindo uma economia que continua relativamente fechada.

Enquanto o crescimento do PIB da Índia chega a 4% na média e da China cerca de 7% acima da média dos países ricos entre 1996-2021, a posição do Brasil fica abaixo de zero, ou seja, é negativa nesse período, como nota o economista José-Antonio Monteiro, coordenador do relatório.

Sinaliza uma economia menos aberta que vários outros países de renda média alta. O México aparece um pouco mais integrado no comércio mundial.

Diz Monteiro: 'Para poder convergir (em direção do nível de renda dos países desenvolvidos), é preciso ter crescimento mais elevado que dos países ricos. E no caso do Brasil, sua taxa de crescimento nesse período foi mais ou menos a mesma daquela dos países ricos. Assim, em termos de convergência econômica é claro que o Brasil está atrasado em relação a outros, como China e Índia, que tem taxa de convergência muito mais elevadas'.

A pesquisa mostra que, embora cada economia divergente tenha suas características exclusivas, elas geralmente podem ser agrupadas em duas categorias. Três quartos dessas economias têm níveis de participação comercial abaixo da média de seu grupo de renda. O quarto restante, apesar de ter uma participação comercial relativamente alta, é predominantemente especializado em exportações de commodities. Consequentemente, o relatório identifica a baixa participação comercial e a alta dependência de commodities como fatores de risco críticos relacionados ao comércio para a divergência econômica.

Como destaca Ralph Ossa, economista-chefe da OMC, os altos custos comerciais são um dos principais motivos da baixa participação comercial observada em algumas economias divergentes. Isso decorre, em parte, das políticas comerciais, incluindo os altos custos de conformidade associados às normas estrangeiras e a implementação incompleta de medidas de facilitação do comércio. E fatores internos, como infraestrutura física subdesenvolvida e serviços de infraestrutura ineficientes, desempenham um papel significativo no impedimento do comércio.

As economias ricas em recursos geralmente enfrentam dificuldades para diversificar além de sua principal commodity de exportação - um desafio comumente chamado de "Doença Holandesa".

Mas, insiste Ossa, a integração comercial não está fortemente correlacionada com a desigualdade de renda; ela aumenta a desigualdade de renda em algumas economias e a reduz em outras.

Uma abordagem mais útil, ao seu ver, é examinar como os ganhos do comércio são compartilhados de forma justa.

Para ele, um componente crucial, porém negligenciado, dos ganhos do comércio são os benefícios para o consumidor decorrentes dos preços mais baixos e da maior variedade de produtos. Diz que pesquisas mostram que esses ganhos beneficiam desproporcionalmente as famílias de baixa renda.

A avaliação na OMC é de que o que realmente impede uma distribuição justa dos ganhos com o comércio são alguns obstáculos para os trabalhadores buscarem novas oportunidades. Ossa menciona estudos indicando que os custos para os trabalhadores mudarem de setor ou

ocupação após choques comerciais podem chegar a várias vezes o seu salário anual.

O relatório insiste na necessidade de uma estratégia global que integre a abertura comercial e políticas nacionais de apoio para tornar o comércio mais inclusivo, por exemplo envolvendo formação profissional, ajuda ao emprego, educação e mobilidade da mão-de-obra, política de concorrência para fazer com que os consumidores se beneficiem de preços menos elevados, infraestrutura confiável e bom funcionamento dos mercados financeiros.

Ou seja, menos comércio não promoverá a inclusão, nem o comércio por si só. A verdadeira inclusão exige uma estratégia abrangente, que integre o comércio aberto com políticas domésticas complementares e cooperação internacional eficaz.

O relatório ressalta a importância da coerência das políticas. Constata que os complexos desafios "comerciais" hoje, impulsionados por megatendências como a mudança climática, a transformação digital e as tensões geopolíticas, exigem uma colaboração multilateral - que está longe de existir no momento.

Também insiste na importância do comércio digital para economias menos integradas, mas também para micro, pequenas e médias empresas e mulheres. De acordo com as estimativas da OMC, as exportações globais de serviços prestados digitalmente atingiram US\$ 4,25 trilhões em 2023, um aumento de 9,0% em relação ao ano anterior, e representando 13,8% das exportações mundiais de bens e serviços.

LA OMC ASEGURA QUE CASI EL 30% DEL EMPLEO GLOBAL DEPENDE DE LAS EXPORTACIONES EN PLENA GUERRA ARANCELARIA (EL PAIS)

9 September 2024

La organización advierte de que blindar una industria de fabricantes extranjeros dispara los costes de producción de otros sectores nacionales

En un contexto de creciente proteccionismo y guerras arancelarias, el comercio internacional continúa siendo un pilar fundamental para el empleo global. Casi el 30% de los empleos mundiales dependientes de las exportaciones, según el informe de 2024 sobre el comercio mundial, publicado este lunes por la Organización Mundial del Comercio (OMC).

Paywalled: [La OMC asegura que casi el 30% del empleo global depende de las exportaciones en plena guerra arancelaria | Economía | EL PAÍS \(elpais.com\)](#)

LES ÉCARTS DE RICHESSES DANS LE MONDE SE COMBLENT (LES ECHOS)

Par Richard HIAULT

Publié le 9 sept. 2024

Vous voulez enrichir la population ? Faites du commerce et investissez. C'est ce qu'a fait la Corée du Sud. En 1953, ce pays asiatique affichait un PIB par habitant de 67 dollars, ce qui en faisait l'un des pays les plus pauvres du monde. En 2023, il s'était hissé à plus de 34.000 dollars, soit un niveau équivalent à celui de l'Union européenne. La Chine est évidemment un autre exemple spectaculaire. En 1990, le pays ne représentait que 7 % du PIB des Etats-Unis. En 2022, ce taux atteignait 73 %. Le revenu par habitant chinois d'environ 13.000 dollars aujourd'hui, représente environ 17 % du revenu par habitant des Etats-Unis. Il était de moins de 2 % en 1990.

Ces résultats mirifiques ont été permis par le développement du commerce mondial. Tel est le message, sans surprise, de l'Organisation mondiale du commerce (OMC) dans son rapport annuel sur le commerce mondial, publié lundi. « Le principal message à retenir est le rôle transformateur du commerce dans la réduction de la pauvreté et la création d'une prospérité partagée, contrairement à l'idée actuellement en vogue selon laquelle le commerce et les institutions telles que l'OMC [...] engendrent un monde plus inégalitaire », assène la Directrice Générale de l'Organisation, Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, en préambule du document. A voir.

Il existe de « solides éléments de preuve du rôle essentiel qu'a joué le commerce pour ce qui est de réduire l'écart de revenus entre les économies », indique le document. «La part de la population vivant dans l'extrême pauvreté dans les économies à revenu faible et intermédiaire est passée de 40 % à environ 11 % depuis 1995, tandis que la part du commerce dans le PIB de ces économies a doublé, passant d'environ 16 % à 32 %», a commenté l'économiste en chef de l'OMC, Ralph Ossa, lors d'un point presse, lundi.

Entre 1995 et 2023, le revenu mondial par habitant a augmenté d'environ 65 % tandis que le revenu par habitant des pays pauvres et en développement a presque triplé. «Nos estimations suggèrent que jusqu'à un tiers de cette convergence peut être attribué à la réduction des coûts du commerce», a encore souligné Ralph Ossa.

Convergence des richesses

La mondialisation a donc favorisé cette « Grande Convergence » des richesses grâce à la baisse des coûts de transport et de communication, mais aussi à la diminution des barrières commerciales et à l'augmentation de la coopération économique. Les tarifs douaniers ont en effet chuté de près de 40 % après la Seconde Guerre mondiale. Ils ont diminué de plus des deux tiers au cours des trois dernières décennies, passant de 6,9 % en 1996 à 2 % en 2022.

Dans les années 1980, la France, le Japon, le Royaume-Uni, les Etats-Unis et d'autres économies développées représentaient plus de 60 % du PIB mondial. Aujourd'hui, la situation s'est inversée : le Brésil, la Chine, l'Indonésie et d'autres économies en développement totalisent près de 60 % du PIB mondial et les économies développées un peu plus de 40 %.

Néanmoins, tous les pays ne sont pas à la même enseigne. Tous ne se sont pas insérés dans le commerce mondial. Un tiers des pays pauvres et en développement (13 % de la population mondiale) est resté au bord du chemin. Ces pays se concentrent au Moyen-Orient, en Afrique du Nord, en Afrique subsaharienne et en Amérique latine. En réalité, la convergence est valable surtout pour les économies asiatiques et européennes. D'où vient le problème ?

L'investissement des multinationales

Il est à rechercher directement au niveau des investissements étrangers. Il ne faut pas se leurrer, la participation au commerce et la diversification économique sont étroitement imbriquées avec l'activité des entreprises multinationales et leurs chaînes de production mondiales. Plus des deux tiers du commerce international est généré par ces multinationales et leurs investissements.

L'OMC relève que les pays à la traîne ont reçu bien moins d'investissements directs étrangers (IDE) que d'autres pays qui ont su s'enrichir et s'intégrer dans le commerce mondial. Les flux d'IDE vers pays pauvres du Moyen-Orient, d'Afrique du Nord et d'Afrique subsaharienne sont moins élevés qu'ailleurs. De ce fait, les 46 pays les moins avancés (Plus de 880 millions de personnes) qui sont dans ces régions ne représentent que 1 % du commerce mondial. Cette part stagne depuis 1995. Elle a même diminué à moins de 1 % au cours des deux dernières années. La mondialisation n'a donc pas bénéficié à tous.

OMC FAZ 30 ANOS EM CRISE E DEFENDE COMÉRCIO COMO REDUTOR DA POBREZA GLOBAL (FOLHA BRAZIL)

See news clippings here: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1LxD_VjKrSEGjWkoZoX50GR-oF3jxalAo?usp=sharing

SERVICIO DIGITAL E FUTURO DA EXPORTACAO E BRASIL CRESCE ACIMA DA MEDIA, DIZ OMC (FOLHA BRAZIL)

<https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/mercado/2024/09/servico-digital-e-futuro-da-exportacao-e-brasil-cresce-acima-da-media-diz-omc.shtml>

MUNDO PRECISA DO COMERCIO PARA SUPERAR A POBREZA (FOLHA BRAZIL)

<https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/opiniao/2024/09/mundo-precisa-do-comercio-para-superar-a-pobreza.shtml>

NGOZI OKONJO-IWEALA (DG OMC) : "LE COMMERCE MONDIAL EST UN CATALYSEUR POUR L'INCLUSION ÉCONOMIQUE" (NEWSDUCAMER CAMEROUN)

A l'occasion de la parution du Rapport 2024 sur le commerce mondial, la Directrice générale de l'OMC Mme Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala met en lumière le rôle crucial du commerce dans la réduction des inégalités de revenus à travers le monde. Elle appelle à une stratégie globale, combinant ouverture commerciale et politiques nationales, pour une croissance plus inclusive et durable.

François Bambou
9 septembre 2024

Le commerce international s'est avéré être un puissant moteur d'inclusivité, comme le révèle le Rapport 2024 sur le Commerce Mondial publié par l'Organisation Mondiale du Commerce (OMC). En examinant les tendances des trois dernières décennies, ce rapport met en lumière l'impact profond du commerce sur la réduction des disparités de revenus et la lutte contre la pauvreté dans les économies à faible et moyen revenu.

Selon Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Directrice générale de l'OMC, ce rapport réaffirme le rôle essentiel du commerce dans la réduction des inégalités mondiales. « Le principal message à retenir du rapport est peut-être qu'il réaffirme le rôle transformateur du commerce dans la réduction de la pauvreté et la création d'une prospérité partagée », déclare-t-elle. Ce constat va à l'encontre de l'idée répandue selon laquelle la mondialisation aurait exacerbé les inégalités.

Le rapport souligne que, depuis la création de l'OMC il y a 30 ans, les économies à faible revenu ont vu leurs revenus par habitant tripler en moyenne, avec un taux de croissance significatif par rapport aux économies à revenu élevé. Ce phénomène de convergence économique est en grande partie dû à la réduction des coûts commerciaux, facilitée par les accords internationaux et les réformes institutionnelles menées sous l'égide de l'OMC. Les échanges entre les membres de l'organisation ont ainsi augmenté de 140 % en moyenne, avec un effet bénéfique sur la réduction de la pauvreté.

Cependant, le rapport n'occulte pas les défis restants. Si de nombreuses économies ont profité de cette dynamique commerciale, certaines régions, notamment en Afrique, en Amérique latine et au Moyen-Orient, continuent d'être distancées. La faible participation au commerce, la dépendance excessive aux exportations de matières premières, et des infrastructures commerciales inadaptées sont identifiées comme les principaux obstacles à une croissance inclusive dans ces zones.

L'économiste en chef de l'OMC, Ralph Ossa, souligne à cet égard que « moins d'échanges ne favorisera pas l'inclusion, et le commerce ne pourra pas non plus promouvoir l'inclusion à lui seul. Une véritable inclusion nécessite une stratégie globale — c'est-à-dire intégrant l'ouverture commerciale et des politiques nationales de soutien ainsi qu'une coopération internationale forte. »

Le rapport appelle donc à une stratégie globale pour maximiser les bénéfices du commerce international. Cette stratégie passe par des politiques nationales de soutien, telles que la formation professionnelle, l'éducation, ainsi que des réformes pour rendre le marché du travail plus flexible et inclusif. De plus, il met en avant l'importance d'adapter les règles commerciales aux nouveaux défis posés par la transformation numérique et l'économie verte, deux secteurs où le commerce mondial connaît une expansion rapide.

Le commerce numérique en particulier est vu comme une opportunité clé pour les économies les moins intégrées, ainsi que pour les petites et moyennes entreprises et les femmes. L'adoption de politiques favorisant une meilleure connectivité numérique et des infrastructures adaptées permettra d'accroître l'inclusivité dans le commerce mondial, selon le rapport.

OMC: PEU DE CORRÉLATION ENTRE OUVERTURE AU COMMERCE ET INÉGALITÉS (AGENCE TÉLÉGRAPHIQUE SUISSE)

9 September 2024

L'ouverture au commerce a peu de corrélation avec l'augmentation des inégalités, selon l'OMC. Au contraire, une part importante du commerce dans le PIB a réussi aux pays pauvres et à ceux aux revenus intermédiaires, affirme un rapport lundi publié à Genève.

Autre indication, les transactions entre membres de l'Organisation mondiale du commerce (OMC) ont progressé de près de 150% en près de 30 ans. Les pays qui ont accédé à l'organisation ont obtenu une croissance supérieure de 1,5 point de pourcentage au moment de leurs négociations pour rejoindre l'institution, ajoute le rapport sur le commerce mondial.

De même, la réduction des coûts commerciaux a accéléré de 25 à 30% la convergence des revenus des Etats pauvres et à revenus intermédiaires avec les pays riches. D'autres indicateurs montrent que les inégalités ne sont pas liées systématiquement au commerce et à la concurrence en termes d'importations, ajoute encore l'OMC.

Dans les pays pauvres et à revenus intermédiaires, la part de la population dans l'extrême pauvreté est passée de 40 à 11%. Alors que celle du commerce dans le Produit intérieur brut (PIB) a doublé.

Au contraire, une participation moins importante au commerce mondial aboutit à un décalage. Mais "trop d'économies et de personnes sont laissées de côté", a affirmé à la presse l'économiste en chef de l'organisation, Ralph Ossa. Un tiers des pays pauvres et à revenus intermédiaires ont été confrontés à une croissance inférieure à celle des pays riches. Ces Etats se trouvent en Afrique, en Amérique latine et au Proche-Orient.

Le rapport appelle à davantage d'ouverture mais également à des politiques nationales pour soutenir le commerce pour davantage de parties prenantes. Il faut réduire les coûts, diminuer la fracture numérique et adapter les accords de l'OMC aux défis numériques et de l'économie verte, affirme également l'organisation.

Le commerce a joué un rôle face à la pauvreté, insiste de son côté la directrice générale Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala. Mais il faut en faire davantage pour les pays et les populations, affirme-t-elle également.

COMMERCE: L'OMC APPELLE À FAIRE PLUS POUR «INCLURE» LES PAYS PAUVRES (AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE)

9 September 2024

L'Organisation mondiale du commerce a appelé lundi à faire plus pour les pays pauvres, faisant valoir que l'ouverture commerciale n'est pas suffisante à elle seule pour réduire les inégalités entre les économies et en leur sein.

L'Organisation mondiale du commerce a appelé lundi à faire plus pour les pays pauvres, faisant valoir que l'ouverture commerciale n'est pas suffisante à elle seule pour réduire les inégalités entre les économies et en leur sein.

Dans son rapport 2024 sur le commerce mondial, l'OMC a examiné le rôle qu'a joué le commerce pour ce qui est de réduire l'écart de revenus entre les économies depuis la création de l'organisation en 1995.

« Le principal message à retenir du rapport est peut-être qu'il réaffirme le rôle transformateur du commerce dans la réduction de la pauvreté et la création d'une prospérité partagée - contrairement à l'idée actuellement en vogue selon laquelle le commerce et les institutions telles que l'OMC n'ont pas été une bonne chose pour la pauvreté, ou pour les pays pauvres, et engendrent un monde plus inégalitaire », écrit la directrice générale de l'OMC, Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, dans l'avant-propos.

« Le deuxième message le plus important c'est que nous pouvons faire beaucoup plus pour que le commerce et l'OMC fonctionnent mieux pour les économies et les populations qui ont été laissées de côté au cours de ces 30 dernières années de mondialisation », explique Mme Okonjo-Iweala.

Selon le rapport, les économies à faible revenu et à revenu intermédiaire accusant un retard tendent généralement à être moins engagées dans le commerce international, à recevoir moins d'investissements étrangers directs, à être plus tributaires des produits de base, à exporter moins de produits complexes et à échanger avec un nombre plus réduit de partenaires.

Pour la directrice générale de l'OMC, le protectionnisme n'est « pas une voie efficace vers une meilleure inclusion » car il peut augmenter les coûts de production et donner lieu à des représailles commerciales coûteuses.

- « priorité immédiate » -

« Moins d'échanges ne favorisera pas l'inclusion », assure l'économiste en chef de l'OMC, Ralph Ossa, dans le communiqué.

Mais « le commerce ne pourra pas non plus promouvoir l'inclusion à lui seul », affirme-t-il : « Une véritable inclusion nécessite une stratégie globale - c'est-à-dire intégrant l'ouverture commerciale et des politiques nationales de soutien ainsi qu'une coopération internationale forte ».

Selon l'OMC, ces politiques nationales de soutien destinées à rendre le commerce plus inclusif peuvent, par exemple, concerner la formation professionnelle, les allocations-chômage, l'éducation en vue d'améliorer les qualifications et la mobilité de la main-d'œuvre, la politique de la concurrence pour faire en sorte que les consommateurs bénéficient de prix moins élevés, des infrastructures fiables et le bon fonctionnement des marchés financiers.

« Pour l'OMC, la priorité immédiate est de maintenir un système commercial multilatéral ouvert, prévisible et non discriminatoire, une tâche qui devient de plus en plus difficile dans l'environnement complexe d'aujourd'hui », a affirmé M. Ossa, en conférence de presse.

« Il s'agit notamment de rétablir un système de règlement des différends pleinement opérationnel et accessible, un objectif que les membres de l'OMC poursuivent activement », a-t-il dit.

Le système de règlement des différends est paralysé depuis fin 2019 à la suite du blocage par Washington du renouvellement des juges de l'organe d'appel, une pratique initiée sous l'administration de Barack Obama et que Donald Trump et Joe Biden ont poursuivie. En mars, les membres de l'OMC ont toutefois renouvelé leur engagement à régler cette question cette année.

Le rapport indique par ailleurs que devenir membre de l'OMC, ou signataire de l'Accord général sur les tarifs douaniers et le commerce (GATT) qui l'a précédée, fait progresser les échanges commerciaux avec les autres membres de 140% en moyenne. L'OMC compte 166 membres depuis l'accession du Timor-oriental le 30 août et des Comores le 21 août.

LES TENSIONS GÉOPOLITIQUES, LA RÉVOLUTION NUMÉRIQUE ET LE CHANGEMENT CLIMATIQUE REDÉFINISSENT LE DÉVELOPPEMENT (XINHUA FRENCH NEWS SERVICE)

9 September 2024

GENEVE -- Des tendances internationales émergentes telles que les tensions géopolitiques, la révolution numérique et le changement climatique sont en train de redéfinir le paysage du développement alimenté par les échanges commerciaux, a analysé l'Organisation mondiale du commerce (OMC) dans un rapport phare publié lundi.

Dans l'édition 2024 du "Rapport sur le commerce mondial", l'OMC estime que les facteurs internationaux comme les tensions géopolitiques, les conflits régionaux et les sanctions commerciales ont eu des répercussions sur les fondements stables de la croissance économique mondiale au cours des 30 dernières années, ce qui pourrait entraîner une fragmentation commerciale.

Par ailleurs, la hausse des capitaux et du niveau de qualification dans la production moderne a réduit le champ de la croissance alimentée par la production dans les économies à faibles revenus. En outre, le changement climatique est synonyme de défis encore plus importants, en particulier pour ces pays.

Le rapport met néanmoins l'accent sur les nouvelles opportunités apportées par ces tendances internationales. Par exemple, les économies en développement peuvent abaisser les coûts commerciaux par le biais de la numérisation, s'orienter vers une croissance alimentée par les services, ou bien profiter de la demande en ressources renouvelables dans le cadre de la transformation écologique mondiale pour se développer.

L'OMC a souligné la nécessité de disposer de politiques nationales de soutien telles que les formations professionnelles, les allocations chômage ou l'éducation pour une main d'œuvre plus qualifiée et mobile, ainsi que d'une politique de concurrence pour garantir que les consommateurs bénéficient de prix plus bas, d'infrastructures fiables et de marchés financiers qui fonctionnent bien.

L'organisation a appelé à réduire les coûts commerciaux, combler le fossé numérique et mettre à jour le corpus de règles de l'OMC afin de prendre en compte l'importance croissante du commerce dans les secteurs des services, du numérique et de l'écologie.

Le rapport appelle également à une meilleure coordination entre les organisations internationales. En effet, cela pourrait aider à exploiter les synergies entre des politiques commerciales et complémentaires, tout en développant l'inclusivité entre les économies et en leur sein.

TRADE REMAINS CRUCIAL IN POVERTY REDUCTION (SCIENCE AFRICA – KENYA)

10 September 2024

By Sharon Atieno

With the first sustainable development goal (SDG) calling for zero poverty, trade continues to play a significant role in narrowing the income gap between developing and developed nations while promoting inclusiveness.

According to the 2024 World Trade Report, the rapid expansion in international trade over the past thirty years since the existence of the World Trade Organization (WTO) has contributed to global per capita income increase including in low- and middle-income economies where it has nearly tripled.

"Over the past three decades, open global markets, underpinned by the WTO, gave rise to a boom in trade, enabling the productivity gains that came with greater specialization, scale and competition. Lower-priced imports lifted household purchasing power, especially at the bottom of the income distribution. As more developing economies reformed at home and tapped into external demand for goods and services, their share in global trade increased sharply," WTO Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala says in her foreword to the report.

The report notes that with strong income growth in low and middle-income countries, the proportion of their populations living in extreme poverty decreased from 40 per cent in 1995 to under 11 per cent in 2022.

According to the report, trade policy reforms play a crucial role in this growth, with trade cost reductions increasing global GDP by almost seven per cent between 1995 and 2020 and by 33 per cent in low-income economies.

Notably, economies that took on more reform and liberalization commitments as part of their WTO accession negotiations saw a 1.5 percentage point boost to their annual growth rates and attracted more capital investment.

Too many economies and people still left behind

However, the report notes that the income convergence has been uneven, leaving some economies behind. The economies of many poor countries, particularly in Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, and the Middle East grew slower than the average high-income economy in per capita terms.

“Three-quarters of these economies have trade participation levels below the average for their income group. The remaining quarter, despite having relatively high trade participation, is predominantly specialized in commodity exports. Consequently, the report identifies low trade participation and high commodity dependence as critical trade-related risk factors for economic divergence,” explained Ralph Ossa, WTO’s Chief Economist.

Ossa observed that high trade costs are a major reason for the low trade participation observed in some of these economies. The issue partly stems from trade policies, including high compliance costs associated with foreign standards and incomplete implementation of trade facilitation measures. Additionally, domestic factors, such as underdeveloped physical infrastructure and inefficient infrastructure services play a significant role in hindering trade.

Ralph Ossa, WTO Chief Economist Photo credits: WTO

Additionally, the report notes that despite the slight decline witnessed within-country income inequality over the last 30 years, the numbers remain high in absolute terms.

“It is thus understandable that discussions about trade and inclusiveness are often framed as debates about trade and income inequality. However, as we have established, trade integration is not strongly correlated with income inequality; it increases income inequality in some economies while reducing it in others. A more helpful approach is to examine how fairly the gains from trade are shared,” Ossa said.

Protectionism not a solution

According to the report, protectionism is not an effective path to inclusiveness. It has dire consequences including raising production costs and inviting costly retaliation from disgruntled trading partners.

“A more promising path towards a global economy that works for everyone lies in what we at the WTO have been calling “re-globalization” – bringing more economies and communities from the margins to the mainstream of the global economy by helping them attract more trade-oriented investment,” said Dr. Okonjo-Iweala.

“Fast-growing trade in digitally delivered services and environmental goods offer exciting opportunities, with digital trade in particular lowering the bar for enabling underrepresented economies, small businesses and women entrepreneurs to connect to international markets.”

The report emphasizes the need for a comprehensive strategy that integrates open trade with supportive domestic policies to make trade more inclusive such as vocational training, unemployment benefits, education for a more skilled and mobile workforce, competition policy to ensure consumers benefit from lower prices, reliable infrastructure, and well-functioning financial markets.

Additionally, reducing trade costs, bridging the digital divide, and updating the WTO rulebook to reflect the growing importance of trade in services, digital, and green sectors are essential.

Greater international trade cooperation is also necessary to address evolving challenges in areas crucial to the future of trade. Better coordination among international organizations could help to leverage synergies between trade policies and complementary policies and reinforce their impact on inclusiveness across and within economies.

BRIDGE DIGITAL DIVIDE TO LEVERAGE GLOBAL TRADE OPPORTUNITIES: WTO (BANGLADESH SANGBAD SANGSTHA)

10 September 2024

The World Trade Organisation (WTO) has urged the low- and middle-income countries to bridge the digital divide, tackle regulatory capacity and compliance issues to take full advantage of global trade opportunities.

The organisation came up with call at its 'World Trade Report 2024' released on Monday. The theme of the report is 'Trade and inclusiveness: How to make trade work for all.'

It also laid emphasis on a comprehensive strategy that integrates open trade with supportive domestic policies to make trade more inclusive such as vocational training, unemployment benefits, education for a more skilled and mobile workforce, competition policy to ensure consumers benefit from lower prices, reliable infrastructure, and well-functioning financial markets.

The 2024 edition of the WTO's World Trade Report presented strong evidence that trade has played a crucial role in narrowing the income gap between economies since the WTO was established 30 years ago.

The report said greater international trade cooperation is also necessary to address evolving challenges in areas crucial to the future of trade.

Better coordination among international organizations could help to leverage synergies between trade policies and complementary policies, and reinforce their impact on inclusiveness across and within economies, it added.

"Perhaps the biggest takeaway from the report is its reaffirmation of trade's transformative role in reducing poverty and creating shared prosperity - contrary to the currently fashionable notion that trade, and institutions like the WTO, have not been good for poverty or for poor countries, and are creating a more unequal world," said WTO Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala.

"But the second biggest takeaway is that there is much more we can do to make trade and the WTO work better for economies and people left behind during the past 30 years of globalization," she added.

Examining how international trade has contributed to making the global economy more inclusive, the WTO report showcased data establishing a strong link between trade participation and the narrowing of income disparities among economies.

From 1996 to 2021, a high trade share in GDP is significantly correlated to faster growth in low- and middle-income economies, converging to the level of GDP per capita in high-income economies, it added.

Moreover, membership in the WTO and its predecessor the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) has boosted trade between members by an average of 140 per cent, while economies that undergo rigorous WTO accession negotiations are shown to grow 1.5 percentage points faster during their accession period.

Analysis further suggested that trade cost reductions between 1995 and 2020 led to a 20 to 35 per cent faster income convergence of low- and middle-income economies with high-income economies.

Contrary to common belief, the report found weak correlation between trade openness and within-country income inequality, based on a comparison of the 2021 Gini inequality index and trade openness index of 157 economies.

The report also highlighted challenges, noting that many economies with weak trade participation and high commodity dependence have been left behind.

Between 1996 and 2021, low- and middle-income economies that grew slower than the average high-income economy in income-per-capita terms represented 13 per cent of the global population and were mainly in Africa, Latin America and the Middle East, it added

It mentioned that low- and middle-income economies that have lagged behind generally tend to engage less in international trade, receive less foreign direct investment, rely more on commodities, export less complex products, and trade with fewer partners.

"Less trade will not promote inclusiveness, nor will trade alone," said WTO Chief Economist Ralph Ossa.

"True inclusiveness demands a comprehensive strategy - one that integrates open trade with supportive domestic policies and robust international cooperation," he added.

GLOBAL TRADE HELPED REDUCE EXTREME POVERTY, INEQUALITY: WTO (DAWN, PAKISTAN)

10 September 2024
DAWN

Global trade helped reduce extreme poverty, inequality: WTO

New report says poorer nations suffer due to high tariffs, red tape, poor infrastructure

By Khaleeq Kiani

GENEVA: A new World Trade Organisation (WTO) report has stated that global commerce has played a critical role in reducing extreme poverty from 40pc to 11pc.

Global trade has created "shared prosperity" since the WTO was created in 1995, the report said, while calling for supportive policies to "mainstream more economies" and people across the globe.

The World Trade Report 2024, released on Monday, said the world had witnessed a period of unprecedented income growth.

"Between 1995 and 2023, global per capita income, adjusted for inflation, increased

by approximately 65 per cent, while the per capita income of low and middle-income economies almost tripled." This "impressive economic growth" significantly contributed to reducing poverty, malnutrition and infant mortality, and improved access to education, healthcare and electricity.

The report also raised concerns over persisting income inequalities, which are still high in most economies, as 712 million people were still living in extreme poverty.

According to WTO Director-General Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, the biggest takeaway from the report was its "reaffirmation of trade's transformative role in reducing poverty and creating shared prosperity".

The reaffirmation, according to Dr Okonjo-Iweala, contradicts the perception that trade and institutions like the WTO have not been good for poverty or for poor countries and are creating a more unequal world.

The report also noted that between 1995 and 2022, the share of low and middle-income economies in global trade grew from 21pc to 38pc, while the share of trade

between developing economies in global commerce almost quadrupled, increasing from 5pc in 1995 to 19pc in 2021.

However, this "economic convergence" is threatened by geopolitical tensions, technological revolution and climate change.

Challenges to global trade

The report also pointed out the challenges faced by low and middle-income economies that engage less in international trade, receive less FDI, rely more on commodities, export less complex products, and trade tend to be concentrated among fewer partners.

Among the reasons these economies are not benefiting from globalisation are high tariffs at home and abroad, low regional integration, administrative red tape, poor physical and digital infrastructure, geographical remoteness and weak institutions.

No wonder exporters in poor economies often lack the capacity to comply with foreign market standards and technical regulations and may struggle to utilise preferential access to large markets, according to WTR2024.

The report also noted that some of the economies that are an active participant in global trade failed to leverage trade for development due to a lack of diversification in their production and export baskets.

For example, economies that specialise in capital-intensive extractive and primary sectors can be vulnerable to commodity price volatility and fail to achieve sustained growth because of macroeconomic instability.

The report observed that impediments to structural transformation and a limited ability to adopt foreign technologies could also prevent certain economies from reaping the gains from trade.

"Trade fosters growth by enabling the import of technology and know-how, and by leveraging external demand to shift workers and resources from subsistence work to more productive," the report said and called upon the low and middle-income countries to bridge the digital divide and tackle regulatory capacity and compliance issues to take full advantage of global trade opportunities.

"Complementary domestic policies are

required to make trade more inclusive."

The countries must ensure that every citizen benefits from the opportunities created by open and rule-based international markets, the report suggested.

This means investing in education and infrastructure, maintaining an appropriate competitive environment, implementing effective adjustment and redistribution policies, including labour market support.

According to WTO Chief Economist Ralph Ossa, the bottom line of the analysis is that less trade will not promote inclusiveness.

"True inclusiveness demands a comprehensive strategy — one that integrates open trade with complimentary domestic policies and effective international cooperation."

For the WTO, the immediate priority is to uphold an open, predictable, and nondiscriminatory multilateral trading system — a task that is becoming increasingly challenging in today's complex environment, he added. "This includes restoring a fully functioning and accessible dispute settlement system, a goal that WTO members are actively pursuing."

PINOYS EMPLOYED IN INDUSTRIES COMPETING WITH IMPORTS 'LIMITED' (PHILIPPINE STAR)

11 September 2024

The number of Filipinos employed in industries that are competing directly with imports is "limited," according to the World Trade Organization (WTO).

In its flagship World Trade Report, the WTO said that the average population share affected by import competition in 14 select most populous economies, including the Philippines, was at 1.85 percent, which has "hardly changed since 1995."

The report showed that only 3.6 percent of the Philippines' workforce were employed in domestic industries that directly compete with imports.

"We are not saying in this report that nobody is affected by import competition and we also not saying that it is not leading to disruptions in labor markets," said Ralph Ossa, WTO chief economist, during a press briefing here Monday night (Philippine time).

“But if we take the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) data and do our calculations then there is a very small share of workers in the economy that are exposed to import competition,” Ossa added.

Ossa explained that countries could implement policies that would help their workers in import-competing industries to shift to other industries where they have comparative advantages.

That way countries are able to sustain their economic growth while reducing within country inequality and improving between countries inclusiveness, he said.

“Rather than trying to protect workers through import tariffs or protectionist measures, if you try to help them move toward new opportunities then that is going to be good for within country inequality and also good for leveraging comparative advantages,” he added.

The WTO made the estimates to see the extent of disruption being caused by trade on domestic labor markets, particularly in countries’ import-competing industries.

The multilateral body used data from the OECD in selected economies with large population and available data.

The WTO defined import-competing industries as those with gross imports exceeding 15 percent of output, representing the top 25 percent of industries in terms of import penetration in the database.

The WTO said some economies have implemented trade policies that are “centered” around the effects of trade on workers “on the basis that individuals are not just consumers, but also workers.”

However, such policies, the WTO pointed out, “ignored the fact that a substantial share of individuals do not work, for instance because they have retired or are too young.”

“The positive consumption effects of trade, even for most workers, are likely to directly impact a larger number of people than the labour market effects,” it said.

RELATÓRIO APONTA COMÉRCIO COMO FACTOR DE INCLUSÃO E CRESCIMENTO ECONÓMICO (EXPANSÃO, ANGOLA)

10

September

2024

Foi apresentado em Genebra o World Trade Report 2024, produzido pela Organização Mundial de Comércio, que na publicação dedicada à inclusão, se pode ler que a percentagem de pessoas a viver em condições de pobreza extrema nas economias de baixo e médio rendimento diminuiu de 40% para cerca de 11% desde 1995.

A Organização Mundial do Comércio (OMC) defendeu hoje, em Genebra (Suíça), onde decorre o 'Public Forum', que o sistema internacional de comércio é um factor de inclusão social, de crescimento económico e que deve continuar a ser aprofundado tendo em vista as novas tendências relacionadas com as transacções digitais, o comércio de serviços e os temas relacionadas com o ambiente e a transição energética. As conclusões fazem parte do mais recente relatório sobre comércio internacional (ou 'World Trade Report', no título original) publicado pela OMC.

Desde a criação da OMC, há 30 anos, "os rendimentos per capita nas economias de baixo e médio rendimento quase triplicaram, reduzindo significativamente a diferença de rendimento em relação às economias de rendimento elevado", assinalou Ralph Ossa, economista-chefe da OMC durante o 'Public Forum' promovido por aquela organização e que decorre em Genebra até sexta-feira, 13 de Setembro.

"As nossas estimativas sugerem que até um terço desta convergência pode ser atribuída às reduções nos custos associados ao comércio, facilitadas em parte pela OMC", disse o responsável.

Segundo os autores do relatório, a percentagem de pessoas a viver em condições de pobreza extrema nas economias de baixo e médio rendimento diminuiu de 40% para cerca de 11% desde 1995, enquanto a percentagem do comércio no PIB destas economias duplicou de cerca de 16% para 32%.

Mesmo assim, a percepção global sobre os benefícios do comércio internacional tem sido colocada em causa por tendências proteccionistas defendidas por grandes economias como os EUA, que argumentam a favor da necessidade de proteger a indústria local e os postos de trabalho gerados neste sector.

Estes argumentos também são utilizados por diversas economias mais pequenas, que acusam os grandes produtores industriais de serem mais beneficiados pelo comércio internacional e de não permitirem o desenvolvimento das indústrias locais.

"Contrariamente à crença popular, a desigualdade de rendimentos nas economias não aumentou, em média, nos últimos 30 anos. De facto, o índice de Gini médio - análise que permite medir a desigualdade - diminuiu ligeiramente num vasto leque de economias durante este período. Além

disso, a desigualdade de rendimentos apresenta apenas uma fraca correlação com a abertura comercial e é inferior nas economias mais abertas", sublinhou Ralph Ossa.

"As evidências também desafiam a noção prevalente de que a concorrência das importações nos países industrializados apenas conduziu a perdas. Também foram registados ganhos significativos. Nos EUA, por exemplo, o rendimento diminuiu em algumas regiões industriais devido ao aumento do comércio com a China, mas as regiões especializadas na agricultura e nos serviços registaram uma evolução positiva", afirmou o economista-chefe da OMC.

196 países fazem parte da OMC: Timor-Leste e as Ilhas Comoro foram os últimos países a aderir. Angola é um membro de pleno direito da organização desde Março de 1996.

L'OMC LANCE SON RAPPORT 2024 POUR UN COMMERCE MONDIAL PLUS INCLUSIF (AGENCE ECOFIN)

10 Septembre 2024

Link: [L'OMC lance son rapport 2024 pour un commerce mondial plus inclusif \(agenceecofin.com\)](https://www.agenceecofin.com/fr/actualites/2024/09/10/omc-lance-son-rapport-2024-pour-un-commerce-mondial-plus-inclusif)

(Agence Ecofin) - Selon l'OMC, les revenus par habitant dans les économies à faible et moyen revenus ont triplé en 30 ans, depuis sa création. A l'occasion de son anniversaire, l'organisation appelle à accroître les investissements pour un commerce plus inclusif face aux tensions géopolitiques et aux risques de fragmentation.

Depuis sa création, l'Organisation mondiale du commerce (OMC) a largement contribué à la croissance économique et à la réduction de la pauvreté mondiale, selon le rapport mondial 2024 de l'institution. Le commerce international a joué un rôle déterminant au cours des trois dernières décennies, en facilitant l'accès aux marchés et en stimulant les investissements, apprend-on.

D'après le rapport, entre 1995 et 2022, le taux de pauvreté dans les économies à faible et moyen revenus a chuté de 40,3% à 10,6%, tandis que la part du commerce dans leur PIB a doublé, passant de 16% à 32%. Cette dynamique a ouvert de nouvelles opportunités, bien que les effets du commerce sur la pauvreté et les inégalités restent nuancés.

« Contrairement à l'idée reçue, les inégalités de revenus au sein des économies n'ont pas augmenté en moyenne au cours des 30 dernières années. En fait, l'indice de Gini moyen a légèrement diminué dans de nombreuses économies pendant cette période », a précisé l'économiste en chef de l'OMC, Ralph Ossa, lors du lancement du rapport à Genève. Il a ajouté que l'ouverture commerciale montre une corrélation faible avec les inégalités, celles-ci étant même légèrement inférieures dans les économies plus ouvertes.

Néanmoins, l'OMC reconnaît que plusieurs économies en développement et de nombreuses populations sont encore laissées de côté. L'organisation appelle à une meilleure participation de ces acteurs au commerce mondial.

Ce rapport arrive à un moment où le commerce mondial fait face à des tensions croissantes, notamment le protectionnisme accru dans les grandes économies. Les récentes surtaxes imposées par les Etats-Unis et l'Union européenne sur les véhicules électriques chinois, accusés de dumping, illustrent bien ces tensions. L'OMC avertit que de telles politiques protectionnistes, visant à protéger certains secteurs, peuvent avoir des effets contre-productifs, en augmentant les coûts pour d'autres industries et en réduisant les bénéfices globaux du commerce. Elles peuvent également engendrer des représailles commerciales, limitant encore les opportunités économiques.

En 2023, le commerce mondial a reculé de 3%, soit environ 1000 milliards de dollars, selon la Conférence des Nations Unies sur le commerce et le développement (CNUCED), après un record de 32 000 milliards de dollars en 2022. Cette baisse est attribuée aux tensions géopolitiques et aux perturbations des chaînes d'approvisionnement.

Face à ces défis, l'OMC appelle à un commerce plus inclusif, à travers des initiatives en collaboration avec des institutions telles que la Banque mondiale pour soutenir les efforts nationaux et régionaux. « La mission de l'OMC, telle qu'énoncée dans le préambule de l'accord de Marrakech, est d'utiliser le commerce pour améliorer les niveaux de vie, créer des emplois et promouvoir le développement durable », a rappelé Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, directrice générale de l'OMC.

LE DERNIER RAPPORT DE L'OMC MET EN LUMIÈRE LES DÉFIS ET OPPORTUNITÉS DE L'INCLUSIVITÉ DANS LE COMMERCE INTERNATIONAL, AVEC DES LEÇONS POUR LA RDC (ACTUALITE CD)

10 septembre 2024
Actualite.CD

Le rapport annuel de l'Organisation mondiale du commerce (OMC), publié ce lundi, souligne que, bien que le commerce ait été un puissant moteur de croissance économique au cours des trente dernières années, il n'a pas bénéficié de manière égale à toutes les économies et populations. Ce document met en exergue les progrès réalisés pour réduire l'écart de revenus entre les pays à faible revenu et ceux à revenu élevé, tout en identifiant les défis qui persistent, notamment en Afrique, en Amérique latine et dans le Moyen-Orient.

Le rapport fait état de trois conclusions majeures. Tout d'abord, il montre que le commerce a été un puissant vecteur d'inclusivité. Depuis la création de l'OMC il y a 30 ans, les revenus par habitant dans les économies à faible et moyen revenu ont quasiment triplé, contribuant à réduire considérablement l'écart de revenus avec les pays à revenu élevé. Cela s'est accompagné d'une baisse marquée de l'extrême pauvreté, la part des personnes vivant dans des conditions de grande précarité ayant chuté de 40 % à environ 11 % depuis 1995. Ces avancées sont en partie dues à la réduction des coûts commerciaux et à l'augmentation de la part du commerce dans le PIB de ces pays, qui est passée de 16 % à 32 %. Contrairement aux idées reçues, les inégalités de revenus au sein des pays n'ont pas augmenté en moyenne, et certaines régions, autrefois marginalisées, ont tiré des bénéfices importants du commerce international.

Cependant, le rapport souligne que toutes les économies n'ont pas connu cette convergence de revenus. Un tiers des économies à faible et moyen revenu n'ont pas progressé aussi rapidement que les autres, et cette divergence est particulièrement visible en Afrique, en Amérique latine et au Moyen-Orient. Ces économies sont souvent confrontées à des obstacles tels que des infrastructures sous-développées, des coûts commerciaux élevés et une dépendance excessive aux exportations de matières premières, ce qui limite leur capacité à profiter pleinement des avantages du commerce mondial.

Le rapport conclut que pour une véritable inclusion, il est nécessaire de combiner un commerce ouvert avec des politiques internes adaptées, notamment dans les domaines de l'éducation, de la régulation du marché du travail et des infrastructures. Il met également en lumière l'importance d'une coopération internationale renforcée pour relever les défis mondiaux tels que le changement climatique et la transition numérique.

La situation en RDC : entre dépendance minière et volonté de diversification

La RDC incarne à la fois les opportunités et les défis soulevés par le rapport de l'OMC. Le pays dépend fortement de ses exportations minières, avec 90 % de ses revenus provenant du cuivre et du cobalt, principalement exportés vers la Chine. En 2023, la RDC a exporté pour 18,7 milliards de dollars de produits miniers vers la Chine, affichant un excédent commercial de 14,2 milliards de dollars. Toutefois, cette dépendance excessive aux matières premières expose le pays aux fluctuations des prix des produits de base et limite ses possibilités de diversification économique.

Comme le souligne le rapport de l'OMC, une économie trop concentrée sur les matières premières risque de manquer des opportunités de développement durable à long terme. La RDC en est consciente et cherche à diversifier ses exportations en misant sur le développement du secteur agricole, avec un potentiel de 80 millions d'hectares de terres arables, ainsi que sur la transformation locale des ressources naturelles. Le gouvernement congolais a pris des mesures pour attirer les investissements dans ces secteurs et améliorer les infrastructures nécessaires à leur développement.

Pendant, la RDC est confrontée à des pratiques commerciales déloyales de la part de certains pays voisins, notamment le dumping et le transbordement, qui coûtent à l'État environ 5 milliards de dollars par an. Des efforts sont en cours pour moderniser les contrôles douaniers, renforcer l'Office Congolais de Contrôle (OCC) et améliorer les infrastructures de transport afin de faciliter le commerce intérieur et extérieur.

Le rapport de l'OMC souligne également l'importance de politiques nationales complémentaires pour garantir que les bénéfices du commerce atteignent les populations locales. En RDC, cela implique des investissements dans l'éducation, la formation professionnelle et les infrastructures, ainsi que des réformes pour faciliter la circulation des biens et des personnes à travers le pays et avec ses voisins.

Enjeux et perspectives pour la RDC

Pour tirer pleinement parti du commerce mondial et sous-régional, la RDC doit relever plusieurs défis : réduire sa dépendance aux exportations minières, renforcer son secteur agricole, améliorer ses infrastructures et lutter contre les pratiques commerciales déloyales. Le rapport de l'OMC souligne que ces efforts doivent s'accompagner de réformes politiques et économiques à l'échelle nationale, ainsi que d'une coopération internationale accrue, afin de garantir que le commerce bénéficie à toutes les couches de la population.

La RDC, avec ses richesses naturelles et son marché intérieur de plus de 100 millions d'habitants, dispose d'un potentiel considérable pour stimuler son développement économique. Toutefois, pour que le commerce devienne un outil véritablement inclusif, il est essentiel que les réformes en cours s'accompagnent d'investissements ciblés et d'une vision à long terme.

DEVELOPING COUNTRIES SHOULD LOWER TRADE COSTS: WTO DG (BANGLADESH SANGBAD SANGSTHA)

11 September 2024

Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha

To increase participation and ensure competitiveness in the world trade, Director-General of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala observed that developing countries should lower their trade costs.

"High trade costs constrain countries' access to foreign markets and cheap inputs, to the mobility and information frictions, skill mismatches, and limited access to finance that, too often, mean people cannot seizing new opportunities," she said.

The DG said this at a recent press briefing at WTO headquarters.

Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala said the high trade costs issue partly stems from trade policies, including high compliance costs associated with foreign standards and incomplete implementation of trade facilitation measures.

Additionally, domestic factors, such as underdeveloped physical infrastructure and inefficient infrastructure services play a significant role in hindering trade, she added.

Referring to a data of the World Trade Report 2024, she said, trade cost reductions between 1995 and 2020 led to around a 6.8 per cent increase in global real GDP over the period, with low-income economies growing by around 33 per cent.

She informed that the trade costs reductions led to between 20 and 35 per cent faster income convergence of low and middle-income economies, trade in services with LDCs than with high-income economies.

"The cost of doing business in some African countries is very expensive. That cost is equal to about 300 percent customs rate. The people of such countries are left behind because of trade. We have to work to improve it," she added.

She said that the "digital divide" in poor countries should be ended as the future business is digital business.

"As we look forward to trade we have to recognize the ways the world trading system is changing. That trade is digital now, services, it's green, and it should also be inclusive. So trying to tackle the issue of inclusiveness is a very important one," she added.

Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, however, said fast-growing trade in digitally-delivered services and environmental goods offer exciting opportunities, with digital trade in particular lowering the bar for enabling under represented economies, small businesses and women entrepreneurs to connect to international markets.

In an era when global supply chains have exhibited some vulnerabilities, deconcentrating and diversifying them to business-friendly but underrepresented regions and economies can be part of fostering inclusiveness, while also building global resilience, she added.

TRADE ALONE WON'T BRIDGE GAP-WTO (FIJI TIMES)



Delegates attend a panel discussion held on the margins of the WTO 2024 Public Forum at the atrium of the WTO headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland on Tuesday. Picture: TIMOCI VULA

By TIMOCI VULA in Geneva

LESS trade will not promote inclusiveness nor will trade alone. True inclusiveness demands a comprehensive strategy — one that integrates open trade with complementary domestic policies and effective international cooperation.

World Trade Organization (WTO) chief economist Balazs Ossa made these comments at the launch of the 2024 World Trade Report at the beginning of the 2024 WTO Public Forum, attended by representatives of WTO member countries in Geneva, Switzerland.

Noting one of the conclusions of the

trade report, he said too many economies and people were still left behind.

"Income convergence has been uneven, leaving some economies behind. One-third of low and middle-income economies, representing 18 per cent of the global population, grow slower than the average high-income economies in per capita terms, leading to divergence rather than convergence," Mr Ossa said.

He said those diverging economies were mostly located in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Middle East.

Mr Ossa said high trade costs were a major reason for the low trade participation observed in some diverging economies, and added the issue partly stemmed from trade policies, including high compliance

costs associated with foreign standards and incomplete implementation of trade facilitation measures.

"Additionally, domestic factors such as underdeveloped physical infrastructure and inefficient infrastructure services play a significant role in hindering trade. Resource-rich economies often face difficulties diversifying beyond their main export commodity, a challenge commonly referred to as the 'Dutch disease'."

"This phenomenon occurs when lucrative commodity exports undermine the development of competitive manufacturing, agriculture, or services sector."

"Barriers to foreign direct investment (FDI), including explicit restrictions and soft factors such as an unfavourable in-

vestment climate, further exacerbate this challenge."

Mr Ossa said just as too many economies were left behind, so were too many people. "One aspect that receives particular attention is within-country income inequality, which despite the slight decline over the last 30 years remains high in absolute terms."

"It is thus understandable that discussions about trade and inclusiveness are often framed as debates about trade and income inequality."

"However, as we have established, trade integration is not strongly correlated with income inequality. It increases income inequality in some economies while reducing it in others."

The Fiji Times

The Fiji Times Offices in Suva, Lautoka & Labasa will be closed on

PROPHET MOHAMMED'S BIRTHDAY PUBLIC HOLIDAY

MONDAY
SEPTEMBER 16, 2024.

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Engineers' meet focuses on professional standard

By JOSEFA SIGAVOLAVOLA

IT is extremely important that the quality of Fiji National University's engineering program will produce world standard graduates as per the Washington accord required by Engineering Fiji, Professor John Mo said.

Speaking during the Engineering Fiji (EF) meet at the FNU campus on Tuesday, Prof Mo, of the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, said FNU educated future engineers who would become members of EF.

"This meeting is one of the series of meeting to foster shared understanding of the required standard," he told representatives of various sectors and council members of EF.

Prof Mo also emphasised that one of the meetings main agenda was the requirement (Washington accord) for professional engineers to practice in Fiji.

The Washington accord is an international accreditation agreement for



FNU's Dean of the College of Engineering and Technical Vocational Education and Training Salabogi Mavoa, from left, with ex-president of Engineering Fiji Prof Ankim Swamy and RMIT University Prof John Mo during the Engineering Fiji meeting at FNU. Picture: LITA RITOVA

degree and post graduate level engineering between its signatory countries.

Also addressing the participants, FNU's Dean of the College of Engineering and Technical Vocational Education and Training Salabogi Mavoa, said FNU offered to host the meeting because of the significant work and its collaboration between the university and EF.

Director of Ensisio Consultants Triveneo Erasto and Vijay Krishnan, director of Engineered Designs Ltd, who is also the elected vice president for Engineering Fiji chaired the meeting.

EF's newly-elected members also include the re-elected president Hamen Lothia of Hamen Lothia Engineers Pte Ltd, the honorary secretary and

treasurer Dr Satyanand Singh an associate Professor at FNU, James Raman director of Shri Singh and Associates Pte Ltd, Anil Kapadia director of Kapadia Consultants Pte Ltd, Richard Sekiguchi and Satish Patel.

Engineering Fiji is the body responsible for keeping professional engineering standard of practice in Fiji.

12 September 2024



Your Business



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MARKET SNAPSHOT

STRI as at September 11, 2024 = 5240.10
LOCAL SHARE PRICES

Stock	Moved	Class	Val
Atlantic and Pac. Park	0.00	2.09	-
Anal. Telecom Holdings	0.00	2.14	-
Communications Fiji Ltd	0.00	6.58	-
First Best Australia Ltd	0.00	3.85	-
Fijicore Insurance Ltd	0.00	18.49	-
FIP Foods Ltd	0.00	1.78	-
Fiji Television Ltd	0.00	2.00	-
Korulu Finance Ltd	0.00	1.08	101
Korulu Growth Fund Ltd	0.00	1.50	-
Plains Global Ltd	0.00	7.94	-
Port Denarau Marina Ltd	0.00	2.22	-
Port Denarau Ind. Fij Ltd	0.00	1.88	-
RF Retail Group Fiji Ltd	0.00	3.05	-
Rice Corp. of Fiji Ltd	0.00	2.80	258
SUN	0.00	215	2907
Tayara Trade 5th Sea	0.00	20.00	-
W8 Holdings	0.00	6.00	-
Vision Investments Ltd	0.00	4.07	-
Wine Holdings Ltd	40.02	1.00	8775
Commercial News	1.00	30.99	-

GBP	JPY	PKG
index: 0.3439	64.71	1.8571
diff: 0.3357	61.71	1.4861
AUD	EUR	NZD
index: 0.6809	0.4094	0.7394
diff: 0.6559	0.3974	0.7064
USD	index: 0.4533	
diff: 0.4363		

Church projects to help mission

By SAINIMILLI HAGIMAGI

THE Methodist Church in Fiji and Rotuma is participating in a boost in its business arm with the opening of a service station, shipping company and money buildings in the next two years.

Also, in the prospect of their business expansion is a five to 10-year plan for setting up its own broadcasting company for television and radio.

Secretary of the Communication Department, Manasa Vatanitawake, said the aim of the project is to help the people and the mission.

“So, by 2025, maybe in March or April, we will open a service station in Tavulevu and a shopping complex as well.”

“The year after that (2026), the Lake Vuni 10-story building will be something to look forward to.”

“These are the projects that the church is hoping for, that’ll bring in money to basically support the mission of the church in reaching out to people through the gospel and also help them in their daily needs.”



WTO Director General Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, left, and a forum delegate at the launch of the 2024 World Trade Report at the WTO headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland on Tuesday. Picture: TIMOCI VULA

Trade plays vital role in narrowing income gap

by TIMOCI VULA
Geneva

THE World Trade Organization of the United Nations World Trade Report 2024 promotes strong evidence that trade has played a crucial role in narrowing the income gap between economies since the establishment of WTO 30 years ago.

The flagship publication — officially launched in Geneva, Switzerland yesterday on the margin of the 2024 WTO Public Forum — is an annual publication that aims to deepen understanding about trends in trade, trade policy issues and the multilateral trading system.

The 2024 World Trade Report explores the complex interlinkages between trade and inclusiveness across and within economies, and it also discusses how trade policies need to be complemented by appropriate domestic policies to make the benefits of trade more inclusive.

“Perhaps the biggest takeaway from the report is a reiteration of trade’s transformative role in reducing poverty and creating shared prosperity, contrary to the current, fashionable notion that trade and trade participation are the narrow-

ing of income disparities among economies.”

Dr Okonjo-Iweala said the trade report also looked in detail at the various factors that had held back individuals, firms and economies from capitalising on, and adjusting to, international trade.

Current Fiji Interest Rates	Term Deposits		
	1 year	3 years	5 years
ANZ	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%
BSP	0.60%	0.60%	0.60%
First	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%
FSP	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%
Trust Corp	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%
UOL	0.80%	0.80%	0.80%
WFC	0.80%	0.80%	0.80%
World Finance	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%
Message Finance	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%
MFC	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%

Home Loans	1 year		
	Variable	Fixed	Fixed
ANZ	4.40%	3.90%	4.90%
BSP	4.90%	3.70%	4.80%
First	3.25%	4.00%	4.50%
BSP	4.40%	4.00%	4.50%
MFC	3.95%	3.90%	4.50%
MFC	4.40%	3.70%	4.40%

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WTO: GLOBAL TRADE ALONE DOES NOT HELP FIGHT POVERTY (AL AHARAM, EGYPT)

<https://gate.ahram.org.eg/News/4984785.aspx>

CNBC EUROPE TV INTERVIEW

See: <https://www.cnbc.com/video/2024/09/09/trade-is-seen-as-problem-not-driver-for-economies-wto-chief-economist.html>

CNBC AFRICA TV INTERVIEW

<https://www.cnbcfrica.com/media/6361744368112/wto-developing-countries-lose-100bn-yearly-due-to-unfair-protectionist-policies/>

CGTN TV INTERVIEW

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=jTSIRAbn1Oc>

BBC TV INTERVIEW

<http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=ad796e54-0b35-4717-a24f-074212b82566>

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TV interview clips

Outlet	WTO official	Link
CNBC Europe	Ralph	Trade is seen as problem, not driver for economies: WTO chief economist (cnbc.com)

		
CNBC Africa	Robert	<p data-bbox="443 712 1300 768">https://www.cnbc.com/media/6361744368112/wto-developing-countries-lose-100bn-yearly-due-to-unfair-protectionist-policies/</p> <p data-bbox="443 775 1037 797">Data out earlier from the World Trade Organization showed that Africa's share of global trad...</p> 
BBC TV	Ralph	<p data-bbox="443 1218 1393 1274">http://m.ms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=ad796e54-0b35-4717-a24f-074212b82566</p> <p data-bbox="443 1301 1257 1335">^Do not share BBC link; Proprietary info of clipping service.</p> 
CGTN	Ralph	<p data-bbox="443 1778 1037 1798">https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=jTSIRAbn1Oc_</p>



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Moneyline (Nigeria)	DG	<p>YouTube Link: Exclusive Interview with Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala: Trade & Inclusiveness WTO Director-General (youtube.com)</p> 