

Impact case study (REF3)

Institution: The University of Manchester		
Unit of Assessment: 22a (Development Studies)		
Title of case study: Gender equality in global value chains: promoting company, civil society and policy strategies		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2007 – 2020		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s):	Role(s) (e.g. job title):	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
Stephanie Barrientos	Professor of Global Development	2007 – present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2013 – 2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? No		
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>Barrientos' research highlighting the benefits of promoting gender equality in global value chains has directly influenced gender equality and advocacy strategies of corporations and civil society organisations, and UK government policy. As a result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • over 390,000 workers in Nike's and Mondelez' value chains in low- and middle-income countries have directly benefited from the implementation of gender-equitable strategies • over 1 million workers in the value chains of Marks & Spencer and Ethical Trading Initiative member companies have been indirectly advantaged through opportunities for women to advance to leadership positions • Sedex (a major social compliance body) adopted a gender strategy recommended by Barrientos to its 60,000 members, reaching 33,000,000 workers in 180 countries. 		
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>Barrientos has undertaken in-depth research since 2000 on the role of workers (waged, informal and in smallholder farming), with a particular focus on gender, in the production of consumer goods sourced by retailers and brands through global value chains (GVCs). She advanced the concept of gender-equitable social upgrading when co-PI with Gary Gereffi (Duke University) on 'Capturing the Gains' (2008–12), a GBP1,900,000 DFID-funded research programme in 20 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America [1]. Building on this research, Barrientos advanced GVC gender analysis through two major research programmes: a Leverhulme Major Fellowship (2012–16) resulting in a book published by Cambridge University Press [2]; and research leadership of a DFID/FCDO flagship programme Work Opportunities for Women (WOW) [3].</p> <p>Gender and Global Value Chains Monograph</p> <p>Barrientos' book provides unique insights into the significant yet under-recognised contribution of women workers in GVCs coordinated by retailers and brands. Her extensive research in agriculture and apparel in Africa, Asia and Latin America demonstrates that promoting gender equality in GVCs can both improve business performance, and advance women workers' rights and household wellbeing. She advocated governance strategies to enhance upgrading to higher value activities, which often involves bargaining and contestation by workers themselves. Barrientos' research with companies, NGOs and government agencies includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nike: Research on Nike's Equitable Manufacturing (EM) pilot in Indonesia examined the linkages between economic and social upgrading and gender equality, with beneficial outcomes of greater worker satisfaction and productivity gains [2: ch. 8]. • Marks & Spencer: Research on African horticulture examined the implications of poor working conditions for a majority female workforce, and the beneficial outcomes of gender-equitable social upgrading by some farms, improving worker rights and higher value production; M&S is also in WOW (see below) [1; 2: chs. 6,7,8; 4]. 		

- **Mondelez/Cadbury:** Research on women in smallholder cocoa production in Ghana highlighted their important role in ensuring quality cocoa production and enhancing resilient cocoa communities [2: ch. 4; 5].
- **Oxfam:** Research on gender and governance examined how global retail value chains provide channels for bargaining and resistance by workers, and for campaigns and advocacy by civil society organisations (NGOs and trade unions) [1; 2 ch. 9].
- **Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI):** An ESRC Impact Acceleration Account grant supported collaborative research with the ETI. Barrientos played a leadership role in coordinating a gender analysis of 10 ETI company supply chains and an assessment of the role of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights as a channel to promote gender equality. This led to co-publication of a journal article with ETI's Berman [6].

Women and Work Opportunities for Women (WOW) in Global Value Chains

Barrientos is research lead of the GBP10,000,000 DFID/FCDO flagship programme WOW, which aims to enhance the economic empowerment of 300,000 women workers in GVCs by 2022. The programme builds on research synthesised in her book and publications [1,2,4]. WOW research involved in-depth gender analysis of the GVCs of three UK retailers, of which M&S has agreed to be publicly named, to enhance the visibility of women workers and inform their strategies to promote women's leadership and economic empowerment [3].

3. References to the research

1. **Barrientos, S.**, Gereffi, G. and Rossi, A. (2011). 'Economic and social upgrading in global production networks – a new paradigm for a changing world'. *International Labour Review* 150, 319–340. DOI: [10.1111/j.1564-913X.2011.00119.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1564-913X.2011.00119.x) [745 citations - Google Scholar January 2021]
2. **Barrientos, S.** (2019). *Gender and Work in Global Value Chains: Capturing the Gains?* Cambridge University Press. DOI: [10.1017/9781108679459](https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108679459) [Sales in year one:195 HB copies + 1,435 electronic downloads].
3. **Barrientos, S.** and Pallangyo, C. (2020). 'Hidden in plain sights: why we need more data about women in GVCs'. WOW Briefing Paper (October). Available UK government website: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/924704/Hidden-in-plain-sight.pdf
4. **Barrientos, S.**, Knorringer, P., Evers, B., Visser, M. and Opondo, M. (2016). 'Shifting regional dynamics of global value chains: implications for economic and social upgrading in African horticulture'. *Environment and Planning A* 48, 1266–1283. DOI: [10.1177/0308518X15614416](https://doi.org/10.1177/0308518X15614416) [79 citations – Google Scholar January 2021]
5. **Barrientos, S.** (2014). 'Gendered global production networks: analysis of cocoa-chocolate sourcing' *Regional Studies*, Vol. 48(5) pp. 791-803. DOI: [10.1080/00343404.2013.878799](https://doi.org/10.1080/00343404.2013.878799) [66 citations - Google Scholar January 2021]
6. **Barrientos, S.**, Bianchi, L. and Berman, C. (2019). 'Gender and governance of global value chains: promoting rights of women workers', *International Labour Review* 158(4) (December). DOI: [10.1111/ilr.12150](https://doi.org/10.1111/ilr.12150) [ILR commendation as one of most downloaded ILR papers in 2019/20].

4. Details of the impact

Barrientos' 'engaged scholarship' has achieved a far-reaching impact on advancing companies' gender strategies implemented across their supply chains. In brief, this research has resulted in beneficial outcomes for workers in the GVCs of Mondelez (a total of 124,318 smallholder farmers) and Nike (over 270,000 workers), and greater opportunities for gender equality for over 1 million workers in M&S's GVC. It has influenced procedural change by Sedex, an international social compliance platform with 60,000 members reaching 33 million workers, to enhance visibility of women workers in global supply chains. Impact has been achieved through a pathway involving mutually reinforcing interaction between Barrientos, companies, civil society organisations and government with three interlinked dimensions:

1. Civil society: Ongoing research (including [2]) highlighting poor conditions and rights of women workers informed civil society advocacy and campaign strategies, including the following case examples.

Oxfam: Barrientos' research has involved ongoing collaboration with Oxfam since 2004 and she has advised the organisation on a number of public campaigns advocating gender equality in retailer GVCs. This advisory work includes a recent campaign *Behind the Barcode* (2018), which ranked supermarkets on a number of criteria including gender. Oxfam states: "*Barrientos' research influenced the wording of the indicators in the supermarket assessment tool which forms the basis of the Supermarket Scorecard... During the first year of the campaign, supermarkets' average total score against the indicators on women increased... Tesco and Ahold Delhaize have made improvements and, together with Wal-Mart, have taken steps to uphold the rights of women in their supply chains. Oxfam will continue to work with suppliers to end discrimination against women*" [A]. The campaign influenced other companies to follow suit.

Ethical Trading Initiative: Barrientos secured a secondment to ETI (0.4FTE) funded by an ESRC Impact Acceleration Account award in 2017. ETI is a leading alliance of 100 UK companies (combined turnover over GBP166,000,000,000), 17 NGOs and 4 union federations that promotes respect for workers' rights in member company value chains globally. The research collaboration aimed to influence the development and advancing of ETI's gender strategy to drive gender equality in company member value chains by 2020. ETI's Executive Director stated: "*This collaboration has been instrumental in enabling ETI to raise the profile of the initiative and of gender equality more broadly among corporate, trade union and civil society members. Collaborating with one of the foremost experts on gender and ethical issues in global supply chains has lent increased credibility to this initiative and has increased appetite for participation and ultimately for moving forward in this area. This is especially important as Gender has not been high on the agenda of our corporate members in recent years and we are in the process of launching our new Gender Strategy*" [B].

2. Companies: Building on the momentum created by her research and this enabling policy environment, Barrientos has also undertaken extensive engagements with M&S, Nike and Mondelez/Cadbury that have resulted in demonstrable direct improvements to conditions and opportunities for gender equality for over a million workers.

Marks & Spencer (M&S): M&S's Ethical Trading Manager served on the advisory committee of the Capturing the Gains programme, participated in the ETI gender analysis and subsequently participated in the WOW programme (see below). She has stated: "*Findings from your research in African flowers and Bangladesh garments under 'Capturing the Gains' influenced our decision to include more gender sensitive indicators in the revision of M&S Global Sourcing Principles (GSP) in December 2014. We were also grateful for your advice on design of the final gender indicators incorporated. The GSP determine the conditions of supply to M&S and [are] applied to approximately 2000 suppliers employing one million workers in the M&S supply chain. Inclusion of gender indicators helped to sensitise our suppliers to the need for more equitable employment practices*" [C].

Nike: Barrientos advised Nike's Worker Engagement and Wellbeing (EWB) pilot and undertook subsequent research on a pilot garment factory in Indonesia. Enhancing women's voices led to practical changes, benefiting women and business. For example, providing a relief team to cover for women workers when their children are sick, led to higher productivity on the line, more than covering the costs of this innovation, which also resulted in 22% of women workers reported feeling better valued [2: ch. 8]. [Text removed for publication][D].

Mondelez/Cadbury: The research undertaken by Barrientos, at the start of the Cadbury Cocoa Partnership in 2008, led to gender equality and women's empowerment being the foundation of the Cocoa Life programme established by Mondelez International in 2012, with gender defined as a key cross-cutting theme [E,F]. Its Cocoa Life Director reports that "*Barrientos' research has been critical for us at a time of increasing concern about the future sustainability of cocoa*

production...Informed by Barrientos' research, Cocoa Life promotes gender equality across all five pillars of the programme (farming, communities, livelihoods, environment)" [E]. So far, the Cocoa Life programme has "impacted women in over 1,000 cocoa communities. The program provides 50,000 women annually with access to finance to fund education and encourage entrepreneurship, to give them a voice and unlock their potential. By the end of 2018, an additional 74,318 community members have been trained in gender awareness to change perceptions, attitudes and behaviours, to help address gender inequalities. Evidence of the benefits of Cocoa Life in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire also indicates increased cocoa yields, improved incomes, better investments in children's education and greater participation in decision making" [E].

3. Government and WOW programme: Following Capturing the Gains, Barrientos was invited to join an advisory group to the Secretary of State (SoS) for International Development on DFID input into the UN High Level Panel (UNHLP) on Women's Economic Empowerment (2016). Barrientos co-hosted a public consultation meeting addressed by the SoS at the University of Manchester [G]. DFID subsequently launched a GBP10,000,000 programme on *Work and Opportunities for Women* (WOW) in global value chains, citing Capturing the Gains research in its terms of reference [H]. The overall aim of WOW is to promote the economic empowerment of 300,000 women in supply chains by 2023. Barrientos was part of the winning consortium managed by PwC, and is WOW research lead. Examples of WOW research's impact include:

M&S: Barrientos is collaborating with 3 UK companies (all high-street retail chains, including M&S which agreed to be named publicly) on enhancing the collection, recording and reporting of gender data and information in their supply chains. Barrientos' collaboration with M&S under Capturing the Gains, ETI and the WOW programme has resulted in changes enhancing the visibility and leadership of women workers in their global supply chain. This is shown in a letter from M&S's Ethical Trade Manager to Barrientos: *"Your research (synthesised in your book Gender and Work in Global Value Chains), and the ETI gender analysis, has highlighted the benefits to workers and business of promoting women's leadership. This, along with launch of the DFID WOW programme, influenced M&S decision in 2017/8 to include a target in Plan A of 25% leadership positions to be occupied by women in the first tier of our supply chain by 2023. Plan A is M&S flagship public commitment to helping build a sustainable future by having a positive impact on wellbeing, communities and the planet through all that we do. Our collaboration with you and WOW colleagues is playing an instrumental role in helping us achieve this target...Our aim is to ensure 80,000 women will be promoted to leadership positions across our global supply chain by 2023" [C].*

Sedex: M&S is a member of Sedex, the main industry social compliance platform covering 180 countries, that manages much of its data on workers. M&S publicly announced engagement with WOW, and used learning from the research to encourage Sedex to adopt a gender strategy, to be applied across all members. *"We used insight from WOW to present at the Sedex Stakeholder Membership Forum, making the case for gender disaggregated data to be collected via the Sedex platform. The forum was available to 50,000+ global supplier and buyer organisations. As a result a gender data working group has been formed with the objective of integrating the recommendation into existing Sedex tools" [C].* Barrientos organised a WOW networking workshop in January 2020 (attended by 35 companies, NGOs) at which Sedex's progress and plans for implementing a Gender Strategy were reported [H]. The plans included a revised Sedex supplier assessment questionnaire, updated supplier workbook, and publication of a gender report. *"Our [Sedex] aim in including more gender data points in the SAQ [Self-Assessment Questionnaire] and Site Profile, is to enhance the visibility of women workers across our 60,000 members. We hope that in doing so, we will improve the data available on approximately 33 million workers over the coming few years....Having the support and input of the WOW brands plus Stephanie's expertise both ensured Sedex prioritised this project and increased momentum for further work on gender....Gender is now a key focus area in Sedex strategy going forward." [I].* This focus on gender has significant potential to scale up gender reporting and equality in GVCs internationally.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

- A. Testimonial from Ethical Trade Manager, Oxfam GB. Received January 2020.
- B. Testimonial letter sent to ESRC by Executive Director of ETI, February 2018.
- C. Testimonial from Ethical Trading Manager, Marks & Spencer Ltd. Received December 2019.
- D. [Text removed for publication]
- E. Testimonial from Global Director, Cocoa Life (Mondelēz International programme). Received January 2020.
- F. Cocoa Life (2016). 'A transformative approach for women's empowerment in cocoa communities', pp. 2 [time line indicating contribution of the research] and citations in footnotes 1, 9, 10, 11 and 14. Available at: <https://www.cocoalife.org/progress/cocoa-life-a-transformative-approach-for-womens-empowerment-in-cocoa-communities>
- G. *Justine Greening asks, 'how do we reach gender equality?'* <https://wearethecity.com/justine-greening-asks-reach-gender-equality/>. Article describing the public consultation meeting on UNHLP (panellists included Justine Greening and Stephanie Barrientos) held at University of Manchester (May 2016).
- H. Testimonial from Director of HERProject and Team Leader for FCDO/DFID WOW programme, Business for Social Responsibility; and letter confirming that The University of Manchester was contracted by PwC UK to lead the Research component of WOW. Received November 2020.
- I. Testimonial from Head of Improvement, Sedex. Received October 2020.