The NEPAD Agency’s Role in Empowering African Women through Trade and Investment

Ms. Justina Dugbazah
Project Manager, Anglophone Countries
NEPAD Gender and Development Programme

The views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of UNCTAD.
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Outline of Presentation

• Situational Analysis
• Why address gender inequalities in trade and investment?
• NEPAD Agency’s role in addressing issues
• Results of NEPAD Agency’s interventions
• Challenges, lessons learned and opportunities
• Conclusion and Way Forward
Situational Analysis

• Trade forms the second most important source of livelihoods in Africa and women are predominant in this sector (60-74% NEPAD Agency, 2011)
• Gendered representation of African women in sub-sectors of trade (agriculture; agri-business; retail and petty trade; small and Medium Enterprises; Cross-border trade )
• Barriers to women in business: lack of access and control over productive resources and limited managerial skills
Why address gender inequalities in trade and investment?

• Gender equality in development in general, and trade and investment in particular, is a human rights issue
• Intra-Africa trade is an increasing focus for governments, AU and development partners
• Need for trade and investment to be gender-responsive
• Address access to resources and trade capacity building for women-owned businesses
• Contribute to achievement of Millennium Development Goals (especially MDG 3 – empowerment of women)
NEPAD Agency’s Role in addressing Issues

• Engagement on four levels – International dialogues, regional, national and civil society engagement
• Support to Regional Economic Communities (Business Incubators for African Women Entrepreneurs)
• Strengthening women’s business associations in policy deliberations
• Capacity development and providing access to business information and opportunities
• Increasing access to productive assets – financing of small and medium enterprises
Results of Interventions

• Enhanced creation of income generating activities for women through

a.) Support in agro-processing (145 agro-processing machines distributed to women groups in Kenya, Nigeria and Gambia)

b.) Sub-awards to 31 rural women groups in Ghana, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Burkina Faso, and Somalia for business development skills and establishment of income generating activities such as--- soap making, bakeries and cassava processing

• Creation of employment opportunities through public-private partnerships in Gambia and Ethiopia (2) and (3)
Income generation - Women buying soya to process into soya milk in the Democratic Republic of Congo
Results of Interventions

• Business development and capacity building on trade issues (SMEs and cross-border trading) through seminars, workshops and mentoring in Gambia, Togo and Mali (4 women’s groups).

• Application of ICT to business (2 women’s groups currently using online and telephone skills to assess market information)
Closing ceremony of business development and management skills held in Timbouctou
Results of Interventions

Skills development for women leaders in business and civil society;

• **270 women business leaders** in Mali trained in leadership and entrepreneurship skills

• **185 women leaders from civil society organizations** (women groups) in South Africa trained in leadership and management skills
Opening ceremony of business development and management skills training held in Timbouctou at Sikasso, Mali on 29th June, 2009.
Results of Interventions

• Engagement with Regional Economic Communities
  - Enhanced knowledge management on gender and trade through bilateral discussions
  - Establishment of business Incubator for women in COMESA and ECOWAS regions
  - Enhanced knowledge of governments on gender and trade issues through linkage with CAADP
CFEMA MALI PARTICIPATING TO SIAO SMALL BUSINESS EXIBITION, BURKINA FASO
Results of Interventions

Increased research on issues affecting women entrepreneurs;

• 4 Research studies carried out on challenges facing women entrepreneurs in Ethiopia to inform policy and program development

• Results of feasibility studies on women and fish processing vegetable trades used to enhance trade in Senegal and Gambia
Challenges and Lessons learned

- Many women’s organizations are better positioned to support women but do not have financial resources and/or organizational capacity.
- Technical nature of some interventions requires further development of partnerships.
- Resource mobilization essential.
Opportunities

• NEPAD Agency has continental reach, capacity and experience in gender and trade interventions
• Establish a programme on trade and investment - NEPAD Trade & Investment Initiative
• Opportunity for increased involvement of intergovernmental and development partners in trade and investment initiatives
• Scale-up participation of civil society
• Research and analysis of gender impact of trade
Conclusion and Way Forward

• NEPAD Agency is committed to Gender Equality in Africa
• Agency is positioned to play an important role in trade and investment issues
• Call for strengthened participation between UNCTAD and NEPAD Agency
• Strengthen the NEPAD Agency to enhance trade and investment interventions – support to RECs, countries and civil society
“Due to gender differences in terms of access to rights, resources and power, women and men are impacted differently by trade and investment. There is, therefore a need for gender-responsive trade and investment interventions”

Dr. Ibrahim Assane Mayaki
CEO
NEPAD Agency
End

Thank you very much for your attention.