

6th UNCTAD Trade Policy Dialogue:

Applying a gender lens to financial inclusion

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The case of women and informal cross-border trade

presentation by

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Financial inclusion and informal cross-border trade (ICBT)

- Limited access to credit
- Low capital accumulation
- Reliance on informal sources of borrowing
- Challenges related to currency exchange





The role of digital solutions in financial inclusion



- Mobile money accounts might be helping to narrow the gender gap in financial inclusion (*Global Findex, 2017*)



- UNCTAD findings show that many women traders have a mobile phone and use it for financial transactions

Benefits that mobile money offers to ICBT, and risks



- Payments domestically and across borders
- Currency exchange integrated in the process
- Avoid the risk to carry cash
- Positive impact on women's privacy and control on their incomes
- Less expensive option for remittances
- Provides access to digital credit

...but what are the risks?

- Data protection issues and over-indebtedness



What needs to be tackled:

Digital divide

Skills building: digital literacy initiatives, financial education programmes, entrepreneurship

Raise awareness about the services potentially available

High fees for small transactions

High costs of network connection and devices

Tailor financial apps and mobile services

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Thank you for your attention



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